

## THE CHILD PROTECTION TEAM AT MARY LEE'S HOUSE

### WILL MY CHILD NEED A MEDICAL EXAM?

The Detective and the other professionals present for the interview will decide if your child needs a medical exam at the Child Protection Team (CPT). If one is needed, the Detective will contact the CPT to set up an appointment, which may be able to occur immediately after your child's interview. Please plan for this possibility accordingly. Regarding the exam, you might tell your child, "We are going to see a nurse who takes care of kids. The nurse is not going to hurt you. She just needs to make sure your body is okay."



### CAN I TALK TO MY CHILD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM OR HER?

No, not unless your child brings up the subject and wants to talk about it. In that case, listen to your child without commenting or questioning. Be sure to reassure your child that he/she will be alright. Please consider the therapy referrals that will be provided to you by your Child Protective Investigator or CAC Child Advocate to assist your child in dealing with what happened.



2806 North Armenia Avenue  
Tampa, Florida 33607

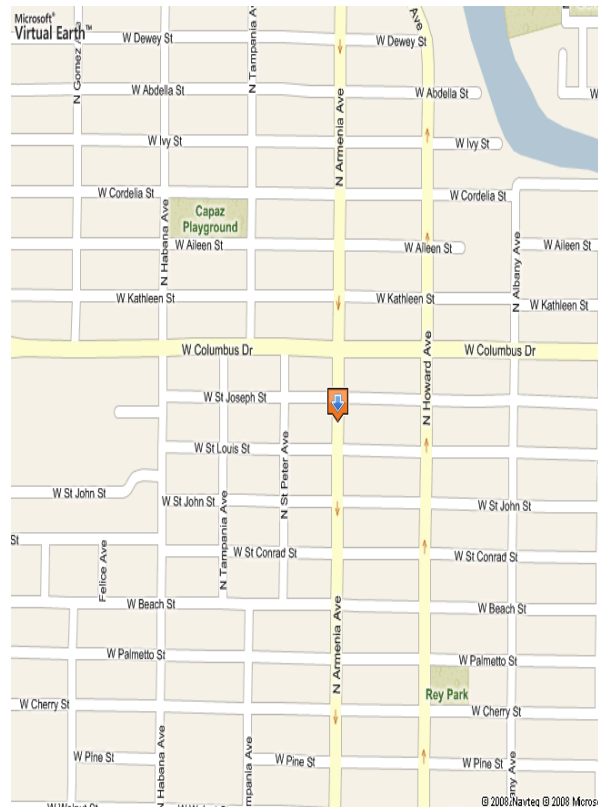
Phone: 813-272-KIDS(5437)

Fax: 813-301-3888

Website: [www.fljud13.org](http://www.fljud13.org)

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Time: \_\_\_\_\_



# What do I tell my child about the



## A Parent's Guide to Talking With Their Child About a Forensic Interview

Funded by the  
Administrative Office of the  
Courts and the  
Florida Network of  
Children's Advocacy Centers

# CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

## THE FORENSIC INTERVIEW AND THE INVESTIGATION

### WHAT HAPPENS AT THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER?

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) at Mary Lee's House is a child friendly interview center located in Tampa, Florida. Children of all ages come to the CAC to talk with specially trained interviewers about allegations of child abuse. The CAC process involves a team of professionals from multiple agencies such as law enforcement, social services, state attorneys, etc. When you and your child arrive, you will wait in our main lobby on the first floor. This lobby has a TV, books and toys. The Interview Room where your child will be interviewed is designed to make your child feel comfortable. This room has two small video cameras and microphones to record the interview. Meanwhile, professionals involved specifically in your child's case can watch the interview from a separate room using the video cameras.



### WHAT DO I TELL MY CHILD ABOUT THE CAC INTERVIEW?

You can tell your child, "You and I are going to the Children's Advocacy Center. It is a special place where kids go to talk. There will be a person there who talks to lots of kids about lots of things and that person will talk to you too." You might also consider telling your child, "That person will need to know everything that you remember so that we can make sure you are safe. It is important that you tell the truth and only talk about things that really happened." It is important for you to tell your child, "You are not in any trouble."



### WHO WILL MY CHILD TALK TO?

Your child will talk to a "Forensic Interviewer." This person has special training and experience in talking with children about difficult subjects. The Interviewer's goal is to make your child as comfortable as possible while gathering necessary information for an investigation. Questions are asked in a non-leading and non-threatening manner. The Interviewer moves at a pace that is comfortable with your child and never forces a child to talk to them.

### CAN I WATCH THE INTERVIEW?

No, only those people who are directly involved in the investigation are allowed to observe the interview. This is done for two reasons. The first is to create a neutral setting to reduce the possible stress that can be placed on a child. The second is to avoid any influence the child's statements may have on your own knowledge of the alleged crime as you may or may not have been a witness to the incident(s). This may come into question during the prosecution phase of the case. Please consider bringing a support person with you to wait with you during the interview. This person could then wait with the child when you have your opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with the Detective and the other professionals that were present for your child's interview.



### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INTERVIEW?

You will be asked to talk with the Detective and the other professionals who watched the interview. They will tell you in general terms what they learned from the interview. You will have an opportunity to ask questions and voice your concerns. The Detective will send his report to the State Attorneys office who will decide whether or not to prosecute.