

What equipment will be used during the examination?

A stethoscope will be used to listen to the heart, lungs, and abdomen. To enable the provider to examine genital areas, a colposcope may be used.

A special camera, a colposcope, may be used to examine the genital area as part of the exam. The colposcope does not touch the child, but may be used to obtain photographs for the confidential medical record. Special lab tests known as cultures may be obtained if your provider feels it is necessary. Cultures are obtained by using a very small sterile swab to take samples from areas such as the vagina, anus, penis, and mouth.

What is a colposcope?

The device looks like a microscope on wheels and allows the provider to better examine the genital area with its bright light and magnification lens. Remember, this is NOT a pelvic examination and the colposcope does not touch your child's body. Any photographs that may be taken are part of the confidential medical record.

Will my child be checked for diseases?

Testing for diseases is done if the healthcare provider feels it is necessary to protect the child. Testing for some diseases is done with swabs for laboratory cultures while other tests may require blood or urine samples. The nurse or provider will explain any testing procedure to you and your child.

Will I be told the results of the examination?

The healthcare provider will talk to you after the examination. If there are any areas of concern, your child will be treated accordingly and will be referred back to his or her regular care provider. Your child may be referred for mental health counseling as well.

Who will receive information about my child's examination?

Like all medical records, the information we obtain is subject to a court's subpoena. If Law Enforcement or Child Protective Services referred the case, then those agencies will receive a copy of the report. If your child is referred for further care, that physician will have access to the findings.

COUNSELING

How do I know if my child needs therapy?

If your child displays any of the signs and symptoms of traumatic stress or if you have any concerns about your child, then you should take him or her for an evaluation. A therapist who has experience working with children who've been abused can help you determine whether your child needs help. Some children will not need help at all, but many will need some help. Some children may just need a therapist to provide information so they can understand more about what happened to them.

What do you look for in an evaluation?

When children are evaluated the provider will look for symptoms of traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety. He or she will also try to find out if they have any unrealistic beliefs or ideas about the event. It is common for children to blame themselves or to feel that they could have prevented it. It is important to explore these distorted ideas because they can continue to cause problems in a child's life. The provider will also evaluate for any signs of difficulty in school, social, or family life due to the abuse.

Who should I take my child to?

During your visit at the Lincoln County Child Advocacy Center, the Victim Advocate will gather information through a screening which will help to decide which therapist will best fit your child's needs. The Victim Advocate can give you a referral and information regarding therapists in our area.



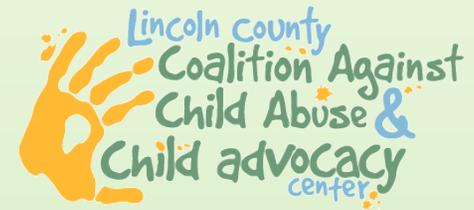
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What do I tell my Child?

*Answers to your questions
about the Child Advocacy
Center and our services*

Lincoln County Child
Advocacy Center
161 Policarp Street
PO Box 652
Lincolnton, NC
704-736-1155

www.cac-lincolncounty.org

Forensic Interview

What happens at the interview?

Specially trained interviewers conduct the interview. Members of law enforcement and Child Protective Services observe the interview so that the child will not have to undergo multiple interviews related to the possible abuse. Information obtained in the interview session may be shared with the healthcare provider to assure your child's best possible care.

Why is my child being interviewed?

The interview is a fact-gathering process to assist Law Enforcement and Child Protective Services in the least stressful way possible. This interview is also a valuable opportunity for the child to give his or her own account of what happened.

What type of questions will be asked?

The child will be asked open-ended, non-leading questions that are appropriate for his or her developmental age and abilities.

May I be present at the interview?

It is the policy of the center to interview your child alone. You can have an opportunity to see the interview room before your child enters, and you will have a chance to speak to someone about the interview after it has ended.

Will the interview be recorded?

All interviews are recorded for the benefit of your child and his or her safety.

Who will receive the report of my child's interview?

The copy of interview summary is given to all agencies involved in the investigation of the case.

Will my child be interviewed more than once?

It is our goal that the number of interviews be as few as possible for each child. If more than one interview is needed, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Advocacy

What is an advocate?

An advocate is someone who will provide information and resources and support to help you through the investigation and prosecution process.

Who will be my advocate?

The Lincoln County Child Advocacy Center is staffed with a Victim and Family Advocate. When your case is referred to the CAC, you and your child will be assigned to a Victim and Family Advocate that will be in touch to set up appointment times, relay information from other agencies involved in your case, and serve as the connector for other resources in the community.

Will I get to meet my Advocate during my visit?

Yes. Upon your arrival to the Child Advocacy Center, you will be greeted at the door by either the Victim Advocate or another member of the CAC Staff.

What will my advocate do during the visit?

Your advocate will greet you, make sure you are comfortable, and walk you through the paperwork process. She will also describe the interview process and answer any questions you may have.

Will the Advocate sit with me during the Forensic Interview?

All interviews are recorded for the benefit of your child and his or her safety. The child is made aware of the cameras before each interview.

Who will receive the report of my child's interview?

The copy of interview summary is part of the medical record and is treated in the same manner as the exam report.

Will my child be interviewed more than once?

It is our goal that the number of interviews be as few as possible for each child. If more than one interview is needed, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Medical

Will my child need a medical exam at the CAC?

Children are referred to the Child Advocacy Center to determine if there are signs of physical or sexual abuse and to prescribe treatment if necessary. The investigative team members will decide if your child needs a medical exam. If it determined that a medical is necessary, there will be no charge to the family.

Who will attend this exam?

The Victim Advocate will attend this exam with you and your child. The exam may take place at a doctor's office, the hospital, or at the CAC's in-house medical room.

Who will examine my child?

According to National Children's Alliance requirements, your child will be examined by a healthcare provider that has specific training in child sexual abuse that meets training standards.

What will happen during the exam?

Your child may receive a complete head-to-to physical exam. A parent or guardian is welcome in the exam room if the child desires, and the provider and assistant will explain all equipment used. Copies of the medical evaluation will be sent to the law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services agency that is involved.

Will my child be frightened by the exam?

The people who care for your child have special training in talking with children of all ages and will explain all equipment and procedures to assure the child's comfort and safety.

Continued on next page