

LET'S TALK

Developing effective communication
with child victims of abuse
and human trafficking

UNMIK / GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE



For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



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Developing effective communication with child victims of abuse and human trafficking

**Practical handbook for social workers,
police and other professionals**

Barbara Mitchels, September 2004

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INTRODUCTION

Many of the victims of violence, abuse and human trafficking are children who have experienced the trauma of many forms of abuse, sexual, physical and emotional. They may have physical illness or psychological problems as a result of their experiences. It is important to understand their needs and to respond to them appropriately. We should try to stop children being further abused after they are found. Shelters, repatriation and reintegration programmes often are in themselves abusive to the children that they should be protecting.

All professionals and helpers should abide by the UNICEF Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Children Victims of Trafficking in Southeastern Europe and the principles of protection and respect for human rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

When we sit down to talk with a child, it may be the first time that the child has been really listened to, and this is a chance to establish trust and rapport, to validate the child's experience, and begin to heal the hurts of the past. We need to be sensitive, patient, professional, empathic, and willing to be open to the child's account of their experiencing, told in their own way.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

DO:

- Remember that children and young people have the right to respect (this includes respect for their physical, intellectual, social and emotional welfare).
- Respect the cultural, religious and ethnic background of all the people with whom you work, however different it may be from your own.
- Model good conduct for others to follow.
- Ensure that there is always be more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or the activities should be within the sight and hearing of others.
- Respect the right of children of personal privacy.
- Create an atmosphere of trust in which children and young people can challenge attitudes or behaviours which they do not like.
- Monitor each other's behaviour with children.
- Feel able to comment on each other's conduct and be prepared to offer and accept constructive criticism.
- Challenge any inappropriate behaviour with children.
- Report **any** suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Be aware that some actions may be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned.
- Recognise the need to exercise special care and caution in discussing sensitive issues with children and young people.
- Be aware of and comply with the codes of conduct and rules of the agency or organisation with which you are working.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others (unless for medical attention).
- Remember that physical contact should only be that which is necessary for the activity, it should be age appropriate, and should reflect the child's needs not those of adults.

- Physical contact should be initiated by the child, not the adult, unless for medical attention.
- Seek advice about any concerns about the behaviour of any adult with children, advice.
- Ensure that children and young people know of trusted adults (e.g. the school child protection co-ordinator, or social services) with whom they can share their concerns, and how to contact those people if they are worried about any issue.

DO NOT:

- Have any inappropriate verbal communication with children or young people.
- Have any inappropriate physical contact with children or young people.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate or attention seeking behaviour.
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures to (or in front of) children or young people.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Rely on your good name or your job to protect you.
- Think 'it cannot happen to me.'
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests a more prudent approach.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to be used as a training resource, as a source of information, and to provide references for future reading and research.

Training

The handbook contains information for skills training, for example, the qualities of a good listener, and the skills required to communicate effectively with children. It contains exercises that can be done alone and in groups, which will help to develop these skills, and suggestions for workshops and training.

There is additional information included in the handbook relevant to communication with children, including child development, human rights, and other topics which can be included in training.

Information

The handbook can be used as a reference book. If you need more help with a particular problem, for example, the effect of posttraumatic stress on children, memory, or difficulty in communicating with a child, consult the index and find the section of the handbook for ideas and information.

References for further research

The handbook contains references to the research of others. The footnotes indicate research and other works which can be explored to gain further detailed information on specific topics.

For teaching purposes, the references are also set out in the Bibliography at the end of the handbook.

1. CHILD VICTIMS OF ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING

1.i What is abuse and trafficking?

The definition of 'child' is any person under the age of eighteen as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Abuse is understood as any forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power" (World Health Organisation, 2002)

Human trafficking is the criminal trading of human beings. The legal definition can be found in Art. 139 of the Provisional Criminal Code of Kosovo.

Trafficked children may be kept in captivity, in harsh conditions, deprived of the love and affection of their friends and family, and treated with cruelty. The psychological and physical damage caused is potentially lifelong unless they can recover in safety and security.

1.ii The rights of child victims of abuse and trafficking

Child victims of trafficking may have been treated with cruelty and neglect. They need to be treated with respect and with care, to feel that they are valued, and that they are worthwhile members of the community, with rights and powers. Children need to be encouraged to develop self-respect.

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are entitled to an identity, their own family and culture, safety and security, health care and nutrition, education, freedom of speech, movement and association, and expect to be treated with kindness and compassion.

Victims of child abuse may...

- experience immediate fear and bodily harm at home/at school
- poor school performance
- learning disorders/slow cognitive development
- poor peer relations
- antisocial behaviour
- be at risk for long-term problems (including mental health disorders, physical defects, low level education)

The first and most important principle in Child Protection is that the child's welfare must always be paramount. In every case this overrides all other considerations.

1.iii Special needs of child victims of trafficking

Children may have been trafficked for sexual purposes or forced labour and babies may have been taken for sale or for adoption. As a result, children rescued from trafficking may have suffered from inhumane living conditions, neglect, inadequate diet and hygiene, poor health care or no health care, dangerous conditions of living and working, sexual abuse and physical maltreatment.

In addition, they will inevitably have been separated, from their home, and therefore will have experienced the physical and emotional trauma of their removal and the loss of their family and community. The continued deprivation of a loving and supportive family and community may affect a child's development and cause significant harm.

Children who have been the victims of trafficking will often have suffered or are at risk of suffering significant harm through physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse.

Many health problems are a result of ill-treatment or neglect:

- Malnourishment, dental problems, retarded growth, developmental delay
- Infectious diseases from poor hygiene
- Infections or mutilations caused by inappropriate 'medical' treatment
- Injuries from torture or ill treatment
- Work related problems arising from working in difficult or dangerous conditions and for long hours, i.e. eye problems, respiratory illness, muscular and joint pain, exhaustion, hearing problems

The principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be summarised as follows:

- Each child is a person in her or his own right and has a right to be treated as an individual
- Each child who can form a view on matters affecting her or him has a right to express those views if she or he so wishes
- Parents should normally be responsible for the upbringing of their children and should share that responsibility
- Each child has a right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- So far as is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, public authorities should promote the upbringing of children by their families
- Any intervention by a public authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies working in collaboration

For trafficked children, aspects of their loss might include:

- Safety and security- emotional and physical
- Personal integrity and dignity, through imprisonment, torture, rape, or coercion
- Education
- Home, or a place to live
- Routine, and familiar surroundings
- Spiritual support and religious freedom
- Positive intellectual, emotional or physical stimulus
- Trust in self or others
- Friendship
- Emotional support of friends, family
- Social support
- Recreation

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy, resulting from rape or prostitution
- Infertility from unsafe abortions, infections or other injuries
- Physical injuries related to sexual activity, pelvic pain, urinary tract infections
- Substance abuse problems
- Stress related psychosomatic illnesses including cardiovascular disease, respiratory ailments, dysfunction and diseases of the immune system
- Psychological illnesses, including anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress, panic attacks and phobias
- Developmental delay, enuresis or faecal incontinence in children
- Cultural shock, from finding themselves in a strange country or community

These health problems will require assessment of each child's individual needs, and the provision of appropriate physical, mental and social care.

1.iv The role of social workers and other professionals following the UNICEF guidelines for the protection of child victims of trafficking

Child victims of trafficking are not always obvious. Children of all ages may be targets for illegal activity in the sex industry or child pornography.

Social workers, and others trying to help trafficked children should provide:

- Physical assistance (safety, security, accommodation and healthcare)
- Psychological assistance
- Financial assistance
- Legal status and protection

Trafficked children may have their identity concealed by false documents, or have none at all. Traffickers control the children and so they remain silent about their experience through fear.

Trafficked children may not be able to speak the language of the country they find themselves in. They may not attend school, and may not have a doctor. If they are ill or injured, they may not be offered medical attention at a hospital. They are often not permitted to speak freely with trusted adults. You should take care to ensure that children are able to speak freely without coercion.

2. UNDERSTANDING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOMATIC EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

If we are aware of the physical and psychological responses to trauma, we can understand why traumatised children behave in certain ways, and we can help them more effectively.

Children may experience, witness or be confronted with 'traumatic events' i.e. actual or threatened death or serious injury. The child's response might involve fear, helplessness or horror. Traumatic events can vary from a brief, single event, to long-term and repeated abuse.

Children who have been trafficked, may have experienced loss of their home, security, family support, work, and friendships. They may have suffered bereavements of family, friends, and others; and events which are shocking or upsetting, for example witnessing or experiencing imprisonment, torture, physical or other abuse.

The impact of trauma and the duration of its effects may be affected by the personality and resilience of the child, the circumstances of the events, and the degree of emotional and other support available. Adult resilience to trauma is possibly linked with their earlier childhood experience.

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 1.

Questions:

- What is abuse and trafficking?
- What are the rights of children victims of abuse or trafficking?
- What is the most important principle in Child Protection?
- Name three other principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- What losses might a child victim of trafficking have suffered?
- Name four possible special needs of a child victim of trafficking.
- Name four tasks of social workers under the UNICEF Guidelines for the protection of child victims of trafficking.

2.i Posttraumatic stress

After any traumatic event, most people will experience some psychological and physical effects. This is a natural part of the human response to stress. Some people describe this as a 'normal reaction to an abnormal event'. When these effects continue for a long time, or if the symptoms are very severe, medical or psychological help might be required. Responses to traumatic events can be grouped into symptoms of intrusion (unwanted memories), avoidance (blocking out the traumatic event and feelings about it) and hyperarousal (agitation, over-sensitivity). Memories of the traumatic events keep coming back, in the form of thoughts, memories, and dreams. Sometimes these are very real and the person feels as though the traumatic event is happening again, right now, and they are re-living it. This is uncontrollable, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to shut out or stop the memories. Often nightmares happen, and children might be afraid to go to sleep because their dreams are frightening.

Some people try to avoid activities, places, people, that remind them of the trauma. The symptoms of 'avoidance' are described as a sense of 'apathy,' 'depression,' 'tiredness,' 'emotional numbing' and 'no vision of the future'. They might hold back feelings and memories, or become numb. Reminders of the past might be depressing, but some children may find relief in talking about the events. Sometimes pressure from family or society stops people talking about the past.

Most children recover from trauma with social support and help from their friends, family and community, or other agencies. Some cannot function in their day today life, and they continue to experience great psychological suffering. It is these children who may need expert medical or psychological help.

2.ii Effects of captivity and powerlessness

Children subjected to prolonged sexual abuse may assume that adults expect that affection or kindness

Children may feel tired, worthless, guilty and be unable to think or concentrate. They may also have recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying) or thoughts of suicide. Depression or suicidal feelings might be increased by physical illness, hunger, poverty, family problems, or a lack of effective psychological help. There may be an increase of violent outbursts or aggression in school or at home.

is to be demonstrated or rewarded by sexual favours. They may be unable to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching, and therefore do not defend themselves from inappropriate advances from adults. Some child victims may feel guilty and blame themselves for what happened to them. Adolescents may engage in prostitution or other sexual activity because they feel that their lives have already been spoiled, and they have nothing else to lose, and they feel worthless and 'dirty.' We should reassure these children that what happened was not their fault.

Child captives may develop disturbances in the sense of time, memory, and concentration. They may have a sense of 'no future' and hopelessness, and also eventually the past may also be forgotten, leading to 'traumatic amnesia'. Personality disorganisation, or dissociation, may be associated with prolonged or very severe child abuse. They may carry unexpressed anger against those who hurt them, or people who failed to help, and it may be turned into self-hatred and suicidal thoughts.

2.iii Psychological and behavioural effects of child abuse in children of different ages

Older children may abuse alcohol or drugs to try to regain control over painful feelings, or sometimes children may self-harm in an effort to regain a sense of control through pain. The age of the child will influence the effect of traumatic stress on their development, and the way in which they respond to the trauma.

i) Children under seven years of age

Preschool children are learning to trust others, developing basic security and attachments, and developing control over their body and impulses. They are developing identity and autonomy, and seeking to understand their outer world, so they may have a limited capacity for understanding what is happen-

Children who have been trafficked may have been kept powerless, sometimes for long periods of time. Children, deprived of normal family love and affection may develop a victim-captor relationship in which they are grateful for small kindnesses or simply for temporary relief from many acts of cruelty. In captivity, children may lose their ability to make their own decisions, and they may become unable to develop or sustain trusting relationships with adults.

ing, or the long-term implications of the events. They may have heightened anxiety about separations and rejections, and are more vulnerable to the loss of their family. Their lack of understanding may be to some extent a protective factor, as is their openness and ability to be concrete and direct. Their reactions to trafficking may include anxiety about strangers, crying, clinging, and the need for much reassurance. They may show regressive behaviour- bedwetting and soiling, and sleep disturbances. The depressive symptoms may be apparent in loss of interest in play and temper tantrums.

ii) Children over seven years of age

School age children are decreasing their dependence on their parents, and increasing contact with the world outside the family. They have a repertoire of coping strategies to meet and handle crisis situations and in fantasies, they can change events or taking revenge, and they can counteract feelings of helplessness. Schoolwork may suffer from the child's inability to concentrate or apathy. They may not want to share their feelings with adults or their peer group. Denial or suppression of feelings seems to increase with age, and if negative or painful feelings are not freely expressed, reactions to posttraumatic stress may emerge in physical symptoms, subconsciously giving a tangible reason for complaint. Many children ask for help for bodily complaints rather than for painful feelings.

iii) Adolescents, and young people of sixteen to eighteen years of age

Adolescents are developing adult sexuality and the adult sexual role. Concerns centre on dependence and independence, fear of rejection and ambivalence towards parents. They may have inappropriate feelings of responsibility for events, so guilt and self-reproach may arise. Adolescents may express reactions through behaviour and conflicts with the environment. They may engage in risk-taking activities. This may be sublimated into sport, but where the

Schoolwork may suffer from the child's inability to concentrate or apathy. They may not want to share their feelings with adults or their peer group.

trauma is severe and recent, it may be risky where weapons may be available, and where the political, cultural or social climate may encourage aggressive or violent behaviour.

Research has shown that there may be a significant difference between parents' and children's evaluation of children's problems, with children reporting more problems than their parents had noticed. Perhaps parents have a tendency to deny their children's problems, or simply do not take sufficient notice. Wherever possible, families should be treated as a whole.

2.iv Physical effects of traumatic stress

After trauma, body and mind suffer together. Medical staff and other project members describe an increased number of physical illnesses and psychosomatic conditions following trauma, including circulatory system problems; also gastro-intestinal problems, asthma, endocrine and immune system problems. Sometimes children find it easier to talk about bodily aches and pains rather than reporting their feelings of sadness. Some children find that adults do not listen to their feelings, but that adults respond with more attention to a complaint of a bodily pain or illness. Some experts also consider that anger or other strong feelings can be turned inwards and result in bodily illness, and they suggest the combination of medical and psychological approaches as a treatment model.

Following trauma, the body's immune system may be depleted, and the body becomes more susceptible to infections and to other illnesses. The symptoms of posttraumatic stress in victims of torture or sexual assault may be complicated by additional physical injuries, requiring medical attention. Girls' menstrual cycles may be disturbed following posttraumatic stress or sexual assault, or they may suffer pregnancy as a result of rape. Girls who have suffered sexual torture, enforced sex, or sexual ill treatment may suffer from pelvic pain and sexual

Symptoms of trauma may include insomnia, palpitations, tremors, sweating, feeling cold, diarrhoea, confusion, blushing, tension headaches, choking sensations or giddiness, decreased sex drive and gastrointestinal disturbances. Muscular aches in the head or back, restlessness, heaviness, or fatigue in the legs, and pains in the abdomen, head, shoulders, back or pelvic area are also common.

Both girls and boys may experience feelings of guilt and shame, low self-esteem, and distortion of self-image, resulting in attempts at self-harm or suicidal feelings or intentions

dysfunction afterwards, which may be partly the result of physical injury and partly associated with the traumatic memories.

Both girls and boys may experience feelings of guilt and shame, low self-esteem, and distortion of self-image, resulting in attempts at self-harm or suicidal feelings or intentions.

2.v Effects of traumatic stress on memory

When we are interviewing trafficked children, we need an understanding of the effects of traumatic experience on memory. After a trauma, events are understood and stored in memory below the level of conscious awareness. The brain attaches emotions to events, which are then given meaning. For example, a child is taken to a street market on his birthday. In the market, he is hit with a stick by a bearded man. The child will remember the painful sensation of being hit, and the brain will attach to this the emotion of fear. The brain may also create associations of that pain and fear with street markets and bearded men. Memories of the event may be later triggered on seeing similar bearded men, or being again in a street market, and the event may also be associated with the birthday.

The memory process may be speeded up or slowed down by stress. Sometimes, a low level of stress can improve learning, but high stress levels may cause problems in storing words, places, conversations, written material, and contextual details in long-term memory. This means that traumas which are prolonged or repeatedly suffered are often more difficult to remember than a single episode of severe turmoil.

In interviewing child victims of trafficking it is important to realise the psychological effects of trauma on memory, and to be consistently patient and gentle with the child.

2.vi 'Burn out' and 'compassion fatigue' – posttraumatic stress in professionals

Posttraumatic stress reaction is not confined to those who directly experience trauma. Professionals and helpers may themselves experience 'compassion fatigue' or 'burn out' from the posttraumatic stress caused by listening to many accounts of trauma of others. Professionals and helpers working with refugees and trafficked children may find themselves working long hours, in difficult conditions, and often they feel that they have insufficient training and experience to deal with the problems they have to face.

Professionals and helpers need adequate rest and time away from their work, and appropriate support for their work by colleagues and management within their own administrative bodies.

3. THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING CHILDREN

The welfare of the child is paramount:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 3 provides that when adults or organisations make decisions which affect children they must always think first about what would be best for the child.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 12 provides that children have the right to say what they think about anything that affects them. What they say must be listened to carefully.

3.i. Gathering information about the child

There are lines of inquiry that may help to identify abused children and young persons:

- Is the child's identity verified by appropriate and correct papers or documents?

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 2.

Questions:

- Describe the three main symptoms of posttraumatic stress.
- What might be the effects of captivity on children?
- What are the ways in which children under seven show their stress?
- How are adolescents affected by stress?
- How does the brain make links between events, people and places?
- Does stress affect memory?
- What is compassion fatigue? What else is it called?
- As professionals, how can we avoid burn out?

The purpose of child protection interviews may include:

1. Information about the child and their family for identification and history
2. Information for appropriate referrals, for example for therapy, to be offered to the child
3. Information about the events that happened to the child
4. Formal evidence for court purposes

- Does the child have an identifiable family who is responsible for their care?
- If the child has no identified family, is he or she in the care of an organisation?
- Given the child's age and ability, can he or she speak, at an age-appropriate level, the language of the country they are in?
- If of school age, is the child at school?
- Is the child known to the local social services?
- Does the child have bruises or other evidence of abuse?
- Does the child have any unexplained or untreated illness?
- Does the child have an apparently unexplained fear, depression, or anxiety?
- Is the child kept away from other children of his or her own age in the area that they live in?
- Are adults with the child unwilling to allow social workers to see the child alone?

3.ii Gaining information about events and evidence for forensic purposes

There is a difference between interviewing children for forensic purposes and interviewing for therapeutic or helping purposes. Forensic interviews are for the purpose of gaining information or evidence for legal proceedings for the prosecution of offenders, for immigration purposes, or for child protection.

The courts require the best evidence possible, and therefore accuracy of the child's memory and recall is important. In forensic interviews, the way in which the interview is conducted is very important if the child's account of events is to be used as evidence in legal proceedings or in court. The child's account must be given freely. It must be clear, recorded accurately, and what the child says must not be influenced in any way by the interviewer.

Where a child agrees to become a witness in a court case, if possible the child should be jointly

interviewed by a specially trained police officer and social worker, and that interview ideally should be audio or video-recorded. This ensures that the court knows that the procedures for the protection of the child have been followed.

3.iii Extending information to help the child: preparation for referrals

Children who have been rescued from traffickers or abusers will inevitably be faced with many problems. Social workers and police may need to refer the child on to other agencies for specific help. The child may have medical, psychological, educational, social, housing, and other needs, which require either experts or help from their family or community.

Asking appropriate questions to find out the required information about the child before referral is important. Questions may include:

- Family name
- Place of residence of the child
- Details of family history
- Family details: siblings, parents, wider family
- Medical history
- Family issues
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Special needs
- Details which may help to establish links with other abused children
- The child's account of events whilst they were away from their family

3.iv Therapeutic interventions

If a child is suffering from posttraumatic stress or other psychological illness following their experiences during abuse or trafficking, then they may need to be referred for therapy.

Forensic interviews of children victims of abuse could include information about:

- Identity of the alleged abuser/trafficker, her/his present whereabouts, their relationship to the child.
- The duration and extent of the abuse.
- What happened in detail, when events happened, where, and how often.
- Names of anyone else having knowledge of the abuse.
- Names of anyone else involved, or observing the abuse.
- In the case of alleged sexual abuse, whether the child had been bribed or threatened to take part, and to keep it secret.
- Names of anyone the child has told in the past and what happened as a result.
- If the child has not told their non-abusing parent or family, does she or he feel able to do so now?
- Child's feelings about the current situation and what she or he would wish to happen now.

Vulnerable or intimidated witnesses should not be denied the emotional support or professional counselling they may need both before and after any legal proceedings. Child care professionals and police should make sure that, wherever possible, professionals who provide therapy for children prior to a criminal trial should be aware of the needs of the child and also the needs of the courts.

Where psychotherapists are not available, some of these tasks may be carried out by trained counsellors and experienced volunteer helpers, under appropriate supervision.

Preparation for court

If the child agrees to take part in the criminal process as a witness, work may be undertaken to prepare a child for the statement or for trial.

Psychotherapy may address a number of issues, including:

- treatment of emotional and behavioural disturbance, for example post-traumatic stress disorder;
- treatment of a child who has been traumatised and shows symptoms of illness, for example, posttraumatic stress, anxiety or depression, which give rise to concern for the child's mental health.
- helping the child to make sense of their experience and to put it into the context of their life
- helping the child to cope with loss, separation and bereavement
- helping the child to complete their developmental tasks of childhood

The purpose of this work is to:

- provide the child with information about the legal process;
- address any particular concerns or fears which the child may have in relation to giving evidence;
- reduce anxiety.

The timing of the preparation for court is important. If it is carried out too soon before evidence is given, the child's anxieties may be increased. On the other hand, if it is carried out at the last minute the child may feel rushed and be unable to assimilate the information given.

4. PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEWS OF CHILD VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

This guidance is intended for social workers interviewing children who are the alleged victims of abuse and child witnesses.

4.i General guidelines

General guidelines for the interviewing of children victims of abuse or trafficking are:

- Interviews should take place as soon as possible after the allegation or suspicion of abuse emerges
- The child should feel supported and safe during the interview
- Interviews should take place in an informal setting, and be conducted by interviewers trained to talk with children
- If possible, interviews should not be too long, to avoid tiring the child
- The child's developmental stage and needs should be considered in planning the interview
- The characteristics of the child, the child's family background and the interviewer should be considered in planning the interview
- The children should be given an opportunity to tell their story in their own way, before they are asked explicit questions
- The questions should begin with open questions and direct or leading questions should be reserved for the later part of the interview
- Props and cues may be used, but only with caution

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 3.

Questions:

- Name five purposes of a child protection interview.
- Name five pieces of information about a child that could be gained from an interview.
- What is a forensic interview?
- What information might you need to refer a child to another professional for help?
- When might a child need a referral for psychological therapy?
- How could psychological therapy help a child victim of trafficking?

Have in mind that:

- The amount that children can recall freely increases with age
- Free recall is generally accurate
- Accuracy of reports does not vary with age
- Omission of details is much more common in interviewing children than the invention of false details by the child

- The child should be prepared for giving evidence in court, and the long term consequences of being a witness
- The child should have support throughout the criminal investigation and trial

4.ii Issues which affect interviews with children**Issues to have in consideration when interviewing children victims of abuse or trafficking:**

- The child's developmental stage
- The child's level of understanding
- The child's memory, suggestibility
- The child's knowledge and use of language
- The child's culture and religion
- The child's educational level
- The child's capacity to see the events that happened to them in the wider context of events around them
- The child's psychological state
- The level of resources and support available for the child
- Whether the child may have been taught a story to tell investigators or police, or is likely to be influenced by fear or coercion

4.iii Memory

The amount and accuracy of children's memories (free recall) of events increases as they reach adulthood, and younger children of three to six years appear to forget more rapidly than adults. But, although their free recall might be more incomplete and brief than adults, it is usually as accurate as that of adults. Sometimes young children may introduce fantastical elements into their accounts, but this is exceptional, and does not invalidate the rest of their account.

When questioned to help retrieve information from memory, most witnesses find that they know more

than they were able to spontaneously recall, but the questioning might make their memories less accurate. Open-ended questions generate the most accurate answers. Specific questions are answered more accurately than leading questions.

4.iv Suggestibility

This is where the memory of a witness is influenced by the ideas, attitude or wishes of another person. Children (particularly those under six years) and vulnerable witnesses may be influenced by the questions they are asked, or by the circumstances of the interview, examples are:

- Where the child perceives that the interviewer or others judge an action negatively, e.g. as suspicious or wrong
- Repeated suggestive interviewing with leading questions implying a misleading account of events might induce a young child to comply with the questioner and affect free and prompted recall of the event.
- Misleading information provided after the event may affect free and prompted recall of the event, especially in children from four to six years
- People may try to implant false memories in children by repeatedly telling the child that a certain event happened. This may affect a child's recall, but only if this is compatible with the child's previous experience and beliefs.

4.v Use of language

Children might not seek to clarify questions that they do not understand and then they might give inaccurate responses. Use the first part of the interview to establish the child's linguistic competence. Make sure that the child understands the words you are using, and that you understand their terms. They may have their own understanding of particular terms and words.

Small children might not understand adult concepts, such as:

- Times and dates
- Location (place, country, underneath, behind, above, in front of)
- Duration
- Frequency
- Measurements (height, weight, age, size, distance)

Children might learn to tell the time at around six or seven years, and the days of the week and the seasons at around age eight.

4.vi Deception

As a general rule, it is difficult to tell if a child or anyone else is telling the truth.

Remember that:

- Body language and behaviour cannot be an accurate indicator of deceptive and truthful statements. For example, some people believe that eye contact means that the speaker is telling the truth, but a good liar might know this and deliberately use it to their advantage.
- There are no special behaviours or words that identify deception, for example, covering the mouth, touching the face, blinking or looking at the ground whilst speaking is not always an indicator of lying.
- Some behaviours linked to stress may be confused with behaviours associated with deception, for example, sweating, wringing hands, or fiddling with a pen might show anxiety, but is not always an indicator of lying
- Remember that it is very hard, even for trained police officers, to tell when someone is lying.

4. viii How to make an interview a positive experience

Generally

Older children should be interviewed alone, but a younger child would benefit from having a trusted adult with her or him.

Any adult who is the alleged perpetrator of the

4.vii Planning an interview with a child witness

Points to remember:

- Children do not all disclose in the same way. Some will deliberately talk about events, others will accidentally disclose through behaviour.
- Disclosure may come through medical or other means.
- Children may not tell everything all at once.
- There may be a delay before a child discloses, sometimes for years.
- Sometimes a child will deny abuse or retract a disclosure, even if it is true and supported by other evidence.
- Age, culture and circumstances may influence willingness to disclose abuse.
- If children tell about abuse, they may not understand what will happen as a result of the disclosure.

abuse/neglect **must never** be with the child during any interview. The adult who accompanies the child at an interview are there to provide support to the child at a difficult time. They can and should offer verbal and physical comfort, but **must not** interrupt or prompt answers from the child, must not express any shock, anger or disbelief, and they **must** keep the content of the interview confidential.

The interview with the child should be in a quiet room, free from distractions (such as television or radio playing) and free from the interruptions of people entering and leaving.

4.ix Choosing the right venue and facilities

Venue

Allow the child to have some control over when and where the interview takes place.

- Make sure that the child is fully at ease with the venue of the interview. Make sure that the child knows and feels comfortable in the premises and the interview room, and that they feel at ease.
- Provide, as a minimum, at least comfortable seating, toilet facilities nearby, and water. Paper, with writing and drawing materials may be provided. Refreshments may be available for the end of the interview.
- The interview room should be as private as possible. Others, who are not involved in the interview process, should not be able to stare in through windows, or to overhear the conversation in the interview.
- There should not be interruptions during the interview, and others should not be coming and going in and out of the interview room whilst the interview is taking place.

Frequent or prolonged interviewing of a child during the course of a child abuse/neglect investigation can, of itself, be a form of psychological abuse. Interviews with children must therefore be kept to the minimum number necessary to secure the relevant information.

4.x Toys and play facilities in interview

Generally, depending on the child's age, toys and play facilities are usually more appropriate for therapy than for interviews.

However, in interviews, paper and writing or drawing materials may assist the child to write or draw something if they wish to do so. Adolescents may wish to write an account in their own words if it is for a specific purpose, e.g. a letter to the court. Others may prefer to tell their account to the interviewer in verbal form. Children can usually find a way to explain to a good interviewer what has happened to them, provided that the child is allowed to take their time and to explain things in their own way.

4.xi Who should interview the child?

- The interviewer(s) should have received appropriate training.
- The child may have fears or preferences about their choice of interviewer. Respect the child's views, including those about the gender of the interviewer.
- Remember that the circumstances of the abuse may have left the child traumatized, and that psychological reactions to the trauma may influence responses to questioning. Recalling traumatic events may also impact on the child psychologically. The interviewer should be aware of this and empathic and responsive to the needs of the child. If the interview becomes too emotionally painful for the child, it should stop and, following the interview, appropriate psychological and social support and/or therapy should be offered by a suitably trained person.

The interviewer should be empathic and responsive to the needs of the child. If the interview becomes too emotionally painful for the child, it should stop and, following the interview, appropriate psychological and social support and/or therapy should be offered by a suitably trained person.

4.xii Who should be present at the interview?

- Any persons suspected of harming the child should **NOT** be present in the interview.
- A trusted adult may be present at the interview of a young child, (for example a social worker or a teacher) to offer support wherever necessary, but they should not ask questions nor answer any questions the interviewer might ask of the child.
- A child should not be interviewed alone, i.e. with only one adult present.
- Be aware that, as a result of their experiences, the child may fear certain people. If the child does not want a specific person at the interview, explore why this is and respect the child's views.

4. xiii Providing age-appropriate information to the child in advance of the interview

Find out the age and the level of understanding of the child, and make sure that the interview will be conducted in words that they will understand. If the child needs information, provide this at an age-appropriate level.

4. xiv Pace the interview to suit the child

The interview can be paced by:

- Slowing down speech rate
- Allowing time for the child to understand what has been said
- Allowing time for the child to consider their response
- Being patient if the child replies slowly
- Avoiding following up with another question too soon
- Avoiding interrupting the child if they hesitate... they may be taking time to think

Information should include:

- the purpose of the interview
- the likely outcome of the interview, i.e. what is likely to happen next.
- Explain issues of confidentiality in an age-appropriate way.
- Never falsely encourage or mislead the child – i.e. never promise something that you or others are not sure that you are able to do (for example it may not be possible to guarantee total confidentiality, or the provision of certain scarce resources or to definitely locate other family members)

If the child gives short answers try to ask one or two open general and simple questions that require a longer answer, for example, 'Tell me about your favourite food, (or game), (or activity) here...' or 'Can you tell me something about the best day that you have had this week?'

4. xv Make sure the child understands the language used

This sounds obvious, but it is surprising how many interviewers do not think to make sure that the child understands fully the language or terminology used in the interview.

Children have their own way of describing things, and they may use a word that means something specifically to them. For example, if they use a word or a phrase in a way that does not quite make sense to the interviewer (e.g. when they talk of 'going for a walk', but when they say it, they look unhappy, when the interviewer might think of walking as a pleasant activity) ask the child what the phrase 'going for a walk' actually means to them... it might be that, to the child, the phrase 'going for a walk' in their experience of trafficking or abuse means going unwillingly with someone to do something that was abusive or unpleasant.

Sometimes children want to please, and they will give the appearance of understanding, but in fact they might not do so.

Ask a few general test questions to see if the child fully understands, and try to get the child to speak a little about a pleasant and non-threatening topic. Simple 'Yes' and 'No' answers from a child might not give the interviewer an indication of full understanding.

4. xvi Guidance on the use of interpreters

If interpreters are used, then make sure that certain basic safeguards are in place:

- Try to use independent interpreters who are known to the agency, specifically trained, and who are trusted
- If there is no agency interpreter, make sure

that anyone else offering to interpret is not known to the child in a threatening way (i.e. make sure that any person coming forward with an offer to interpret is not associated with trafficking and trying to silence the child)

- Make sure that the interpreter has no control or influence over the child.
- The interpreter should understand that they must translate what the child actually says, adding nothing, and leaving nothing out
- The interpreter should not change the child's answer in the interpretation, for example to improve grammar or to add detail
- The interpreter should not be allowed to take over the interview and to ask questions themselves. Their role should be neutral.
- They should be taught not to show shock, fear, or other strong emotional reactions, which may influence the child.
- Interpreters should remain calm and professional. They should be warm, non-judgmental and open in their attitude to the child.

4. xvii Points to remember

- Children do not all disclose in the same way. Some will deliberately talk about traumatic events, others will accidentally disclose traumatic things that have happened to them through behaviour.
- Disclosure of abuse may come through medical or other means.
- Children may not tell everything that has happened to them all at once.

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 4

Questions:

1. Give four of the general guidelines on interviewing children
2. Give five issues which affect child witnesses
3. Do children remember events as accurately as adults?
4. Name four reasons why a child's account of events might not be accurate
5. What adult concepts might a child not understand?
6. Name three elements of a good venue for an interview.
7. What should you do if a child objects to a particular person as interviewer?
8. Imagine that you are about to interview a child of ten years. How would you explain your role to them?
9. Name three things that an interpreter must **not** do in an interview.
10. Name one thing that an interpreter **must** do in an interview.

- There may be a delay before a child discloses, sometimes for a long time. They need to feel safe before they can tell what has happened.
- Sometimes a child will deny abuse or retract a disclosure, (for many reasons including fear) even if it is true and supported by other evidence.
- Age, culture, circumstances and the nature of the abuse may influence willingness to disclose what has happened.
- If children tell about abuse, they may not understand what will happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Remember that the circumstances of the abuse may have left the child traumatized, and that psychological reactions to the trauma may influence responses to questioning. Recalling traumatic events may also impact on the child psychologically.

5. FIRST STAGE OF THE INTERVIEW

5.i Introductions

To put the child at ease, make sure that the child knows in advance, who will be present at the interview and why they are there. If the child has strong feelings about not wishing any specific person to be present, explore the reasons why, and respect the child's wishes and feelings. At the interview, introduce yourself, also introduce the interpreter, and any other person present.

5.ii Establishing appropriate boundaries and trust

After introducing everyone, explain to the child what will happen in the interview. Explain the purpose of the interview and make sure that the child understands as far as their age allows.

Confirm that the child consents to being interviewed. If an older child who has a clear understanding of the situation refuses to participate in the interview, their decision must be respected. No child should be forced to answer questions. There should be breaks for comfort or refreshments, but refreshments should not be used as a reward for disclosure or co-operation, or withheld in the absence of co-operation.

Emotional safety is established through trust, honesty, clarity and openness.

- **Trust:** the child needs to have trust in the interviewer. Never lie, or mislead a child, or make promises that cannot be kept.
- **Honesty:** tell the child the truth in an age appropriate way, for example when they want to know why you are interviewing, and what you will do with the information gained.
- Children are usually very good at seeing

Remember that the child is about to talk about things, people and events that may be painful to remember. They may be frightened of those who have abused them. They may be frightened of reprisals against friends or family. It is therefore very important that before the interview, the child is physically safe, and trusts the interviewer.

• Children are usually truthful. Terrible things may have happened to them that seem unbelievable to you, but, sadly, are normal events to the child. Do not judge, but remain open to the concept that the child is trying to describe their experience in the best way they can.

- through prevarications by adults, and they will not trust the adult interviewers if their questions are evaded.
- **Clarity:** if the child asks questions, (for example about friends, family, or the circumstances of the interview) give clear, understandable answers in language the child can understand.
- **Openness:** be open to the child's experiencing. Children will not usually make up detailed false accounts of an experience. However, sometimes trafficked or abused children are taught that they must tell a certain story if they are asked questions by social workers or law enforcement officers, and they may have been coached in what they must say. Once they feel safe from oppression the true story will usually emerge.
- Remember that children need to tell their story in their own way.
- Each child's experience is unique and different from that of others. Children will describe their experience according to their character, culture, and level of understanding. Do not make assumptions about what a child means. Try to remain open to their way of describing what happened, and to find out what it is that they want to say.
- Children who have suffered prolonged trauma may have difficulty in giving a clear account of events in chronological sequence. They may confuse several incidents and run them together.

5.iii Confidentiality issues

Explain to the child in an age appropriate way about why you are interviewing, and what you will do with the information gained. Never lie to the child or avoid the truth. If the information from the interview might result in legal action against an offender, then the children concerned need to know how their interviews may be used.

Children should never be forced into giving an inter-

view for the purposes of forensic evidence. They should be given an explanation, which is appropriate to their age and understanding, and allowed to make a choice about whether they will give an interview. Evidence should never be gained by duress or by coercion.

5.iv Establishing rapport

The time spent in an interview establishing rapport has a number of useful functions:

- Establishing a relationship of empathy and trust between the child and the interviewer
- Explaining the purpose of the interview and making introductions of people present
- Discussion of neutral topics, playing with toys if appropriate, and reassuring the child that they have done nothing wrong
- Ascertaining the child's linguistic competence, level and methods of communication
- Understanding the personality and life circumstances of the child
- Setting ground rules, challenging assumptions and minimizing suggestibility.
- Some assumptions a child might make are: that every question has a right and wrong answer; that all questions must be answered, even if they are not understood; that the interviewer already knows what happened; that it is not ok to say 'I don't know.'
- Distinguishing the truth from lies (note that children of nursery school age can tell the difference between true and false statements, but children under ten may have low awareness of the moral obligation to tell the truth). Don't ask a young child to explain the difference between truth and lies, (this is an abstract concept) but it is better to use concrete examples.

It is vital to make sure that the child understands the importance of telling the whole truth.

Example of a way to establish whether the child understands the difference between truth and lies, and explain what is meant by truth:

Before we begin, I want to make sure that you understand the difference between the truth and a lie.

Let me tell you a story. Violeta was playing with a stone and when she threw the stone, it broke a window. She ran away. A man asked Violeta if she broke the window. She said 'No.'

Did she tell a lie?
(wait for child's answer)

What should Violeta have said?
(wait for child's answer)

Why do you think that Violeta said 'No'?
(wait for child's answer)

(or you can use your own age-appropriate example for an older child)

Is it right to tell lies?
(wait for child's answer)

Example:

It is very important that you tell me the truth about things that have happened to you. The truth means telling everything.

For older children and adolescents you can say something like:

It is very important that you tell me the truth about things that have happened to you. Now I want you to tell me everything that happened. Please do not add anything, and do not leave anything out.

If you think that a child is not telling the truth, do not become angry, but gently ask questions to try to find out why they may be avoiding the truth:

- They may be afraid
- They might not be able to remember everything clearly
- They may not want to get someone else into trouble

Further questions that assist in establishing rapport:

Try to avoid questions that can be answered with just 'yes' or 'no.' Open questions are helpful in establishing rapport, for example-

Tell me about...

- Your favourite food
- Your favourite animal (or pet)
- Your best friend
- Your favourite toy
- Your favourite television programme (or pop star, or footballer etc)
- Brothers and sisters

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 5.**Questions:**

- Name four ways to establish trust with a child in interview.
- Show how you would establish whether a child knows the difference between truth and lies.
- Why is it important that a child tells the truth?
- What should you do if you think a child is not telling the whole truth?
- Name four ways of establishing rapport with a child.

6. SECOND STAGE OF THE INTERVIEW**6. i Open questions**

The interviewer should gradually move from the general discussion to establish rapport, to free narrative and open questioning moving towards those issues that have given rise to concerns. It is important to move at the child's pace.

The task is to gradually build up a picture of what might have happened to the child.

The following are examples of possible general lines of questioning, gradually moving towards specific events.

- 'Tell me why you think -- has brought you here today?'
- 'My job is to talk with children about things that may be troubling them. If there is something troubling you, I would like to understand what it is, so that we can try to help you. Can you tell me about anything that worries you?'
- 'I heard that you have just come back from... Will you tell me what happened to you there?'
- 'Can you tell me about what happened before you came here...?'
- 'Tell me about what happened to you when...'
- 'What happened next?'
- 'What did you do?'

Once a child has started to tell their story, then just listen carefully, and show that you understand and are open to what they say. Try not to interrupt, but try to get a picture of what the child's experience is.

Once the child has come to a natural stop, then specific questions may be asked to elicit more details.

- Encourage as much detail as the child can give in free recall.
- Try not to interrupt the flow of a child's talking.
- Go at the child's pace
- Use non-verbal and verbal listening skills, and reflecting back, but do not introduce new information

6.ii Specific questions

Specific questions are the 'what', 'where', 'when', 'why', 'how', 'who' questions, eliciting more details.

A useful question between open and specific is to ask more about a chosen topic, e.g. 'Can you tell me more about...?' It allows the child freedom to tell more about an incident at their own pace and in their own way.

Other examples might be:

- What did the woman look like?
- What did the man do then?
- How did he hurt you?
- Where did it hurt you?
- Who was there?
- Where did you go to next?
- What clothes was he wearing?
- What colour was his coat?
- Where were you when it happened?
- When did it happen?

Note that the concept of dates and time is often difficult for children, especially younger children. Try to link the event with fixed points in the child's day, for example, was it in the night time? Was it light? Was it before bedtime?

'Why' questions are also difficult. Quite often when you ask a person 'Why did you do that?' they think that you are criticising, and not simply enquiring their reason for the action. If they are defensive, try to put the question in a softer voice and a more neutral way.... Why do you think that you did that? What made you do that?

6.iii Closed questions

These are the least productive questions, but they can be used with care at the end of the interview to clarify issues raised earlier. This type of question poses fixed alternatives, or gets a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 6.

Questions:

- What is an open question? Give an example.
- Why are open questions helpful?
- When do we use open questions?
- What is a specific question? Give an example.
- How is a specific question different from an open question?
- What is a closed question? Give an example.
- Why do we use closed questions last?

Examples are:

- Were you in the bedroom?
- Did he hit you with his hand?
- Did anyone see you?
- Did you run away?

Note: Interviewers should **NOT** put ideas into the witness' head.

Leading questions (ones which suggest the answer) should be avoided, e.g. 'It was blue, wasn't it?' If a child wants to please the interviewer, they might simply agree and answer 'yes' to please. This sort of questioning will not elicit good reliable evidence.

If there is a degree of trust and the child is confident, then occasionally a specific question might prompt a child to give more information than was asked, for example if asked 'Was he wearing a blue coat?' the child might reply 'Yes, it was blue, but it had a red hood and he had red trainers.'

7. FINAL STAGE OF THE INTERVIEW: CLOSING

The closing part of the interview is as important as the opening. If the child has been trusting and has spoken of many things, it may be the first time that the child has felt that an adult has listened to them.

If the things talked about have been painful and difficult, the child may feel relieved to have told someone about them, perhaps for the first time, but the child may also feel sad and upset by the memories.

It is very important to make sure that the child has a person to be with after the interview (a carer, therapist, or other safe adult) who will offer them the appropriate support and help if they are sad and upset.

Closure is also an important part of the interview process because it provides an opportunity to thank

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 7.

Questions:

1. Why is the closing of an interview important?
2. Name two pieces of information to give a child at the end of an interview.

the young witness and also to answer any questions that the child may wish to ask.

The child should be invited to add anything they wish, or to correct anything they have said. The interviewer can leave advice on seeking help, and a contact name and telephone number.

The interview should not be prolonged and tire the child, but also it should not feel rushed.

The ending of the interview should ensure that the child witness leaves the room feeling confident, safe and supported in the investigation process.

8. ACTIVE LISTENING: WHAT MAKES COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVE?

These are comments, which children and young people have made in workshops about their experience of being interviewed:

Things that make listening effective:

- Same physical level
- Relaxed posture
- Physical safety
- Pleasant surroundings
- No distractions
- Privacy
- Clear boundaries (e.g. time, place, duration and frequency of meeting; confidentiality, mutual expectations and responsibilities)
- Good psychological contact
- Genuineness
- Non-judgmental acceptance
- Respect and valuing the other person
- Showing interest and alertness
- Open mindedness
- Good eye contact
- Acknowledgment of the other person and what is said (e.g reflecting back, nodding)
- Open body language
- Confidentiality
- Trust
- Showing undivided attention
- Not interrupting
- Reflecting back
- Mirroring
- Allowing silences
- Clarification, owning confusions or lack of understanding
- Checking out to confirm understanding

- Paying attention to body language
- Being able to be wrong
- Not defensive
- Allowing enough time
- Open questions
- Patience
- Encouragement
- Supportiveness

Comments about how it feels to be listened to:

- Relief
- Not alone
- Realisation
- Recognition
- Loved, valued, cared for, cared about
- Belonging
- Affirmed
- Respected
- Important
- Trusted
- Self worth
- Unburdened
- Wider view
- Different perspective
- Clearer understanding
- Challenged
- I sorted it out for myself, with your help
- Real
- Vulnerable
- Exposed
- Exploring

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 8.

Questions:

1. Name six things that we can do to make listening effective
2. Name six good effects of being listened to.

9. BLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN

Be aware of our emotional response to a child who will not talk

When children will not talk with us, it can set up feelings in us of frustration, rejection or helplessness. We have to be careful to notice our own feelings and not to become angry or punitive in response to a child who will not talk easily. Feelings of frustration in helpers may cause a child to feel their anger and become frightened. If possible, find ways to reassure the child, and to let them know that you understand why they find it difficult to talk.

It may help to ask yourself some questions:

- Is the child frightened? If so, of what? How can you help them?
- Does the child understand that they can trust you? If not, what can you do to help build trust?
- Is the venue a good one for encouraging communication?
- Are there people present who are inhibiting the child from talking?
- Are you listening effectively? Check that you are using all the appropriate listening skills.
- Does the child have speech or language problems?
- Does the child have very strong emotions, which stop them from speaking about the events they have experienced?

Understanding why a child finds it difficult to talk freely and how to help

Try to think of all the reasons that a child might not want to talk. Imagine the child's perspective, try to 'stand in their shoes' and think how it might feel to be them.

For example, one small boy of five who did not wish to talk, found his 'voice' with a drum. He was given a drum and allowed to bang on it as he wished. When he tapped out a pattern on the drum, the listener copied this pattern on another drum. The child was surprised, and he felt that he was being listened to, and began to communicate with the drum having a 'conversation' with the listener, using the drums, which soon led him to speak and eventually to tell his story in words.

Specific problems in communication

Emotions:

- It is difficult for adults to express their emotions in words at the best of times. For a child who is suffering and distressed, it is very hard indeed to talk about feelings. If that child has been deprived of the love and care of a family, and possibly deprived of communication, they may be unable to identify the feelings that they have, and they may not have the words to express what they feel or even to tell their story. Here, the use of drawings, and other forms of expression, for example age appropriate toys, creative arts, drama, and songs or music may help. Children can show their feelings through play, and creative arts such as drawing or clay modelling, and the listener can use this medium to encourage communication with appropriate open questions.
- Children may be willing to tell their story through hand puppets in the form of a play rather than tell their story directly to an adult.
- The use of dance, and of musical instruments can allow children to express themselves and to show feelings, e.g. stamping feet in a dance, or banging a drum can help with anger, and an imaginary microphone can be used to sing or rap to tell a story, or to express feelings.

Cultural, religious or other societal taboos:

- Children find it difficult to talk about some things to adults. In some cultures, girls in particular could find it difficult to admit that they had been sexually abused because it will affect their social standing and also their chances of future marriage. Boys, too, may find it very hard to admit that they have been abused or

raped. They may feel that they are not as strong as men are expected to be in their culture.

- The interviewer should be of the same sex as the child, if the child may find it easier to talk to someone of their own sex about what happened.
- The interviewer should express no judgment of the child.

Anger:

- A child may be very angry with adults for hurting them and for failing to protect them. The listener may need to be able to hear and to take a lot of the child's anger and to be able to understand that this is not personal. The listener cannot allow the child's anger to become violence towards the listener or others, and it should be contained, but if the anger is heard, it will lessen.

These are comments that children and young people have made in workshops about their experience of being interviewed:

Things that make listening less effective:

- Tension, lack of trust
- Background noise, distractions, interruptions
- Physical discomfort
- Strong emotions in listener preventing good listening
- Speaker overwhelmed with emotions, feeling self conscious, embarrassed
- Listener pre-occupied with other things
- Moving away, turning away
- Fiddling with hair or pen

Key skills here are:

1. Listen to the child's anger without judgment.
2. Show the child that you understand why they are angry.
3. Do not defend or to argue back.
4. Do not respond back with anger or punishment.
5. If the listener has the training and experience to contain a child's physical expression of emotion, give the child a way to express their anger safely with words, play materials, or other means e.g. allow them to punch a cushion or to kick a cardboard box and at the same time to say out loud why they are angry.

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 9.

Questions:

1. Name five reasons why a child might not want to talk with us.
2. Suggest two things that you might do to help a child who does not want to talk.
3. What should you not do if a child does not want to talk?
4. How should we deal with a child who is angry?
5. Name ten things that make listening less effective.
6. Think of five things that you could work on to improve your listening skills.

- Making notes
- No eye contact
- Changing the subject
- Standing or sitting at different levels
- Language problems or cultural differences
- Inappropriate body language or posture
- Impatience
- Trivialisation, or scorning
- Being patronising or dogmatic
- Sarcasm
- Asking too many questions, interrogating
- Making assumptions
- Judging and evaluating
- Blaming
- Arguing, not accepting the other's experience or feelings
- Personality conflicts between listener and speaker
- Provocation
- Humouring
- Reassuring
- Labelling and diagnosing
- Moralising
- Advising, teaching or preaching
- Inappropriately talking about yourself
- Directing and leading
- Using 'trigger' words to turn the conversation
- Jumping in before the speaker has finished
- Explaining or over-interpreting
- Putting on a professional façade
- Faking attention
- Falling asleep, yawning
- Lack of interest, boredom
- Automatic responses, or too much repetition
- Lack of emotional and psychological connection
- Summing up too soon

10. SPECIFIC ISSUES AND SKILLS IN WORKING WITH ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

10. i Issues for adolescents

- Adolescents are in a time of their life when rapid change is happening. They are making the transition from child to adult.
- Children seek approval from their parents. Good deeds win parental favour. Adolescents seek approval from their peer group. They may try to win approval of their peers by anti-social actions of which their parents disapprove.
- Adolescents may be concerned about the perceptions of others, and feel both judged and judgmental. This could sometimes result in arrogance and sometimes in a sense of uncertainty.
- Adolescents are trying to become adults and to find their sense of self. This may be the time when they challenge their parents' authority.
- Emotions in adolescence may be volatile, and this may be compounded by stress and traumatic memories.
- Adolescents are dealing with profound hormonal changes. The power of hormonal influences should not be underestimated.
- Sexual abuse may affect an adolescent's self-esteem and perception of self. The violation of their body has a profound effect on self-esteem and also destroys the child's normal belief system, i.e. that the world is a safe place and that adults can usually be trusted.

- Adolescents' needs are different from that of younger children. They may need reassurance and support, but it is important that they feel respected and that they are not patronised. If we treat adolescents as children (rather than young adults) they may be resentful, and may refuse to co-operate.

• Girls who have been raped or abused may feel worthless, and some girls describe their feelings as being 'dirty'.

• Boys who have been raped or physically abused may feel that they are not as strong or 'macho' as their peer group would expect them to be, and they may feel angry, defeated, and powerless, at a time in their lives when they need to feel strong and powerful.

- Sexually abused boys may find it very hard to admit what has happened to them and feel ashamed, as though somehow they should have been able to prevent it happening. Here, reassurance and support, particularly by those to whom they look for respect, and from their peer group, is helpful.
- Adolescent girls who have been sexually abused may be very afraid of the response of their family and friends to their experiences, and afraid of rejection. If the girl has become pregnant, this may be perceived as shameful. In some cases, the girl and her child may be rejected by her family and community.
- A girl who is pregnant as a result of sexual abuse may feel a mixture of feelings about her baby. She may love her baby, and want to keep it. She may wish for an abortion so that she can forget the past and start again. She may have religious feelings about abortion, and feel a duty to keep her baby. She may resent her baby as the child of a rapist. She may feel trapped with all these mixed feelings and find that decisions are hard to make. She may even feel suicidal, thinking that death is the only way to solve her problems.
- Adolescent girls who have been sexually abused may feel that they should have prevented the abuse somehow, and feel that they are to blame. Their feelings of guilt and shame can be overwhelming. The attitudes of others towards girls who have been sexually abused (for example family or society may show pity or disgust) may make their feelings of guilt and shame worse.
- Some girls who have been sexually abused may be left vulnerable, and be unable to protect themselves from further harm and abuse. They may feel that their childhood and innocence has been taken from them. They also may need to learn strategies to protect them-

selves in the future, and to develop appropriate boundaries along with their self-respect, so that they can say 'no' to others who may perceive their vulnerability.

- Adolescents may try to behave as adults and take on too much responsibility. They need to be allowed to develop gradually, and to accept adult duties and responsibilities gradually.

10. ii Skills and qualities in working with adolescents

The main skills and qualities need to interview adolescents are:

- Understanding the developmental stage of adolescence
- Establishing trust and rapport without being patronising
- Relating with openness to the adolescent's experiencing
- Being non-judgmental.
- Offering reassurance and support.
- Setting appropriate boundaries
- Accepting volatile emotions in adolescence
- Understanding the effects of stress and traumatic memories for adolescents.
- Understanding the effects of sexual abuse.
- Offering reassurance and support.
- Arranging support from the adolescents' peer group.
- Understanding the impact of gender differences in adolescence.
- Understanding the impact of cultural differences in adolescence
- Identifying and offering appropriate resources and referrals
- Helping to restore and improve self-esteem

• Some girls who have been sexually abused may feel that they are 'good for nothing else any more' and may prostitute themselves. This leads to further social blame and rejection. They may need reassurance that they are valued and respected, and that what happened to them was not their fault.

• Adolescents are almost adults, and so should not be patronised.

SELF-EXAMINATION TEST 10.**Questions:**

1. Name six issues that might affect adolescents.
2. You are about to interview a pregnant fifteen-year old girl who has been raped.
 - Make a list of the thoughts that she might have about her situation
 - How might she feel about being interviewed?
 - How might she feel about you?
 - What might her family feel about her pregnancy?
 - How can you help this girl?
3. You are about to interview a fourteen year old boy who was sexually tortured.
 - How might this boy be feeling about his experience?
 - Do you think that he would have told anyone about it?
 - Could he talk easily to a young woman about it?
 - Will he tell his friends about it?
 - How do you think his family will feel if they knew?
 - How would you start the interview with him?
 - What should you avoid doing in the interview?
4. What are the most important aspects of interviewing adolescents?
5. What should we avoid when interviewing adolescents?

11. SPECIFIC ISSUES IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY OR SPECIAL NEEDS.

11. i Basic principles

All children should be treated with respect, equality and understanding. Disabled children have the same needs as all other children, love, respect, valuing, intellectual, sensory, physical and emotional stimulation, play, appropriate boundaries, responsibilities which increase with their development, and suitable work to do as they approach adulthood.

Children with a disability do not want to be made to feel as though they are to be pitied, or as though they are less than equal to others of their peer group. Often they are given patronising attention, or they may be ignored.

Some forms of disability may have generated feelings in adults and the child's peer group, which are painful and difficult for the child to deal with. For example, severe burns, diseases, accidents, injuries, or facial disfigurement may have led to negative feelings in others which generate in the child feelings of dismay, or rejection.

Try to understand how the child feels about their disability, and how this may have been influenced by the reactions of others. Do not make assumptions about this. Do not assume that they feel the same way as you would about it. If the child has, for example, been blind from birth, they will understand blindness as normal for them, and they may have developed many useful strategies for day to day living.

Children who have special needs may have been given little positive attention or stimulation. If the child has problems of language and communication, this may have resulted in the child's feelings and wishes being overlooked.

Children who are unable to walk or to feed or to do other things for themselves may have been literally left for hours alone. Their physical and emotional needs may have been ignored, and their development delayed as a result.

Children who have speech difficulties may have been ill-treated or sexually abused by adults or siblings who took advantage of the fact that they could not easily complain.

One of the biggest problems is the incorrect assumption made by many people that children who have a difficulty in expressing themselves or who suffer from a physical disability also have low intelligence. Children who have a physical incapacity may feel very angry and frustrated because they may understand everything that is said to them, but they cannot respond in a way that the listener understands, and so they are treated as 'stupid' or they are told what to do all the time, and treated as though they have no wishes or feelings of their own.

It is important to use all effective listening skills in order to communicate with the disabled child. Patience, respect and observation will be rewarding.

11. iii Coming to terms with injuries and disability

Children who have sustained deliberate or accidental injuries will have to come to terms with their new physical situation. They are likely to be suffering emotionally as well as physically.

They may be shocked, and/or suffer from posttraumatic stress in relation to the event that caused the injury.

The child may grieve for the loss of a bodily function due to injury. Some of the feelings may include:

- **Denial** ('I can't believe it, this cannot be true' 'It can't happen to me.')
- **Anger** ('It is not fair.' 'Why me?')
- **Depression** ('Poor me.')

11. ii Essential attitudes and skills to work with children with special needs:

- A positive attitude
- Genuineness and non-judgemental attitude
- Openness to the child's experiencing
- Not making assumptions about the child
- Willingness to develop and try new communication skills
- Development of rapport and trust
- Understanding the child's specific developmental level and intellectual ability
- Learn the child's body language.
- Learn the child's own way of expressing emotions and wishes.
- Work at understanding the child's own way of communicating. It may help to ask others who know the child well about how the child communicates.
- In cases where the child has communication difficulties, work at developing ways of establishing effective two way communication, possibly devising new effective methods where necessary, with medical or expert advice if necessary.
- Disability does not mean that one cannot have a sense of humour, share laughter and fun where it is appropriate

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 11.

Questions:

1. What are the rights of children with a disability?
2. What should we avoid when interviewing children with a disability?
3. What wrong assumptions do many people make about children with a disability?
4. How can we improve communication with disabled children?
5. What resources may be helpful to a disabled child?
6. Name five important skills and attitudes of an interviewer working with disabled children.

The task of the listener may include helping the child to come to terms with their loss and to achieve integration of their experience into a new life, with adjustment to their disability.

- **Integration** ('Ok. It has happened to me, but I can live with it.')

11. iv Resources and help for disabled children

Ways in which helpers might offer appropriate assistance to disabled child victims of trafficking might include:

- Referral for medical, psychiatric or other help
- Building self esteem
- Creating a social network, e.g. introducing the child into groups who accept them as they are and mutual respect
- Shared experience: introductions to others with similar disability
- Identifying resources to optimise child's functioning
- Provide appropriate boundaries and protection
- Offer play, fun, laughter
- Provide intellectual stimulation, and education where age-appropriate
- Organise age-appropriate leisure activities
- Organise appropriate work

12. SKILLS AND QUALITIES OF AN INTERVIEWER

LISTENING AND GOOD COMMUNICATION

Those who interview children need to have patience, and the ability to communicate effectively.

AN UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Interviewers need to develop effective communication with children of all ages. To achieve this they need an understanding of child development and of age appropriate language.

AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

Those who interview children need to understand the types of abuse to which children might have been exposed, and the potential effects of child abuse on the children concerned and their families.

OPENNESS TO THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

Interviewers must be non-judgmental, and value the child, being open to the feelings and experiences of the child.

BUILDING RAPPORT

Creating the feeling in children that their thoughts and feelings are understood, giving them a chance to make their own decisions, at their own pace, and demonstrating a real interest in helping the child.

ASSERTIVENESS

Being clear about your own needs, and able to express them to other people without putting them down. Through modelling, to encourage the children with whom we work to become assertive themselves.

FACILITATION

Assisting children to communicate, listen, express emotions and concerns.

RECORDING AND SUMMARISING SKILLS

Interviewers may need to record facts and the child's feelings, creating summaries and records of interviews.

A good interviewer should remember the importance of:

- Listening and good communication
- An understanding of child development
- An understanding of child abuse issues
- Openness to the child's experience
- Building rapport
- Assertiveness
- Facilitation
- Non-verbal communication
- Management of the interview process

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Realising the effectiveness of verbal expression, gesture and body language in communicating with the child and others and using them appropriately.

MANAGEMENT OF THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Able to put together a variety of skills, provide a structure for the interview, and keep control of the process.

UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Those who interview children need to be at ease with the children with whom they work. They need to understand how children of different ages might think, and how children of different ages might express themselves.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

Interviewing trafficked children necessitates an openness and awareness of other cultures, religions, and ethnic differences. Interviews may be influenced by cultural taboos on gender, venue and the use of facilities.

UNDERSTANDING OF SITUATIONS AND PEOPLE

Has experience with people, some understanding of various different kinds of behaviour, the necessary substantive knowledge of the issues, and a familiarity with relevant rules or guidelines.

ABILITY TO LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE

Willing to build on knowledge, self-awareness, and understanding of others.

GENUINENESS

Honesty, knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses.

OPENNESS TO OTHER PEOPLE

Respect, understanding of differences, and an awareness of own prejudices.

IMPARTIALITY

Is concerned about the outcome for both sides and has the ability to demonstrate that to the parties.

QUALITIES

An interviewer should have the following qualities:

- Understanding and empathy with children and adolescents
- Understanding cultural and religious differences
- Understanding situations and people
- Ability to learn from experience
- Genuineness
- Openness to the experience of others
- Impartiality
- Self-awareness
- Commitment to equal opportunities
- Creativity
- Professionalism

SELF AWARENESS

Pays attention to own feelings and behaviour, so as not to treat the parties unfairly without realising it.

FLEXIBILITY

The ability to maintain professional standards but also to respond to the needs of each individual child and to change the interview process in order to meet their needs and the requirements of each new situation.

BALANCE

Interviewers need the ability to be aware of their own feelings, and to balance them with the needs of the situation. They may need to match the need for support and empathy with appropriate keeping of boundaries to keep the child safe, matching authority and control with a concern for the child.

COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

A willingness to build an understanding of how race, gender, culture and religion play a part in the child's experience, to be aware of different cultural needs, and to work with a diversity of children and colleagues in a non-discriminatory way.

CREATIVITY

Interviewers need the ability to come up with ideas, trying different ways of working with children where necessary, and being flexible to meet the needs of changing situations.

PROFESSIONALISM

Takes work seriously, is prepared and on time, is respectful to children and adults at all times.

SELF - EXAMINATION TEST 12.

Questions:

1. Read through the skills of a good interviewer. Which six of these would you say are the most important? Why?
2. Name six qualities of a good interviewer.
3. Read through the list of qualities of a good interviewer. Think which of these qualities you are not so good at and need to develop in yourself.
4. How can you work to develop your skills and attitudes as an interviewer?
5. Think of your best qualities as an interviewer.
6. Could you help someone else to develop their interview skills and techniques? Can they help you with yours?

APPENDIX 1

Exercises in developing effective communication with children

1. PLANNING AN INTERVIEW WITH A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

Working in small groups, role-play interviews of young witnesses of varying ages to include:

- An age-appropriate explanation of the interviewer's job/ role
- Explaining the reason for and purpose of the interview
- Explaining what will happen in interview
- Explaining what will be expected of the child in interview
- Answer any questions that the child may have

Feedback in large group.

2. EFFECTS OF LISTENING AND NOT LISTENING.

In a brainstorm, participants identify the emotional impact and effects of situations when a person is not listened to, contrasting this with the situations in which people feel that they are listened to. Chart up the participants' responses, drawing attention to the distinctions. With guidance from the tutors, participants identify the activities involved in active listening, distinguishing listening from not listening, with reference to the handbook.

3. HOW IT FEELS TO BE LISTENED TO/NOT LISTENED TO.

1. Participants are asked to work in pairs, and to think of a situation in which they felt that they had not been listened to. They are asked to speak alternately for five minutes on these topics, whilst the other person listens, giving their best attention:
 - A situation in which I did not feel listened to.

Discuss in pairs or in large group the experience of not being listened to and the way it felt. Chart up the effects of not feeling listened to.

2. Repeat the exercise with the topic

- A situation in which I felt that someone listened to me.

Discuss in pairs or in large group the experience of being listened to and the way it felt. Chart up the effects of feeling listened to.

3. Discuss how it might feel for a child who has been the victim of trafficking to be really listened to, and refer to the handbook.

4. HOW TO LISTEN EFFECTIVELY (1)

In pairs, one person is the speaker, the other one is the listener. The speaker talks for five minutes about a problem in their work. Do not choose a topic that is too big or emotional to talk easily about. The listener should do their best to listen well. The speaker should try to notice whether they felt listened to, and what the listener did that showed this. They should then discuss their experience. Notice what worked, and what was not so good.

Change over and the other person now becomes the speaker. Repeat the exercise.

5. HOW TO LISTEN EFFECTIVELY (2)

Work in threes. One person is speaker, one is listener, and the third is observer.

The speaker should talk for five minutes about an issue of their choice. The listener is to try their best to listen well. The observer is to remain silent and to notice what the listener does that encourages the speaker. In particular to pay attention to eye contact, body language, words used, and other issues.

Repeat the exercise twice more, each person changing roles.

Discuss together what helped and what did not help, with reference to the handbook.

6. PEN PICTURE OF A CHILD

The learning objective of this exercise is to develop empathic awareness of a child, ability in description and widen awareness of personal prejudices, values and preferences. It will also identify the impact of personal values and prejudices on the use of self in the investigation of child abuse.

The participants work individually, and are asked to write a description of a child that they know well. Time for the description *10 minutes*.

The participants are invited to discuss their descriptions, and the facilitator draws out the aspects of the child that have been noted. Participants are encouraged to ask themselves what they noticed, and what they left out. They should then reflect on their perceptions, and their value systems.

7. WHO AM I? HOW DO I USE MYSELF IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS?

1. Participants are asked to reflect individually for five minutes on their own character, skills and qualities. They should make a private note of these. Strengths and weaknesses should be included.
2. In pairs (speaker and listener) they are invited to discuss their strengths, and how these might help in the task of interviewing children. Change roles and repeat.
3. In same pairs, consider weaknesses, and how these may affect the interview process. Discuss how these weaknesses might be changed or improved. Change roles and repeat.

8. WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF CHILDREN IN AN INTERVIEW?

Discuss in small groups what they would expect from a child who is being interviewed. Focus on:

- How will they expect the child to feel about the interview before it starts?

- What information would they wish to obtain?
- How will they expect the child to behave?
- How will they think the child might feel after the interview?

9. WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF OURSELVES IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A CHILD?

Discuss in small groups what we would expect from ourselves as interviewers.

Focus on:

- How should we expect interviewers to behave during the interview?
- What would we expect to learn from the child?
- How might we expect ourselves to feel during the interview?
- How might we feel after the interview has ended?

10. PRACTICE AN INTERVIEW WITH A CHILD.

1. Take a scenario from work and practice interviewing a child in a role play. Work in threes, child, interviewer and observer. In the triad, then discuss together how the interviewer engaged with the child, created rapport, and asked questions. How did the child experience the interview? What did the observer notice? Refer to the handbook.
2. Change roles and repeat the exercise.
3. Change roles and repeat the exercise.

11. IMAGINING HOW A CHILD VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING MIGHT FEEL.

Individual exercise: Think of a child who has been taken from home at the age of ten, and who was used as a labourer until the age of thirteen when they were rescued. You have to interview that child. Think how the child might be feeling. Make a list of their feelings.

In a group, discuss the child's feelings and needs, and how you might build trust with that child

12. PLANNING AN INTERVIEW OF A CHILD VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING (1).

1. In a group, think of a child victim of trafficking and their life story. Then plan an interview of the child focussing on:
 - Why are you interviewing this child?
 - Where should the interview happen?
 - What facilities and resources will you need?
 - Who should be present?
 - What are the issues that the interviewers need to consider?
 - What information should the interviewer try to find out about the child?
 - What information will you give the child about yourself and why the interview is taking place?
2. In a group role play, one person is to be that child, another the interviewer, and the others observers. Carry out the interview. Ask the child to say how they felt about the interview. Ask the interviewer what comments they have on the interview. Observers then discuss the techniques of the interviewer, making constructive suggestions for changes and improvements and noting the strengths of the interviewer.

13. PLANNING AN INTERVIEW OF A CHILD VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING (2).

Discuss in large group:

- What are the different stages of an interview?
- What is the purpose of each stage?
- How will you decide when to go on to the next stage?
- Do you think that you can miss out a stage?
- Is it acceptable to go back to an earlier stage if you feel it right to do so?

Refer to the handbook.

14. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN AN INTERVIEW OF A CHILD VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING.

In a group role play, one person is to be a child, another the interviewer, and the others observers. Carry out an interview. The observers are to note the body language of the child and the interviewer.

Observers then discuss their observations, noting the effect of body language of the interviewer on the child at the different stages of the interview, making constructive suggestions.

15. EMPATHY WITH THE CHILD WHO HAS HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE.

1. In pairs of listener and speaker, the speaker describes how they felt during a bad experience. They then describe whether they still feel the effects of that experience, and if so, what they feel now.
2. Change roles and repeat.
3. In small groups, discuss how might a child victim of trafficking be feeling after their experiences?
4. How will those feelings affect the interview?

16. HOW CAN WE HELP THE CHILD WHO HAS HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE?

In small groups, discuss:

1. Thinking about the bad experiences that trafficked children might have, how can we help them?
2. Does talking about bad things help?
3. Are there any times when talking about bad experiences does not help?
4. If a child does not want to talk what else can we do to help?

Refer to the handbook on posttraumatic stress.

17. WHY MIGHT A CHILD FIND IT HARD TO TALK ABOUT BAD EXPERIENCES?

In a large group brainstorm the reasons why a child might not wish to or be able to talk about bad experiences.

Make a list of the possible reasons.

Refer to the handbook on blocks to communication and discuss.

18. HOW CAN WE HELP THE CHILD WHO FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO TALK?

1. In pairs, as speaker and listener, think of a time when you did not talk about a bad experience, and the speaker is asked to explain why they did not talk about it.
2. Change roles and repeat.
3. In the pair, discuss what might have helped both people to talk about their experiences.

Refer to the handbook on dealing with blocks to communication.

19. PRACTISING OPENING AN INTERVIEW

In threes, or small groups, which include a speaker, listener and observer, with reference to the handbook identify the ways in which to open an interview with a child and practice:

- Introductions
- Answering the child's questions
- Establishing rapport

20. PRACTISING QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

In threes, or small groups, which include a speaker, listener and observer, with reference to the handbook identify and practice the three types of questions:

- Open questions
- Specific questions
- Closed questions

21. PRACTISING CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

In threes, or small groups, which include a speaker, listener and observer, with reference to the handbook identify the issues to be considered in closing the interview and practice bringing an interview to a good closure. Issues include:

- Thanking the child
- Valuing the child
- Validating the child's experience
- Allowing opportunity for further questions
- Advice giving and referrals
- Opportunity to meet again if in the child's interests to do so

22. COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

1. Working in small groups, identify the possible special needs of refugee children
2. Plan an interview with a refugee child of seven with speech problems found wandering alone to include:
 - Venue
 - Timing
 - Who should be present
 - Resources, equipment facilities, necessary
 - Lines and methods of questioning.
 - Further actions to be taken
3. Plan an interview with a blind child of twelve who has been subject to cruelty and neglect to include:
 - Venue
 - Timing
 - Who should be present
 - Resources, equipment facilities, necessary
 - Lines and methods of questioning.
 - Further actions to be taken

4. Plan an interview with a teenage refugee who has been sexually abused to include:

- Venue
- Timing
- Who should be present
- Resources, equipment facilities, necessary
- Lines and methods of questioning.
- Further actions to be taken

5. Plan an interview with a former child soldier aged fifteen to include:

- Venue
- Timing
- Who should be present
- Resources, equipment facilities, necessary
- Lines and methods of questioning.
- Further actions to be taken

6. Consider these children again, and think how your interview planning might have varied if they were of a different:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Religion

Give examples from a variety of races, religions, cultures and ethnicities.

23. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN

70% of human communication is non-verbal. Being a good communicator means being able to read the non-verbal cues.

The participants will work in triads. Each person in turn will become communicator, interviewer, and observer. Each exercise should take no more than a total of 15 mins.

EXERCISE 1 Communicator mimes a short scenario (3 mins) in which they convey an event and some emotion connected with it. The interviewer is to write down their understanding of the event

and the emotions conveyed. Discuss in the triad (10 mins).

EXERCISE 2 The roles change. Repeat the exercise, this time the communicator is asked to mime a person that they know in some activity and give some idea of what that person is like.

EXERCISE 3 The roles change. Repeat the exercise. The communicator is asked to mime a scene from their childhood that makes them feel some emotion (with a warning not to mime a traumatic event or one which will cause them severe emotional pain).

The exercise is discussed in the large group.

24. IS CHILDREN'S EVIDENCE RELIABLE?

Small group and large group discussion, in relation to child witnesses:

1. Can you tell if a child is not telling the truth?
2. What are the indicators that a witness is lying?
3. What factors or circumstances might render evidence unreliable?
4. How could the reliability of evidence in cases involving children be improved?

Feedback in large group and discussion of good practice in gathering evidence.

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