

Batman, H. (2024). Forensic interviewer in child sexual abuse. *Turkish Journal of Applied Social Work*, 6 (2), 14-27. [doi:10.54467/trjasw.1408178](https://doi.org/10.54467/trjasw.1408178)

REVIEW ARTICLE

Submission: 21/12/2023

Revision: 29/05/2024

Accepted: 05/06/2024

FORENSIC INTERVIEWER IN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Çocuk Cinsel İstismarında Adli Görüşmeci

Hüseyin BATMAN¹

¹ Assoc. Prof., Afyon Kocatepe University, School of Sandıklı Applied Sciences [✉ hbatman@aku.edu.tr](mailto:hbatman@aku.edu.tr)

 0000-0001-8902-1577

ABSTRACT

Children today are frequently subjected to abuse. Among these, sexual abuse is the type of abuse that affects children most negatively. Since sexual abuse usually takes place out of sight and in an environment where no one is around, there are no eyewitnesses other than the child victim and the perpetrator of the incident. This situation increases the importance of children's statements in the investigation of abuse. Research conducted in Turkey in recent years shows that cases of sexual abuse have increased. The traumatic events that children are exposed to show that they need to be protected more carefully. In addition, supporting and monitoring children who are victims of sexual abuse inside and outside the courthouse is another important requirement. Having experienced, well educated professionals to carry out these tasks will facilitate this process. In Turkey, especially as of 2010, important steps have been taken regarding forensic interviews with child victims of sexual abuse. Child Monitoring Centers opened within the Ministry of Health as of 2012 and Forensic Interview Rooms opened within the Ministry of Justice as of 2017 attract attention as very important centers for forensic interviews with child victims. Children who are victims of sexual abuse are often reluctant to tell about the abuse they have experienced to someone they have not met before. In this regard, persuading children to be interviewed and obtaining detailed and valid information from the child depends on the knowledge level and skills of forensic interviewers. Forensic interviewers play very important roles in protecting children within the judicial system and catching perpetrators.

Keywords: Forensic interviewer, forensic social work, information, sexual abuse, perpetrator, center

ÖZET

Çocuklar günümüzde sıklıkla fena muameleye maruz kalmaktadır. Bunların içinde özellikle cinsel istismar çocukları en fazla olumsuz etkileyen istismar tipi olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Cinsel istismar genelde gözden uzak ve kimsenin olmadığı bir ortamda gerçekleştiğinden mağdur çocuk ve olayın faili dışında başka bir görgü tanığı bulunmamaktadır. Bu durum istismar olayının soruşturulmasında çocukların ifadelerinin önemini arttırmaktadır.

Türkiye'de son yıllarda yapılan araştırmalar cinsel istismar vakalarının arttığını göstermektedir. Çocukların maruz kaldığı travmatik olaylar onların çok daha dikkatli şekilde korunması gerektiğini gösterir niteliktedir. Bunun yanı sıra cinsel istismar mağduru çocukların adliye içinde ve dışında desteklenmesi ve takibinin yapılması da bir diğer önemli gerekliliktir. Bunların gerçekleştirilmesinde deneyimli, iyi eğitilmiş meslek elemanlarının olması bu süreci kolaylaştıracaktır.

Türkiye'de özellikle 2010 yılı itibarıyla cinsel istismar mağduru çocukla adli görüşme konusunda önemli adımlar atılmak-

tadır. 2012 yılı itibariyle Sağlık Bakanlığı bünyesinde açılan Çocuk İzlem Merkezleri ve 2017 yılı itibariyle Adalet Bakanlığı bünyesinde açılan Adli Görüşme Odaları mağdur çocukla adli görüşme konusunda oldukça önemli merkezler olarak dikkat çekmektedir. Mağdur çocuklar çoğunlukla yaşadıkları istismarı daha önce tanımadıkları birine anlatmak konusunda isteksiz davranmaktadır. Bu konuda çocukların görüşme için ikna edilmesi ve çocuktan detaylı ve geçerli bilgi alınması adli görüşmecilerin bilgi düzeyine ve yeteneklerine bağlı olmaktadır. Adli görüşmeciler çocukların adli sistem içinde korunması ve failerin yakalanması hususunda oldukça önemli roller üstlenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Adli görüşmeci, adli sosyal hizmet, bilgi, cinsel istismar, fail, merkez.

INTRODUCTION

Today, child sexual abuse emerges as a global public health problem affecting millions of children around the World (Burrows & Powell, 2014). The problem of child sexual abuse includes problems of neglect, mistreatment, psychological, emotional and physical abuse. Children are the victims most affected by this abuse (Benuto & Garrick, 2016). For instance in the UK according to a report (NSPCC and Tower Hamlets, ACPC, 1996) one million children are abused each year (Alridge & Wood, 1998). It is estimated that the rate of children who are victims of sexual abuse in developed countries is between 20% and 36% (Price-Robertson et al., 2010; as cited in Burrows & Powell, 2014).

There has been an increase in the number of children applying to the police and gendarmerie as victims in Turkey in recent years. According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute, while the number of children who were exposed to sexual abuse in 2021 was 24,400, this number reached 31,890 in 2022 (TÜİK, 2023). This information suggests that more intensive measures should be taken to protect children against sexual abuse. Social workers fulfill many roles such as advocacy, consultancy and expertise for individuals at risk (Çalış, 2022).

Since there is not enough physical evidence in most cases of sexual abuse, the statements of the victim, suspects and witnesses play a very important role in revealing the truth (Güllü & Erden, 2022). Research shows that, contrary to popular belief, there is not enough medical evidence in cases where children are subjected to sexual abuse. The rate of cases with medical evidence such as genital abnormalities, bruises, etc. as a result of sexual abuse among the total incident was announced as 4% (Heger, Tiscon, Velasquez & Bernier, 2002 as cited in Cirlugea & O'Donohue, 2016). In cases of child sexual abuse, there are generally no other eyewitnesses other than the child victim of abuse and the perpetrator. This situation increases the importance of child's testimony (Bussey, 2009). There are two purposes in forensic interviews, the first one is to know what happened? And if something happened, who did it? (Milne & Powell, 2010).

When we look at the literature, we see that the effects of sexual abuse on children, forensic examination etc. are mostly discussed. Differently, this study will focus on the place of the forensic interviewer in the forensic interview with the child victim of sexual abuse. Also multiple forensic interviews with children, forensic interview protocols and forensic interview centers will be discussed.

SEXUAL ABUSE IN CHILDREN

Today, child sexual abuse occurs almost everywhere, regardless of ethnicity and socio economic class. In Turkey, migration from villages to cities, the necessity of spouses to work due to economic difficulties and the prevalence of smartphone use among children make children more vulnerable (Batman & Gökçearsan, 2022). A report about a child who has been subjected to sexual abuse can occur at any time. Because the child can express sexual abuse at any time (Krueger, 2016).

There are number of factors that play a role in a child's exposure to sexual abuse. Among these; the child needs care and assistance due to his age, developmental characteristics and physical disabilities. Family related factors are; the parents' past history of abuse, marriage at a young age, alcohol and substance use, low education level, psychological problems in the family, broken family, having many children, and inadequate relationships with the child (İbiloğlu, Atlı, Oto & Özkan, 2018 as cited in Bacioğlu & Kaya, 2020).

FORENSIC INTERVIEWING

Forensic interviews are an extremely important tool in investigating cases of child abuse. In many cases, the forensic interview is the first communication established with the child victim in the judicial environment and serves as a guide in the investigation of the abuse incident (Children's Bureau, 2023). Forensic interview is the process of listening to, recording and preparing a report for the child who is included in the judicial system as a victim or witness (Atılğan, Yağcıoğlu & Çavdar, 2014). The main purpose of conducting a forensic interview regarding the alleged sexual abuse of a child is to obtain definitive information about whether the abuse occurred (Yemişçigil, 2019). Sexual abuse generally creates a sense of shame in the individual, and for this reason many children keep the incident secret (Tyler & Cauce, 2002). For this reason, it is believed that research should be conducted on why children keep their abuse secret, what obstacles exist, and ensuring that the incident is explained (Cronch, Viljoen & Hansen, 2006). While conducting a forensic interview with the child; It would be appropriate to take into account the emotional state of the child and wait until the child feels safe without keeping him/her under time pressure (Ackerman, 2010 as cited in Güllü & Erden, 2022). The emergence of a sexual abuse case causes the beginning of a damaging process for both the child and her family. They generally avoid talking about this issue and seek mental health support (Hinds & Giardino; as cited in Büken, Kapoğlu, Dinçer & Öbek, 2023). It is thought that this situation reveals the necessity for the forensic interviewer to evaluate the case from a holistic perspective in terms of the child and her family in case of child sexual abuse.

Children must have certain skills in order to express the abuse they experience in a forensic interview. For example, children should be able to communicate with the other person, distinguish truth from lies, and know the importance of telling the truth. Research shows that even 4 years old children can

distinguish lies from reality (Arrigo & Shipley, 2003). Children generally tend to keep the events secret due to threats and punishments. Perpetrators of abuse can buy gifts for children they victimized, thus ensuring that they keep what happened to them secret.

For this reason, everything the child tells about sexual abuse should be taken seriously (Akço et al., 2003).

The place where the forensic interview with the child will be held should be private, child-friendly and not distracting. The phenomenon of confidentiality is very necessary in terms of establishing a connection with the child and making the child safe (APSAC, 2002; Saywitz, Lyon & Goodman, 2011). Another important element is that the forensic interview location is physically safe (Russell, 2004). It is also beneficial to have a suitable seating area ready for the child (Saywitz & Camparo, 1998 as cited in Rohrabough, London & Hall, 2016). Except those; it is necessary to video record the interview, provide a supportive interview environment, and use evidence-based memory and communication strategies (Saywitz & Camparo, 2009).

Forensic interviews with child victims of sexual abuse are carried out by an impartial professional who uses research and application techniques as part of a comprehensive investigation process and completed certified forensic interview training (Newlin et al., 2015 as cited in Güllü & Erden, 2022).

FORENSIC INTERVIEWER

Obtaining information from a child victim of sexual abuse is generally associated with the skills and training of forensic interviewer who conducts the interview. For example, a study conducted in England revealed that a quality forensic interview with a qualified forensic interviewer (London, 2008). Training of forensic interviewers is important in this context (Block, Foster, Pierce, Berkoff & Runyan, 2013).

Forensic interviewers have important duties in the judicial interview process (Güllü, 2020). During interviews with child victims of sexual abuse, forensic interviewers have important duties in protecting children and distinguishing between innocents and suspects (Malloy, La Rooy & Lamb, 2002). Interviewing is described as a complex skill. This is a communication exchange in which the interviewee and the interviewer play a role together (Dando & Milne, 2009). In a forensic interview environment, what kind of questions are asked, the frequency of asking questions, and the scope of the interview play an important role at the time of the interview (Eisen, Goodman, Davis & Qin, 1999).

While a forensic interviewer is conducting a forensic interview with a child victim of sexual abuse; the interview which includes how the abuse occurred, the identity and characteristics of the abuser and the details of the incident, is carried out in a language appropriate to the child's age, using anatomical pictures and, if necessary, accompanied by games and toys. The aim here is to get the necessary information using language suitable for the child. During the interview, the difference between good

touch and bad touch is explained in accordance with the child's age and developmental characteristics, and the interview ends with a small education reminding that the child's body is special (Bağ & Alşen, 2016).

During the forensic interview, the child is expected to tell the story as it happened without being interrupted. Thank you for what you explained from time throughout the interview. The event is detailed with open-ended questions without asking judgmental, biased questions. If the child tells irrelevant things during the interview, his speech is waited for him to finish and then the relevant question is asked (Bayrak, Gürhan & Karakaş, 2021).

People remember events in different ways, not in chronological order. For this reason, the forensic interviewer should allow the child to describe the event he/she experienced in order he/she wishes whenever he/she wants without interrupting (Milne et al., 2007). The forensic interviewer must also allocate sufficient time to get to know and understand the child. This gives the specialist detailed information about the child's life and the child's development level (Dokgöz & Kar, 2017).

Children may be reluctant to tell their experiences to a forensic interviewer who does not have sufficient knowledge about a traumatic event such as sexual abuse (Orbach & Shiolach, 2007). Therefore, the forensic interviewer must be familiar with current valid interview techniques and supporting literature (Stewart et al., 2011).

In order for the forensic interview to be useful, the forensic interviewer must have a calm and accepting attitude towards the child's explanations. In addition, during the interview with the child, the child should not be made to feel personal feelings such as surprise, anger, or sadness in the face of the child's statements, and an impartial and non-judgmental attitude should be displayed. The forensic interviewer should avoid coercive attitudes during the interview. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is preventing the child from blaming himself and getting into a defensive situation (Güler, Yıldırım, Kütük & Toros, 2016). It should not be forgotten that the social distance between the forensic interviewer and the child should be reduced in order to prevent the child from being influenced during an effective interview (Towl et al., 2008).

It is claimed that the gender of the forensic interviewer is important in terms of forensic interviews. It is thought that children give more information about their experiences to female forensic interviewers during forensic interviews (Kaplan et al., 1991; Kunkel & Burlison, 1999).

In the explanations regarding this issue, it is stated that female forensic interviewers have more pronounced interpersonal skills, they approach the victim in a more supportive and understanding manner, they make more eye contact, and they persuade the individual to testify more easily (Fishman, 1978 as cited in Lamb & Garretson, 2003). It is thought that not only the gender of the forensic interviewer is important in this regard but also whether he or she has sufficient training on the subject. A professional who interviews a child that reports sexual abuse should be trained in the proper method

of conducting a forensic interview before attempting to interview a child victim, or any victim, of sexual abuse (Krueger, 2016).

During the interview with the child victim of sexual abuse, it is very valuable for the child to spontaneously tell what happened. Therefore, the funnel technique should be used in the interview. In the funnel technique, the forensic interviewer does not make suggestions to the child. In this technique, questions such as “What happened that day? And What do you remember about this issue? Are asked at the beginning of the interview (Ziyalar, 2006). Forensic interviewers need to be alert to children’s emotions, the importance of the trauma they experience, children’s individual characteristics, as well as their developmental and socio-cultural characteristics (Korkman et al., 2008; Güllü, 2020).

MULTIPLE FORENSIC INTERVIEWS

When children see an event or become a victim of it, they have to tell this situation to different people many times (Ceci & Bruck, 1995). Some authorities reveal that they are interviewed an average of 12 times during the investigation of a criminal case regarding a child (Whitcombe, 1992 as cited in Ceci, Bruck & Battin, 2000). Traditionally, multiple forensic interviews have been viewed as painful and stressful for children. Because multiple interviews with them cause them to recall the painful memories they experienced over and over again. This situation causes children to give unrealistic information under the influence (Lamb, Hershkowitz, Orbach, & Esplin, 2008; La Rooy, Katz, Malloy, & Lamb, 2010 as cited in Myklebust & Oxburgh, 2011). Ceci and Bruck (1995) argue that multiple forensic interviews conducted with children will lead to information contamination (Santtila, Korkman & Sandnabba, 2004).

Laboratory studies reveal that multiple forensic interviews with the child cause the child to receive the message that the answer you gave before was wrong, therefore children tend to change the answers they gave in previous interviews in multiple interviews (Holliday et al., 2012). Especially in multiple forensic interviews with the child, if the time between the previous interview is long, this causes the child’s memory to weaken (Holliday et al., 2012).

It is thought that this situation may cause the child to forget or not be able to fully remember the details of the abuse he/she has previously experienced. For these reasons, it is necessary to take the statements of children who are victims of sexual abuse all at once and in full in order to prevent the child from facing secondary traumatization (Batman & Gökçearsan, 2022).

FORENSIC INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

There are some protocols used for forensic interviews with child victims of sexual abuse. The most commonly used forensic interview protocols in the world will be presented below.

NICHD Protocol

The National Institute of Child Health and Human development Protocol (NICHD) provides a step-by-step framework for how the forensic interview process should be and facilitates recalling information from memory and communication (Benia, Hauck-Filho & Dillenburg & Stein, 2015 as cited in Çağlar & Türk-Kurtça, 2020). In this protocol, the interview begins with an open-ended question (tell me everything what happened at your birthday/school/shopping center a few days/weeks ago?) and complementary questions are asked in the process. Again, in this protocol, statements are tried to be taken through free association without directing the child (Lamb et al., 2007). The NICHD protocol was developed to include issues such as child development problems, linguistic competencies, forensic interviewer behaviour and the effects of stress and trauma (Baugerud & Johnson, 2018).

RATAC Protocol

The Corner House Forensic Interview (RATAC) Protocol is a semi-structured forensic interview protocol and consists of five parts. These; Rapport; Anatomy Identification, Touch Inquiry; Abuse Scenario; and Closure (Anderson et al., 2007 as cited in Cirlugea & O'Donohue, 2016). In this protocol, free association is allowed with the question "Tell me everything about what happened. If necessary, yes/no questions can also be asked, and it is preferred to ask the open-ended question after it, which is asked approximately 3 times (Güllü & Erden, 2022). In the Rapport stage, the child's communication level and competence are seen by the forensic interviewer. In the second stage. Anatomy Identification, anatomical pictures are used depending on the age of the child, thus providing clues for memory. In the Touch Inquiry stage, the child's ability to understand good touch and bad touch is evaluated (Anderson et al., 2007 as cited in Cirlugea & O'Donohue, 2016). If the child makes a confession at this stage, the interview is conducted based on a sexual abuse scenario. During the Abuse Scenario stage, information is collected about who the attacker is and how many times the abuse occurred. At this stage, interview aids (teddy bears, anatomical drawings) are used (Cirlugea & O'Donohue, 2016).

ABE Protocol

In the United Kingdom (England and Wales) the Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) protocol has also been used by police officers and social workers since 2001 for all vulnerable bystanders, including children and older people with learning disabilities (Holliday et al., 2012).

The purpose of the Achieving Best Evidence Protocol (ABE) is to assist those responsible for conducting video-recorded interviews with exploitable, intimidated eyewitnesses during the judicial process (Great Britain. Home Office, 2011). While in the United Kingdom the Memorandum of Good Practice was designed only for child witnesses, the ABE protocol was developed for all victims, including older individuals and individuals with learning disabilities (Holliday et al., 2012). The Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) protocol includes for stages. These; rapport, free narrative, questioning and closure (Towl et al., 2008).

There is currently no officially used judicial interview protocol in Turkey. It is known that the Ministry of Justice is in preparation of a forensic interview protocol, and it is thought that the implementation of the protocol will bring a standard to the forensic interview practice and increase the quality of forensic interviews.

FORENSIC INTERVIEW CENTERS IN TURKEY

It is seen that there have been some initiatives in Turkey since the 1980s to conduct forensic interviews with child victims in separate centers. Currently, the centers where forensic interviews are held with child victims are discussed under three headings.

Child Protection Units

The increasing awareness of child abuse and neglect in our country since the 1980s and the realization of the necessity of multi-disciplinary work in this field have paved the way for the establishment of child protection units. The first Child Protection Unit in Turkey was established in 1998 by İzmir Dr. Behçet Uz Children Hospital.

Since the 2000s, the work of an increasing number of child protection units, mostly in university hospitals, has attracted attention (Bağ & Alşen, 2016). The commission in the Child Protection Units also includes physicians such as forensic medicine specialists, child mental health specialists, public health specialists, pediatricians, pediatric surgeons, and Professional staff such as social workers, psychologists and nurses (Cantürk, 2016). Child protection Units, unlike Child Monitoring Centers, are places affiliated with hospitals that carry out the necessary examination and reporting not only on children who are victims of sexual abuse but also on children who have been exposed to other types of abuse (Humanistic Bureau, 2014). The need to ensure cooperation with other state institutions such as the judiciary, police and social services and the obligation to provide services through a national network have led to the initiation of studies on the opening of child monitoring centers (Bağ & Alşen, 2016).

Child Monitoring Centers

Child Monitoring Centers, equipped with appropriate child interview rooms, were established in 2012 within the Ministry of Health. Professional staff who will work in these centers received interview training in 2010 from Prof. Dr. Betül Ulukol and Prof. Dr. Resmiye Oral (Bayün & Dinçer, 2013). Child Monitoring Centers were established in large hospitals to conduct forensic interviews with children who are victims of sexual abuse. Child Monitoring Centers facilitate the referral of victimized children to units such as psychiatry, forensic examination, etc. (Trabzon Bar Association, 2015). In Child Monitoring Centers, forensic interviews are conducted only with children who are alleged to be victims of sexual abuse, and the interviews are evaluated. Child Monitoring Centers provide services throughout Türkiye on a 7/24 basis. For this reason, a forensic interviewer is on duty every day (Bağ & Alşen,

2016). According to the January 2024 statistics of the Ministry of Health in Türkiye there are 70 Child Monitoring Centers in 67 provinces (Sağlık Bakanlığı, 2024).

Professional staff working in Child Monitoring Centers (ÇİM) participate in the Child Forensic Interviewer Certified Training Program in order to conduct forensic interviews with children who are victims of sexual abuse. 216 hours of this program are theoretical. Professionals who pass the theoretical exam are given 40 hours of practical training and are then asked to take the practical exam. Those who score 70 out of 100 in this exam are entitled to receive a forensic interviewer certificate (Batman & Gökçearslan, 2022).

Opening Child Monitoring Centers (ÇİM) in a location away from police stations and noisy courthouse corridors is an important reform for Turkey. Because in the past, children's statements took place at police stations in an inappropriate environment and in an environment where there was a possibility of encountering the suspect (Trabzon Bar Association Report, 2015).

All forensic interviews held in Child Monitoring Centers are observed by the public prosecutor and the child's lawyer. Questions are asked to the child by a social worker or psychologist. In addition, the public prosecutor can ask questions through a forensic interviewer from the mirrored room. All interviews are recorded with a camera and presented to the judge. With this system, children are protected from the risk of being re-traumatized and confronting the attacker by being included in multiple interviews (Bayün & Dinçer, 2013).

Forensic Interview Rooms

Forensic interview rooms have been established within the framework of child-friendly judicial procedures to protect the best interests of children. In this model, a suitable forensic interview environment is provided to the victimized individual and the victim is protected against secondary traumatization that may arise from the hearings (Aydın, 2017). Children who are asked to testify in cases of child sexual abuse may experience intense stress and anxiety during hearings in the courthouse environment (Goodman et al., 1992 as cited in Landstrom & Granhag, 2008).

With the support provided by UNICEF, 90 Forensic Interview Rooms were established in 86 courthouses in 70 provinces in Turkey between 2017 and 2018., and more than 500 judges, prosecutors and professionals were given a week-long training by academics on Forensic Interviewing with Children (Batman & Gökçearslan, 2022).

In Child-Friendly Forensic Interview Rooms; there are meeting, waiting and observation rooms close to each other (Adalet Bakanlığı, 2024). It has been stated that these rooms should have ideal heat, insulation and ventilation and should be prepared to serve different age groups (Batman & Gökçearslan, 2022). There are two cameras in the rooms where the forensic interview takes place, one of which shows the entire room, and the second camera focuses on the victim's face. There is also a microphone in the room that will enable communication between the forensic interviewer and the judge

and allow the child's response to be heard. All communication is being followed by National Judicial System (UYAP) and Voice and Scene Information System (SEGBIS). In forensic interview rooms, forensic interviewers sometimes use interview aids such as anatomical toys, paper, pencils etc. to facilitate forensic interviews with child (Türk, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The increase in the number of children who are victims of sexual abuse in Turkey in recent years requires further research on how to prevent this problem. In addition, it is thought that the protection of children who are victims of sexual abuse within the judicial system will be possible with the employment of sufficient and well educated professional staff such as social workers, psychologists, etc. It should be kept in mind that, social workers can play an important role in monitoring, supporting and organizing the social environment of the child victim of sexual abuse. It is thought that child must feel the necessary support not only in the courthouse but also in his/her daily life.

It can be seen that intensive studies have been carried out on forensic interviews with child victims in Turkey, especially since the 2010s. It is considered a reform that forensic interview centers have been opened within both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice in order to conduct forensic interviews with children who are victims of sexual abuse in an appropriate environment. Considering that children's statements were previously taken at police stations in environments where they were face to face with the perpetrator, the magnitude and meaning of the reforms can be better understood.

Forensic interviewers who conduct forensic interviews with child victims of sexual abuse undertake an extremely important task in this process. It is possible with the great efforts of forensic interviewers to calm the child victim after the traumatic event he-she experienced, to establish a bond with him/her, to prepare him for the interview, and to obtain detailed and valid information about the abuse he experienced in a limited time. The success of a forensic interview with a child really depends largely on the knowledge and skill level of the forensic interviewer. The forensic interviewer's high communication skills, asking questions appropriate to the child's age and development level, and creating a safe environment for the child are important factors in the success of the forensic interview with the child.

Interviews conducted with the outstanding efforts of forensic interviewers are also important in preventing the need for multiple forensic interviews with children. Otherwise, the child will have to tell what he/she experienced over and over again, and this will cause the child to remember the painful events he/she experienced and experience secondary traumatization.

In addition, the child's memory is negatively affected and he is exposed to accusations from the suspect's lawyer because he gives different answers than the answers he gave before. Forensic interviewers play a critical role in protecting the rights of children who are victims of sexual abuse within the judicial system and making their voices heard more strongly.

REFERENCES

- Adalet Bakanlığı (2024). Adli Görüşme Odası: Adli süreçte yalnız değilsiniz. <https://magdur.adalet.gov.tr/Home/SayfaDetay/agonedir> Access:16.05.2024.
- Arrigo, B. A., & Shipley, S. L. (2003). Introduction to forensic psychology: Issues and controversies in crime and justice. Academic Press.
- Akço, S., Aksel, Ş., Arman, Beyazova, U., Dağlı, T., Dokgöz, H., Gürpınar İnanıcı, A.M., Oral, G., Polat, O., Sözen, Ş., Şahin, F., Tekeş, T.A., Topuzoğlu, Y.A. (2003). Çocuk istismarı ve ihmali el kitabı. Adli Tıp Kurumu. Unicef.
- Aldridge, M. & Wood, J. (1998). Interviewing children: A guide for child care and forensic practitioners. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Atılğan, ÜE., Yağcıoğlu, S., Çavdar, Y. (2014). Çocuklarla adli görüşme odaları. İhtiyaçlar iyi uygulama örnekleri ve çocuklarla adli görüşme standartları. *Journal of Law and Human Behaviour*, 38: 171-180.
- Aydın, M. (2017). AGO uygulaması için temel hukuk bilgisi. Unicef.
- Bacıoğlu, S. D., & Kaya, Z. (2020). Öğretmen adaylarının çocuk istismar ve ihmaline ilişkin bilgi düzeyleri ile çocuğa yönelik cinsel istismarı bildirme tutumlarının incelenmesi. *Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 17(1), 894-925.
- Bağ, Ö., Alşen, S. (2016). Çocuğun cinsel istismarının değerlendirilmesinde yeni model: Çocuk izlem merkezleri. *İzmir Dr. Behçet Uz Çocuk Hastalıkları Dergisi*. 14 (1), 9-14.
- Batman, H., Gökçearsan, E. (2022). Çocuğun cinsel istismarında adli görüşme. Seçkin.
- Baugerud, G. A., & Johnson, M. S. (2018). The NICHHD Protocol: Guide to follow recommended investigative interview practices at the barnahus? Collaborating against child abuse: Exploring the Nordic Barnahus model, 121-143.
- Bayrak, N. G., Gürhan, N., & Karakaş, D. (2021). Türkiye’de çocuk izlem merkezleri, adli görüşme süreci ve hemşirelerin rol-sorumlulukları. *Ege Üniversitesi Hemşirelik Fakültesi Dergisi*, 37(3), 217-222.
- Bayün, S., & Dinçer, C.N. (2013). Çocuk izlem merkezi. *Hukuk Gündemi Dergisi*, 2013/2,
- Benuto, L. T., & Garrick, J. (2016). Cultural considerations in forensic interviewing of children. *Forensic Interviews Regarding Child Sexual Abuse: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practice*, 351-364.
- Block, S. D., Foster, E. M., Pierce, M. W., Berkoff, M. C., & Runyan, D. K. (2013). Multiple forensic interviews during investigations of child sexual abuse: A cost-effectiveness analysis. *Applied Developmental Science*, 17(4), 174-183.
- Burrows, K. S., & Powell, M. B. (2014). Prosecutors’ perceptions on improving child witness interviews about abuse. *Investigative interviewing*, 229-242.
- Bussey, K. (2009). An international perspective on child witnesses. In Bottoms, L. B. Najdowski, J. C. Goodman, S. G. (Eds.). *Children as Victims, Witnesses and Offenders*, Psychological Science and Law (pp.209-232). The Guildford Press.

- Büken, B., Kapoğlu, A.A., Dinçer, A.F. & Öbek, A.M. (2023). Mağdur çocukla adli görüşmenin standardizasyonu. *Adli Tıp Bülteni*, 28(3), 296-306.
- Cantürk, G (2016). Ders notları. Ankara Üniversitesi Adli Tıp Enstitüsü.
- Ceci, J.S., Bruck, M. (1995). Jeopardy in the courtroom: A scientific analysis of children's testimony. American Psychological Association.
- Ceci, J.S., Bruck, M., Battin, B.D. (2000). The suggestibility of children's testimony. In Bjorklund, F.D. (Ed.), *False Memory Creation In Children and Adults* (pp.169-202). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Children's Bureau. (2023). Child welfare information gateway: An office of administration for children & families. Electronic paper.
- Cirlugea, O., & O'Donohue, W. T. (2016). Review of psychometrics of forensic interview protocols with children. In Donohue, T.O, Fanetti, M. (Eds). *Forensic Interviews Regarding Child Sexual Abuse: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practice*, 237-255. Springer.
- Cronch, L. E., Viljoen, J. L., & Hansen, D. J. (2006). Forensic interviewing in child sexual abuse cases: Current techniques and future directions. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 11(3), 195-207.
- Çağlar, E.E., & Kurtça-Türk, T. (2020). Çocuklarla yapılan adli görüşmeler için ulusal çocuk sağlığı ve insan gelişim enstitüsü protokolü (NICHD) önerisi: Türkçe versiyonu. *Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(1), 13-32.
- Çalış, N. (2022). İnsan hakları ve hukuk bağlamında adalet sisteminin sosyal boyutu: Adli sosyal hizmet. *The Journal of Social Science*. 6(6), 107-124.
- Dando, J.C. & Milne, R. (2009). Cognitive interviewing. In Kocsis, N.R. (Ed.), *Applied Criminal Psychology: A Guide to Forensic Behavioural Sciences* (pp.147-167). Charles Thomas Pub. Ltd.
- Dokgöz, H., & Kar, H. (2017). Çocukta cinsel istismar. *Türkiye Klinikleri J Child Psychiatry-Special Topics*, 3(3), 169-74.
- Eisen, L. M. Goodman, S. G. Davis, L. S. Qin, J. (1999). Individual differences in maltreated children's memory and suggestibility. In Williams, M. L. Banyard, L. V. (Eds.). *Trauma & Memory*. 31-46, Sage Pub.
- Great Britain. The Ministry of Justice. (2011). *Achieving best evidence: Guidance on interviewing victims and witness and guidance on using specials measures*. Crown.
- Güler, G., Yıldırım, V., Kütük, M. Ö., & Toros, F. (2016). Adli psikiyatrik değerlendirme ve çocuk ile iletişim. *Adli Tıp Bülteni*, 21(2), 98-106.
- Güllü, B. (2020). Cinsel istismar mağduru çocuklarla adli görüşme: Görüşme yöntemi ve görüşmecinin öznel deneyimi. Yayınlanmamış doktora tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi.
- Güllü, B.Ü. & Erden, G. (2022). Cinsel istismar mağduru çocuklarla adli görüşme ve önemi. *Ayna Klinik Psikoloji Dergisi*. 9(2), 317-331.
- Holliday, E.R., Humphries, E.H., Brainerd, J.C. & Reyna, F.V. (2012). Interviewing vulnerable witnesses. In Davies, G. & Beech, A. (Eds.), *Forensic Psychology: Crime, Justice, Law, Interventions*. 115-134, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

- Hümanistik Büro (2014). Türkiye’de çocuk koruma ve önleme sistemleri haritası. Erişim adresi: <https://humanistburo.org/tr/> Access: 02.12.2023.
- Korkman, J., Santtila, P., Westeraker, M., Sandnabba, NK. (2008). Interviewing techniques and follow-up questions in child sexual abuse interviews. *European Journal of Development Psychology*, 5, 108-128.
- Krueger, M. (2016). Forensic interviewing and charging: A prosecutor’s perspective. Forensic interviews regarding child sexual abuse: A guide to evidence-based practice, 57-79.
- Kunkel, A. W., & Burluson, B. R. (1999). Assessing explanations for sex differences in emotional support: A test of the different cultures and skill specialization accounts. *Human Communication Research*, 25(3), 307-340.
- Lamb, M. E., & Garretson, M. E. (2003). The effects of interviewer gender and child gender on the informativeness of alleged child sexual abuse victims in forensic interviews. *Law and Human Behavior*, 27, 157-171.
- Lamb, M. E., Orbach, Y., Hershkowitz, I., Esplin, P. W., & Horowitz, D. (2007). A structured forensic interview protocol improves the quality and informativeness of investigative interviews with children: A review of research using the NICHD Investigative Interview Protocol. *Child abuse & neglect*, 31(11-12), 1201-1231.
- Landström, S., & Granhag, P. A. (2008). Children's truthful and deceptive testimonies: How camera perspective affects adult observers’ perception and assessment. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 14(5), 381-396.
- London, K. (2008). Investigative interviews of children: A review of psychological research and implications for police practices. In Bartol, R.C & Bartol, M.A. (Eds.), *Current Perspectives in Forensic Psychology and Criminal Behavior* (2nd ed. pp.39-48). Sage Publication.
- Malloy, CL., La Rooy, JD., Lamb, EM. (2002). Facilitating effective participation by children in the legal system. In *children’s testimony: A handbook of psychological research and forensic practice*. (Eds: Westcott, L.H., Davies, MG., Bull, R.). John Wiley & Sons. 423-430.
- Milne, B. Shaw, G. Bull, R. (2007). Investigative interviewing: The roles of research. In Carson, D. Milne, R. Pakes, F. Shalev, K. Shawyer, A. (Eds.). *Applying Criminology to Criminal Justice* (pp.65-80). John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Milne, B. & Powell, M. (2010). Investigative interviewing. In Brown, M.J. & Campbell, A.E. (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Forensic Psychology* (pp.208-214). Cambridge University Press.
- Myklebust, T., Oxburgh, E. G. (2011). Reviewing the case (Post interview). In Lamb, E. M., La Rooy, J. D., Malloy, C. L., Katz, C. (Eds.). *Children’s Testimony: A Handbook of Psychological Research and Forensic Practice*. (2’nd ed.). pp.165-178, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Orbach, Y. & Shiloach, H. (2007). Reluctant disclosures of child sexual abuse. In Pipe, E.M., Lamb, E.M., Orbach, Y. & Cederborg, C.A. (Eds.), *Child Sexual Abuse: Disclosure, Delay and Denial* (pp.115-134). Taylor & Francis Group.

- Rohrbaugh, M., London, K., & Hall, A. K. (2016). Planning the forensic interview. *Forensic interviews regarding child sexual abuse: A guide to evidence-based practice*, 197-218.
- Russell, A. (2010). Documentation and assessment of children's forensic interview statements. *Widener L. Rev.*, 16, 305.
- Sağlık Bakanlığı (2024). Çocuk izlem merkezleri (ÇİM) listesi. <https://khgmsaglikhizmetleridb.saglik.gov.tr/TR,43119/cocuk-izlem-merkezi-cim-listesi.html> Erişim tarihi:18.05.2024.
- Santtila, P., Korkman, J., & Sandhabba, K. (2004). Effects of interview phase, repeated interviewing, presence of a support person and anatomically detailed dolls on child sexual abuse interviews. *Psychology, Crime & Law*. 10, 21-35.
- Saywitz, J. K. Camparo, B. L. (2009). Contemporary child forensic interviewing: Evolving consensus and innovation over 25 years. In Bottoms, L. B. Najdowski, J. C. Goodman, S. G. (Eds.). *Children as Victims, Witnesses and Offenders, Psychological Science and Law* (pp.102-127). The Guildford Press.
- Saywitz, K. J., Lyon, T. D., & Goodman, G. S. (2011). Interviewing children. *The APSAC handbook on child maltreatment*, 3, 337-360.
- Stewart, H. Katz, C. Rooy, L. J. (2011). Training forensic interviewers. In Lamb, E. M. Rooy, L. J. D. Malloy, C. L. Katz, C. (Eds.). *Children's Testimony: A Handbook of Psychological Research and Forensic Practice* (pp.199-216. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Towl, J.G., Farrington, P.D. & Hughes, G. (2008). *Dictionary of forensic psychology*. Willan Pub.
- Trabzon Barosu Çocuk Hakları Komisyonu Raporu. (2015). Çocuk izlem merkezleri. Erişim adresi: <https://www.trabzonbarosu.org.tr/Detay.aspx?ID=63434> Erişim tarihi:17.05.2024
- Türk, T. (2017). Cinsel istismar mağduru çocuk ile yapılan adli görüşmelerin adli görüşme teknikleri açısından incelenmesi. Yayınlanmamış YL Tezi. İstanbul.
- Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK). (2023). Güvenlik birimine gelen veya getirilen çocuk istatistikleri-2022. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Güvenlik-Birimine-Gelen-veya-Getirilen-Cocuk-Istatistikleri-2022-49662> Erişim tarihi:18.12.2023.
- Tyler, A.K., Cauce, A.M. (2002). Perpetrators of early physical and sexual abuse among homeless and runaway adolescents. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 26(12), 1261-1274.
- Üstün-Güllü, B., & Erden, G. (2022). Cinsel istismar mağduru çocuklarla adli görüşme ve önemi. *Ayna Klinik Psikoloji Dergisi*, 9(2), 317-331.
- Yemişçigil, A. (2019). Çocuk ve iletişim. In Polat, O. (Ed). *Tüm Boyutlarıyla Çocuk İstismarı – 2*. (57-66). Seçkin yayınları.
- Ziyalar, N. (2006). Hukukçular için iletişim ve mağdur ile görüşme teknikleri. Goa Yayınları.