

# The Forensic Interviewer and The Crisis Worker

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## Disclaimer

- The information contained in this handout was used in conjunction with a live presentation. These materials outline a portion of that presentation and should not be taken out of context by merely reading them without benefit of that presentation.

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## History of the FAC/CAC



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## Purpose of an Advocacy Center

- Minimize further trauma to victims
- Provide comprehensive victim services
- Thorough investigations
- Successful prosecutions
- Communication!

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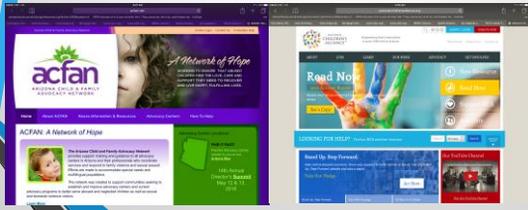
## How Do I Find An Advocacy Center?

ACFAN

<http://acfan.net>

NCA

<http://nationalchildrensalliance.org>



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## Goals & Purpose

- IAC
  - Engage Community Stakeholders in the promotion of victim-centered services
  - Provides a forum for communication regarding protocol and best practice
- MDT
  - Improve joint investigations and collaboration efforts, along with information sharing
  - Provide comprehensive, effective response to reports of abuse and neglect

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## Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)

- Law Enforcement
- Department of Child Safety
- Medical (Forensic Nurse Examiners/Physicians)
- Prosecutors (City and County)
- Crisis Intervention/Victim Advocates
- Forensic Interviewers
- Counselors
- Attorney General
- Adult Protective Services

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## Interagency Council (IAC)

- Education professionals
- Probation
- Mental Health professionals
- GAL (Guardian Ad Litem)

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## Needs of the victim

- To be informed about the process/at the FAC/CAC, and after
- To be included in the process
- To be given choices
- To be comfortable in his/her surroundings
- To know who to contact throughout the process

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## Role of the Forensic Interview and Forensic Interviewer

- Forensic Interview is "jumping off point" of the investigation.
- Forensic Interviewers:
  - Approach the interview from a neutral perspective
  - Obtain factual information from children
  - Investigate if a CRIME has occurred
  - NOT used to determine a child's veracity
  - Used in a legal setting

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## Role of the Crisis Worker

- First point of contact/sets the stage
- Establishing and maintaining rapport
- Liaison between Investigators and child/family
- Support to the victim and his/her family
- Safety and protection throughout the process
- Provide resources
- Provide referrals
- Transportation

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## Overcoming Challenges

- Communication (What does this mean to you?)
  - Briefing/Providing information (which can affect time, misinformation, case disposition/resolution)
- Become familiar with and RESPECT each other's disciplines/roles and expertise
- Educate/Inform victim/family so don't receive contradictory information
- Rapport aids in forensic interview
- Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma managed through self care

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## Burnout

- Demands placed on an individual exceeds his/her available resources
- Related to stressful working conditions that leave you with feelings of frustration and powerlessness.
- The consequences of the challenging **work conditions**, NOT the difficult material, that precipitates burnout.
- How have you experienced it or seen it in colleagues?

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## Compassion Fatigue

- Used interchangeably with Vicarious Trauma
- Described as the "cost of caring" for others in emotional pain. (Figley, 1982).
- Regularly hear very difficult and traumatic stories, you begin to lose your ability to feel empathy for your clients, loved ones and co-workers.
- Described as "nothing left to give."

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## Vicarious Trauma

- Parallels to burnout include symptoms such as exhaustion, feeling overwhelmed, isolated and disconnected.
- Relationship of the person suffering from VT to the world around them becomes altered.
- We accumulate and carry the stories of trauma-including images, sounds, and details-we have heard, which then come to inform our worldview.

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## Self Care

- The proactive strategies that professionals use to offset the negative aspects of working with trauma victims and promote their own wellbeing.
- Mother Teresa wrote in her plan to her Superiors that it was MANDATORY for her nuns to take an entire year off from their duties every 4-5 years to allow them to heal from the effects of their care-giving work.

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## Self-Care Wheel

- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Personal
- Professional

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## Communication Components

- Inform the professionals involved of when the interview is taking place
- Better investigation
- Enhanced forensic interview
- Identify needs of the victim
- Resources
- Referrals

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## Key Elements for Successful Teamwork

- Rapport
- Trust
- Respect
- Team Building



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## Questions

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