

Prevention

Education is the best form of prevention. Parents should not only talk to their children about not talking to strangers but also teach them that people they trust, such as family members, family friends, or acquaintances could also harm them. It is not uncommon for children of sexual abuse to be assaulted by a known person.

1. Teach your child that they own their body and that no one should ever touch them inappropriately.
2. Explain to your child that even if its someone they know, if their touch makes them feel uncomfortable, they can say NO.
3. Reassure your child that they can come to you and tell you openly if something has happened to them regardless of who the person is. Take their concerns seriously.
4. Do not teach your child to have harmful secrets about you or the family.
 5. Assist your child with protecting their online accounts by limiting who can view their information.
 6. Tell your child to report any inappropriate sexual images they see or receive online.
7. Show interest in your child's day-to-day life, get to know the people in their life.
8. Teach your child about boundaries, and how to talk about their bodies.

Support Service

Victim Services Center
812 W. Yosemite Ave., Suite 101
Madera, CA 93637
(559) 661-1000

24-Hour Crisis Line
1-800-355-8989

Advocacy | Crisis Intervention | Victim Compensation
Claims | Victim Impact Statemen | Court Accompaniment

Law Enforcement Agency | Case Number

Detective's Name | Phone Number



The Madera County Child Advocacy Center (CAC) provides a centralized victim-centered hub for the CFIT to deliver direct services onsite during the child and family's initial visit to the CAC and thereafter. Direct services include providing support, advocacy, medical, mental health services, referrals, investigative guidance, and facilitation of continuation of care. The services provided are free, comprehensive, and designed to meet the unique needs of each child and family.

"Working together to improve the life of a child."



Child Forensic Interview Team (CFIT)



Madera County Child Advocacy Center

1225 Gill Avenue, Madera, CA 93637
559.416.5695



Backed by
National Children's Alliance
Accredited Member

MISSION STATEMENT

The Child Forensic Interview Team (CFIT) exists to reduce the ongoing trauma for children who are victims of child abuse.

GOALS

The goals of the CFIT are to:

1. Reduce the number of interviews to which the child is subjected to;
2. Minimize the number of persons who interview the child;
3. Improve the quality and quantity of information obtained in the interview;
4. Shorten the time period between investigation and legal disposition of child sexual abuse cases;
5. Provide immediate intervention for the purpose of protection, support services, and referrals for the child and family.



IMPORTANT

If your child's primary language is something other than English or if they have an intellectual or physical disability please inform the detective so that your child's needs can be met to the best of our ability.

WHAT IS A CHILD FORENSIC INTERVIEW?

The goal of a forensic interview is to obtain a statement from the child victim and/or witness, in a developmentally sensitive, unbiased and fact-finding manner, that will support accurate and fair decision-making in the criminal justice process and child welfare system by coordinating one interview to reduce the trauma experienced by recalling the events.

WHAT DO I TELL MY CHILD ABOUT THIS APPOINTMENT?

You may tell your child, "You and I are going to the Madera County Child Advocacy Center (CAC); it is a child friendly and safe place where kids share their story. You are not in any trouble but it is very important that you speak only the truth."

WHO IS PRESENT AT THE CAC DURING A CHILD FORENSIC INTERVIEW?

Multidisciplinary team (MDT) members present at the Madera County CAC are the Detective, Deputy District Attorney, Child Protective Services Social Worker, Victim Advocate, Certified Forensic Interviewer, and CAC personnel. All of these professionals are sensitive to the difficult time that you and your child are experiencing. The Detective and Deputy District Attorney will determine if a crime has been committed and what other investigative steps must be taken. The CPS Social Worker must assess the safety and protection of your child. The Victim Advocate will provide support and guidance from first contact and thereafter. The CAC personnel will provide support to the team, host you and your child, and provide information and referral to mental health services. The teams overall goal is to complete the investigation in a child friendly, timely, and professional manner.

WHO WILL MY CHILD TALK TO?

Your child will talk to a certified forensic interviewer who has special training and experience in interviewing child victims of abuse. The interviewer moves at a comfortable pace and never forces a child to talk to them.

CAN I BE PRESENT WITH MY CHILD OR THE TEAM DURING THE INTERVIEW?

It is important for the interviewer to talk with your child alone. If something abusive happened to your child, it might be difficult for them to talk about this in front of you. MDT members have the responsibility of observing, assessing, and investigating the allegations. Their focus must be on your child. Therefore, you are not allowed to observe the interview and are encouraged to bring a support person or speak to the victim advocate while the interview is taking place.

WILL I BE ABLE TO HAVE A COPY OF THE DVD ?

Digital recording investigative interviews is a tool which provides accurate and thorough documentation of what occurs during the interview. The DVD is the property of the Madera County District Attorney's Office and can only be released by court order.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW?

After the interview, the detective will inform you about what will happen next. The MDT members will check-in with you regarding any questions you may have.