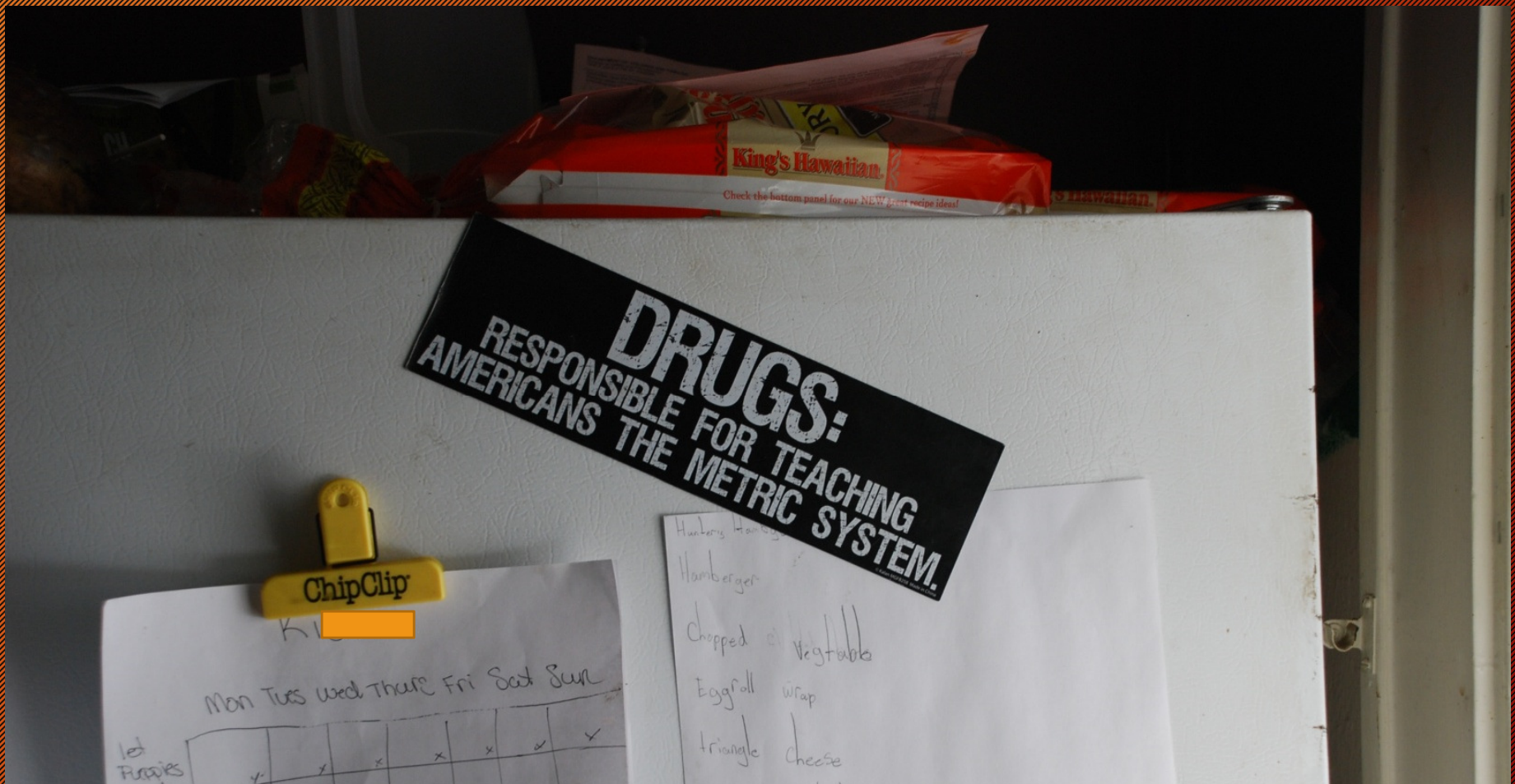


Drug Endangered Children - Forensic Interview and Scene Corroboration



CAC and DEC Collaboration

- Child Advocacy Center: A child-friendly, facility based program utilizing a multidisciplinary team approach to child abuse investigations.
- CAC and DEC a natural fit:
 - Child focused
 - Reduce trauma
 - Maximize evidence collection
 - Assess health and safety
 - Recognition of children as victims of crime - not just as present at crime scene



Why CAC vs Field Interview?

- Neutral interview with interviewer trained in talking to children
- Video recorded and documented for potential trial/evidentiary purposes
- Children's natural reluctance to talk about home life
- The unique issue of DEC Children's view of law enforcement
 - These children grow up surrounded by people who have a dislike of authority and teach them that the police are bad and not to talk to them

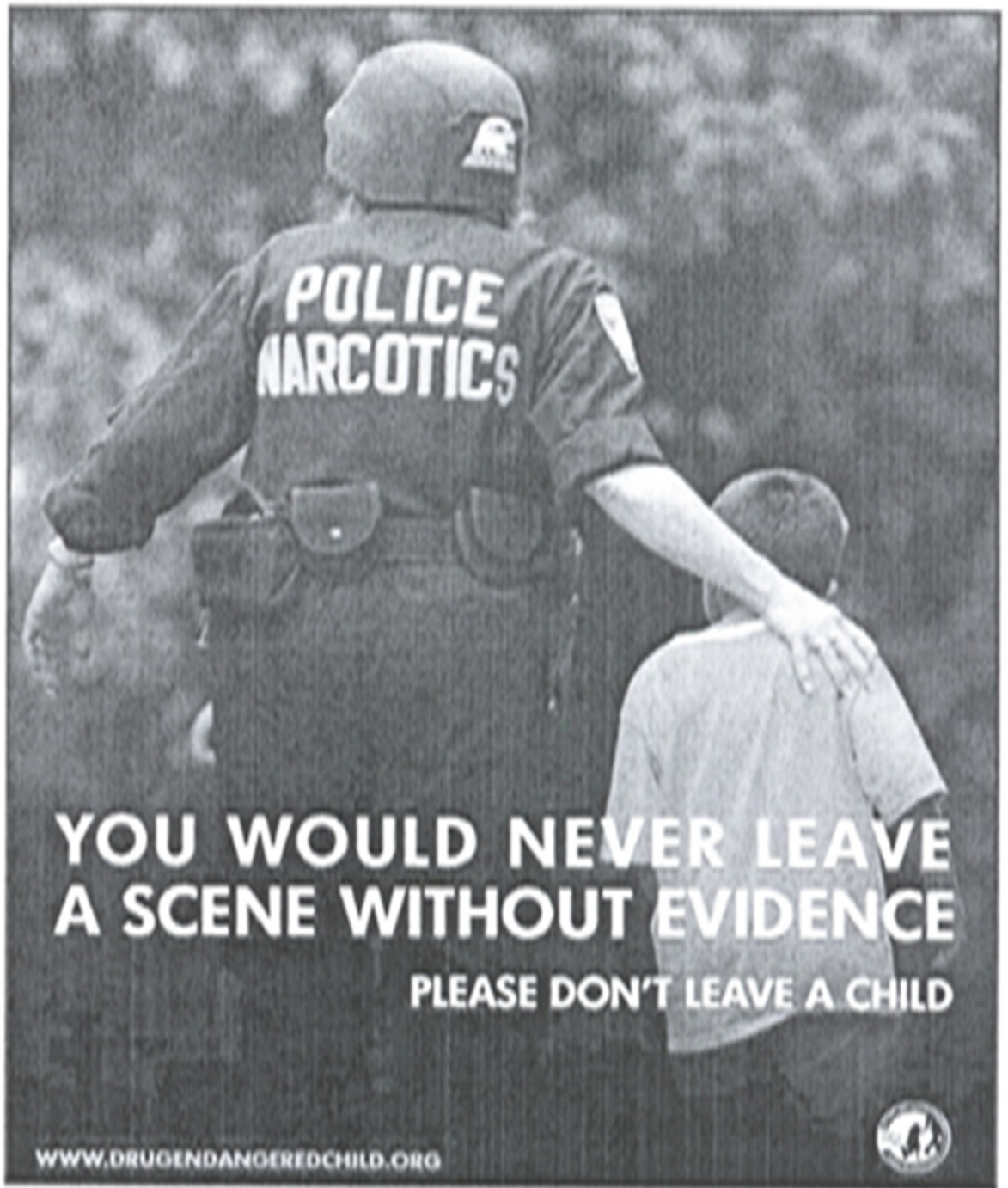


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Golden Rule



In other words...

- Those removed children “contain” evidence if you will..they have information that will help your case, criminal and child protection, to keep them safe
- Those children know A LOT about what’s going on in their homes, a lot more than their parents think or acknowledge



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Preparing for the child interview...

Share your toys

- Facts of the case
- Details of arrest
- Reports
- Photos

And play nice in the sandbox

- Team decision on what needed
- Team decision on introduction of evidence

Goals of an Effective Interview Remain the Same

- Minimize trauma for the child
- Minimize contamination
- Maintain the integrity of the investigative process
- Maximize information obtained



Forensic Interview: Stepwise Guidelines

- Introduction
- Rapport
- Rules
- Disclosure/Topic of Concern
- Clarification
- Closure



How interview phases
may differ with

Drug Endangered
Children



Remember...

Tell me about breathing...



No Two Are Alike

Introduction

- Camera
- Multidisciplinary Team Viewing
- Note Taking
- Introduction of Interviewer



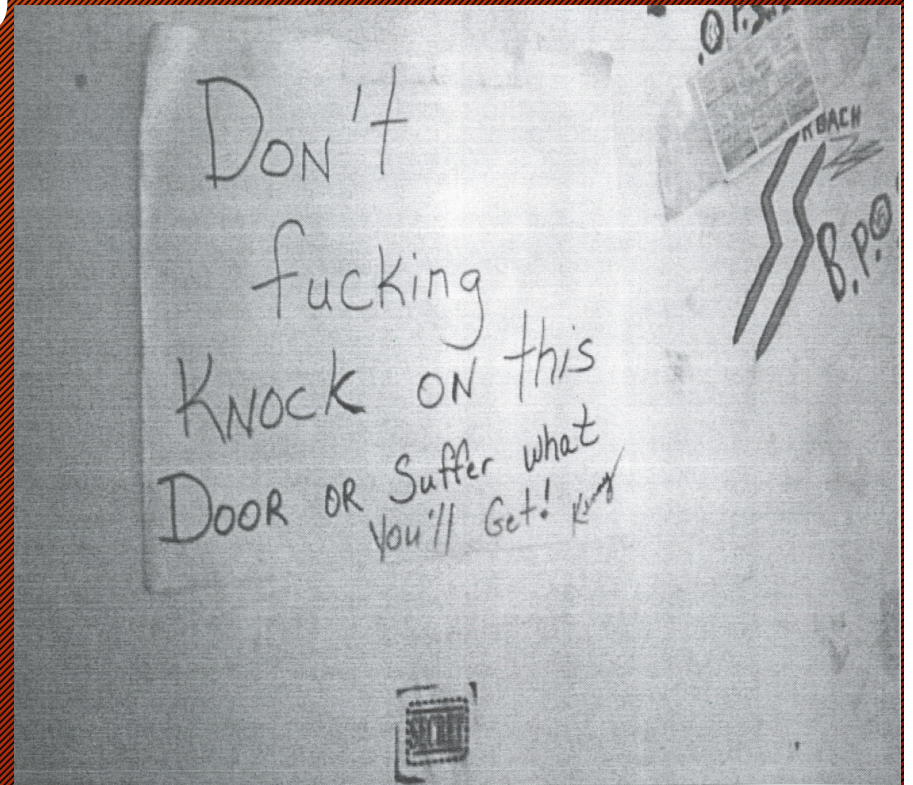
Rapport

- Comfort of Child
- Length
- Tell me about yourself...who???
- Do I need an Interpreter
- Rehearsal for disclosure phase



Rules

- Don't Know + BUT IF YOU DO
- Correct Me
- Concept of Truth vs. Lie
- Reassurance



Intro to Topic

- Tell me why you are here today...
 - Problems/Troubles...of family
 - Worried about
 - Contact with Law Enforcement
-
- Back to Basics: Daily routines, sensory



Back to Basics: Get description of 'typical' day

- How get up: when, bathing, teeth, get to school
- Meals: prep, content, bottles/formulas
- Clothes: location
- Rules: rooms, not touch, weapons
- Medications: who, what, location
- Play: any, area, toys kept
- Elec. & Heat: borrowed, cords, ovens
- Sleeping: caregiver patterns, child routine, waking, where
- Sibs and Pets: who cares for, bathroom, caging

Base questions on information obtained in narrative

Use Your Senses

- Sight: See with your eyes, birds eye, what I see
- Sound: Use, discussions before/after use, speech patterns
- Smell: Use, room, clothes, different locations
- Touch: Feel with your hands, feet, eyes, skin
- Taste: Comparison of foods, ingestion
- Emotions: How do you feel when __, what does _ make your body feel like

Who's on First?

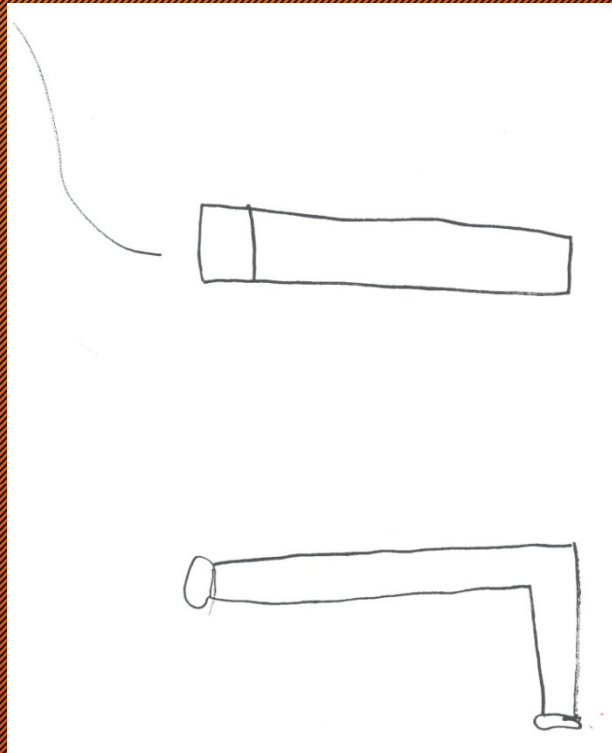
Trafficking through a child's eyes

- Who comes to visit
 - Description, when, purpose, transportation, sensory
- Money
 - Where kept, bills, child's money
- Delivery or carry out
 - Child running items/money or picking up



Interview Aids

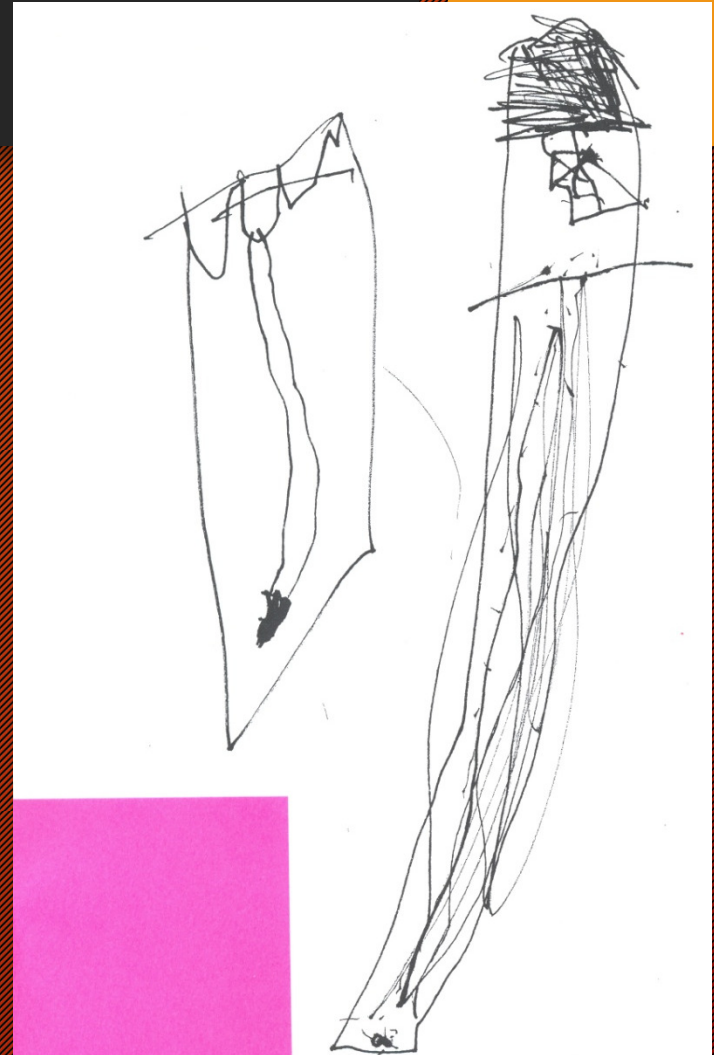
- Mapping



8yo, difference
in cigarettes



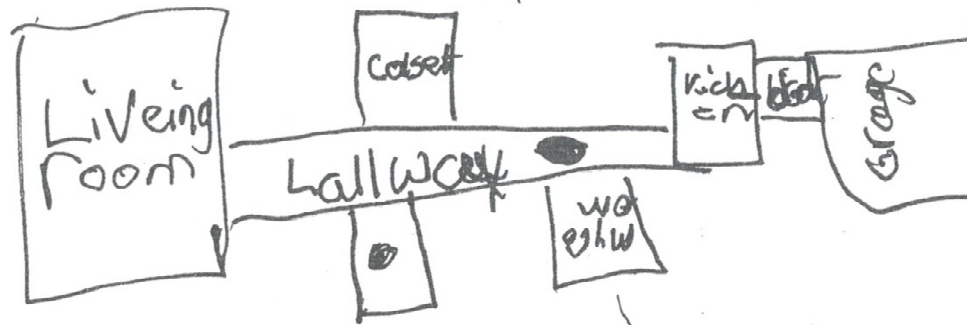
9yo, “powder
piles” and
“straws”



Children are much more aware of what goes on within their home than their parents believe...



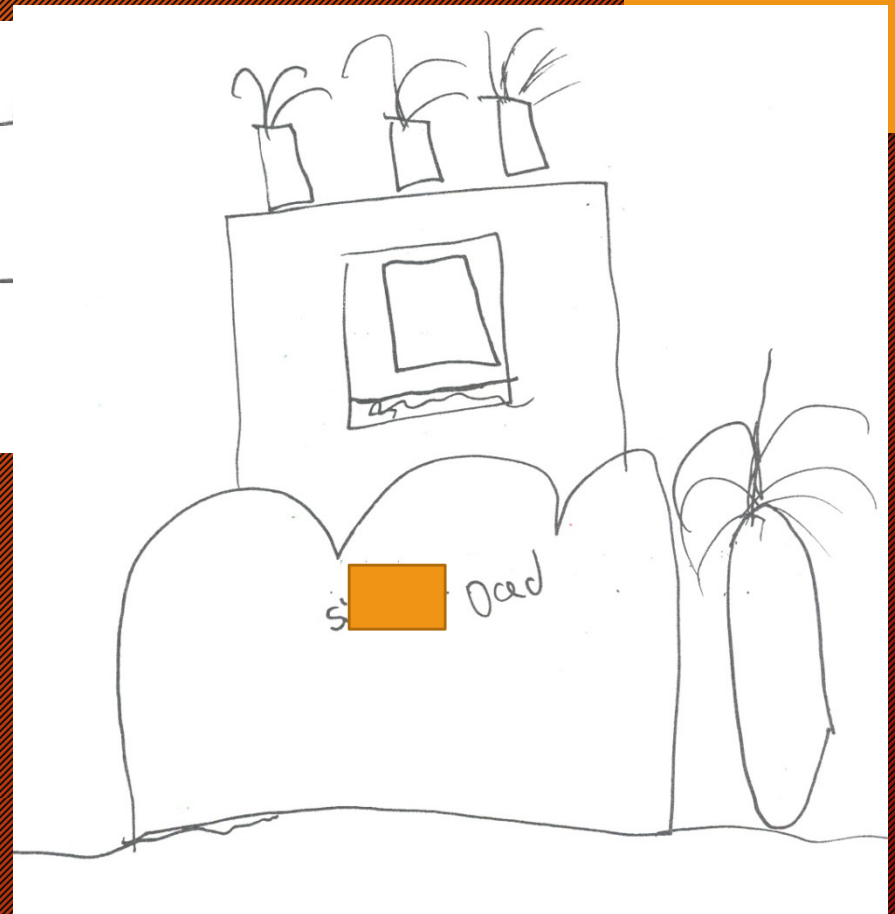
7 year old

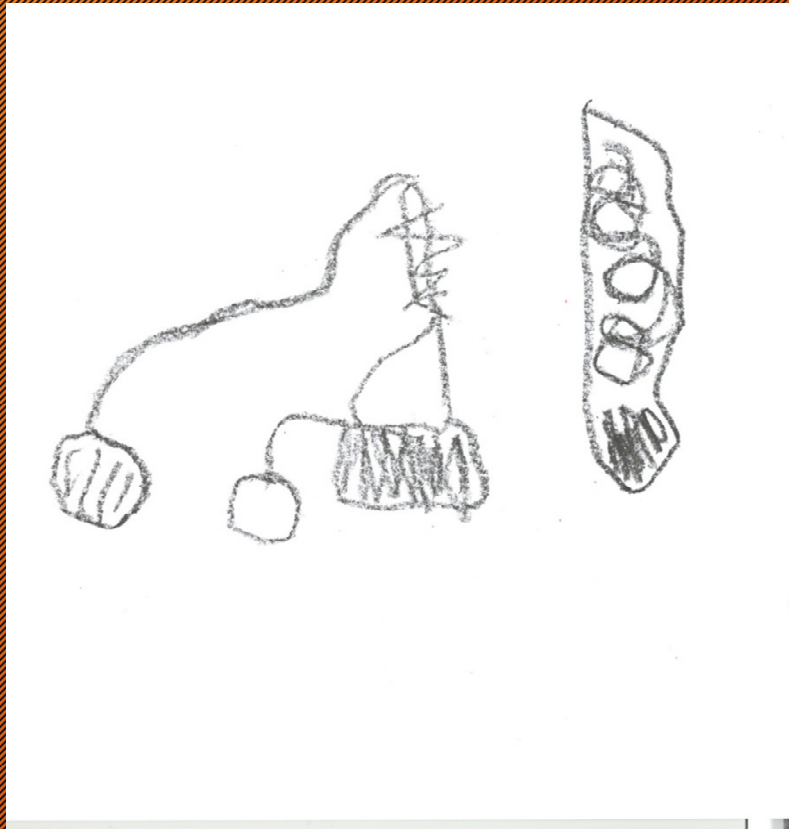


10 yo mapping

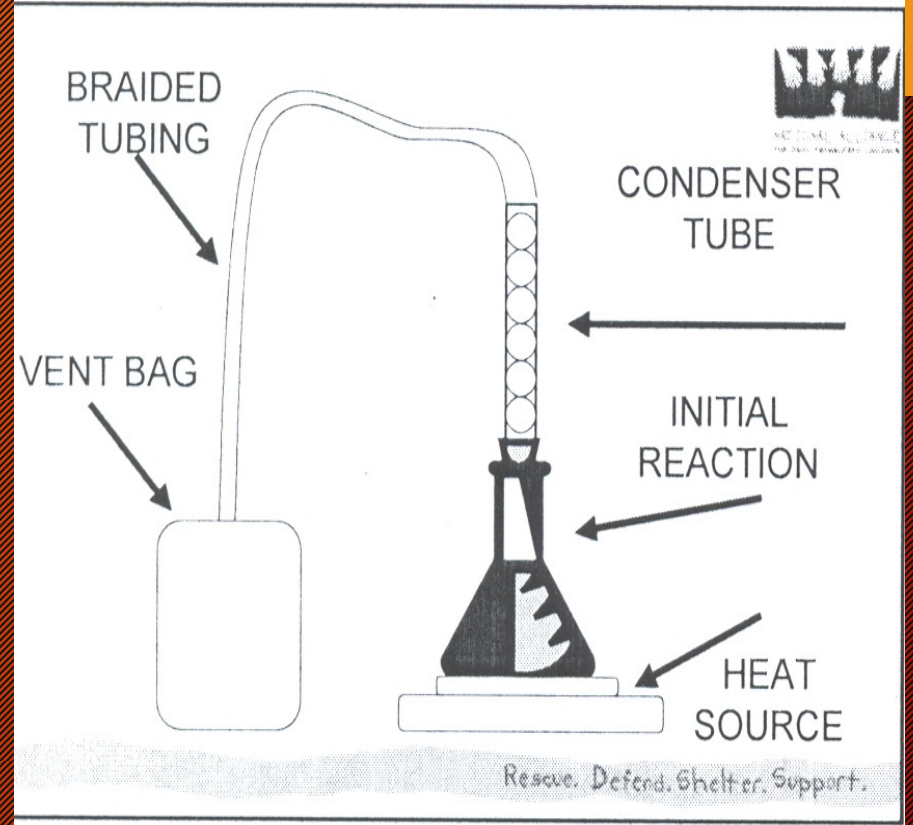
According to dad "she didn't even know the closet existed"

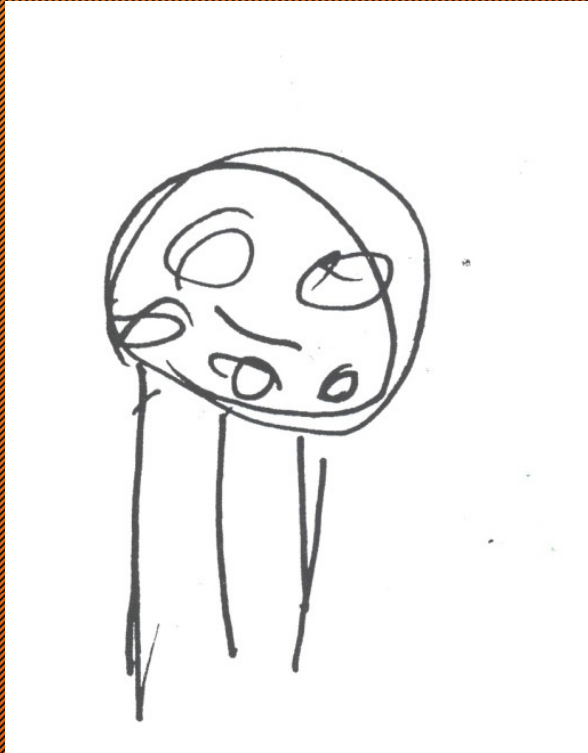
Goes on to draw herself and dad (apparent horticulturist) on the couch in the closet





4 year old
"scribbling"

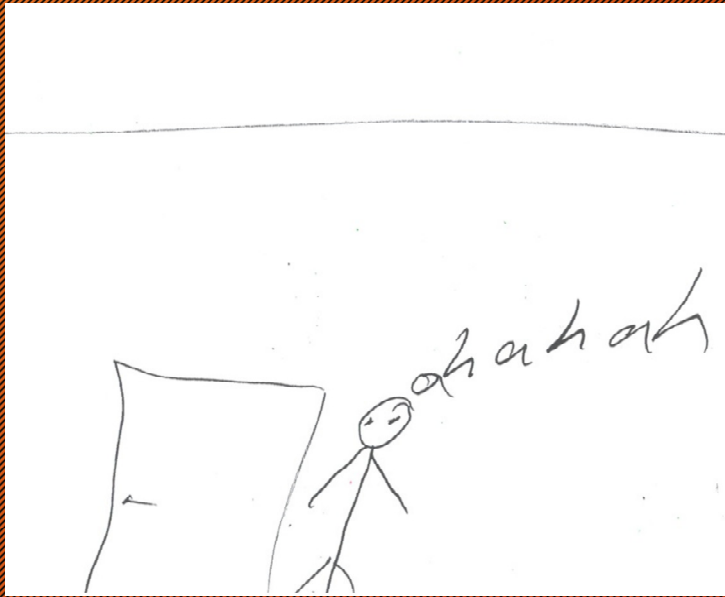




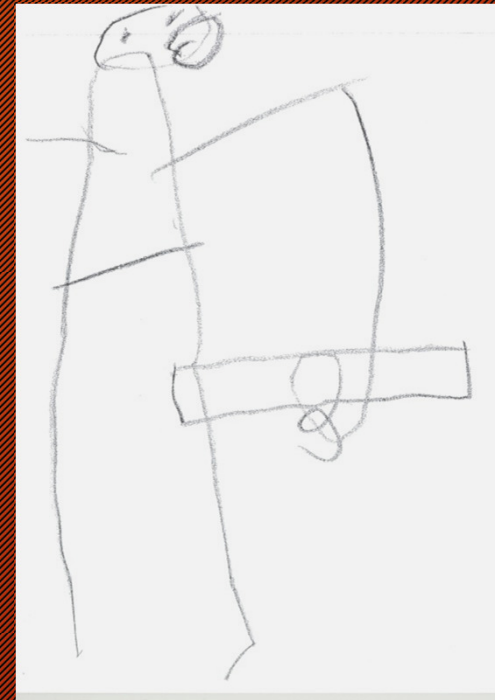
5 year old
Smiling jelly fish?
Or...



Sensory Questioning, Drawing, Risk



8 year old



6 year old

Closing the Interview

- How do you feel talking about this today?
- What would you change about your house?
- Worried/scared of anything
- What do you want to happen?
- Back out gracefully; close with a neutral topic



Interview is NOT ...

- An opportunity for education
 - Proud of skills, love their parents and 20 “auntie’s”
- An interrogation
- For making promises we don’t know we can keep
 - Will my mom go to jail? When can I go home?
- Always a one-time occurrence

Medical Follow Up

- A medical examination can be conducted by pediatrician with special knowledge of risks of drug environments
- Drug testing should be completed if there is any reason to believe a child has ingested drugs
- Well Child Examination should be completed to ensure child is developing normally, both physically and mentally

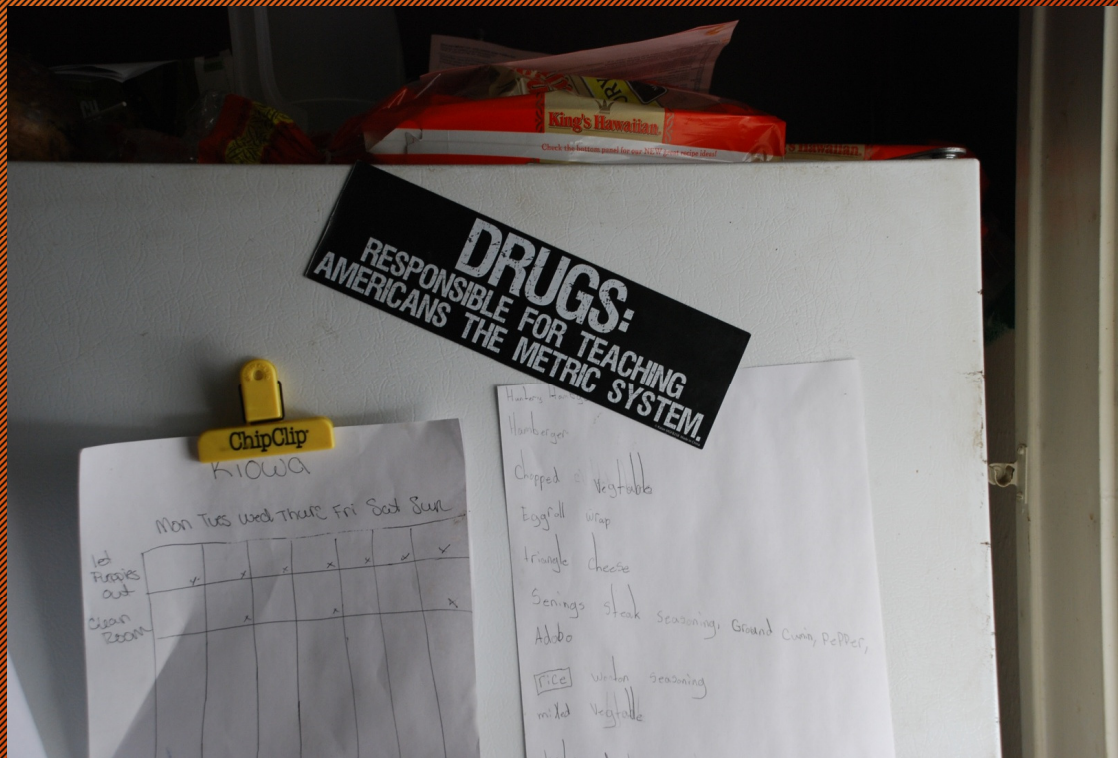


Case Examples

The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe

- Background Information
 - Social Services calls for assistance in investigating a possible sexual assault between siblings. Social Services also told that the siblings in the home are used to help care for several marijuana plants in the basement.
 - Myself (in plain clothes) and a Social Worker respond to the residence.
 - Based on the odor of marijuana, a search warrant is drafted and executed the next morning.

Marijuana grow located in basement



















Outcome of search warrant

- All the children are removed from the home, and placed in foster care.
- All the children are interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center
- During a forensic interview Dakota talks at length about the marijuana grow operation - provides details about helping move plants

What did we need to learn from Dakota during his interview?

- Who comes and goes from the house?
 - May help establish selling activity
- Are there places in the house you're not allowed to go?
- Is there anything you're not supposed to talk about?
- If necessary...ask directly about any plants in the house
 - Who takes care of the plants?
 - What happens with the plants?
 - What kind of plants are they?



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What did we learn from Dakota?

- Again...Children are a wealth of information...they know more than even their parents realize
- Some children don't require specific questions, each child is different. Dakotah offered a very free flowing script, where other children may need more encouragement
- Could a medical exam have been conducted on all the children to ensure they had not ingested any marijuana or suffered any side effects from the marijuana grow in the basement?

Heroin Overdose Investigation

- On 3/11/2013 Officers and Med Units respond to a report of a deceased male at a residence
- Investigation reveals the 30 year old male was found deceased by his 6 year old daughter
- Interviews with male's girlfriend reveals they had recently begun using heroin after a period of sobriety
- Girlfriend admits purchasing heroin for them to share the evening before. She saved his portion for him to use when he got home from work the following day











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Heroin Overdose, Ongoing Investigation

- Girlfriend cooperates and provides details about the male who delivered the heroin
- Children are removed from the home and placed with maternal grandparents
- As the investigation develops, it becomes imperative that 6 year old Ayva provide information about what happened when she arrived at home with her dad (the deceased)
- She is the only witness to events leading up to her dad's death

A Forensic Interview is conducted with Ayva to establish a timeline

- What we need from Ayva, and what is discussed with Interviewer prior to interview
 - What did she and dad do when he picked her up?
 - Did dad talk on the phone with anybody else?
 - Did anybody else come over?
 - Did anyone make any attempts to clean up or change scene prior to police/ambulance arrival?
 - Did she have any knowledge of drug use within the home?



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What we learned from Ayva

- Ayva established a timeline in the best way she knows how
 - By the TV shows she watched when she got home
 - She was able to articulate that Dad was upstairs alone for 2 hours while mom slept
- Ayva established that her dad did not speak with or meet up with anyone else during those two hours
- Ayva had no direct knowledge of drug use within the home, but still offered powerful and important details

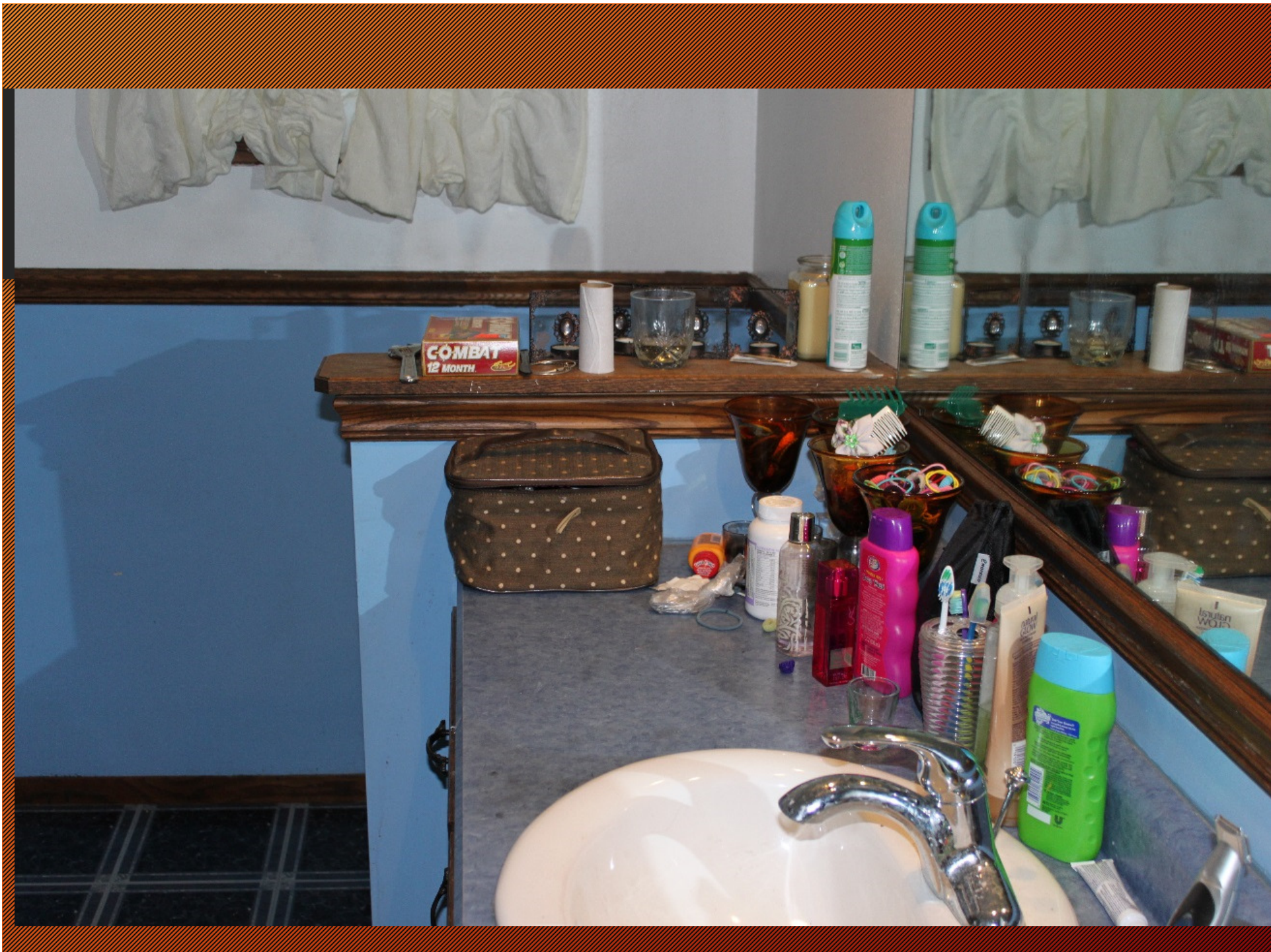
Witness to Armed Robbery



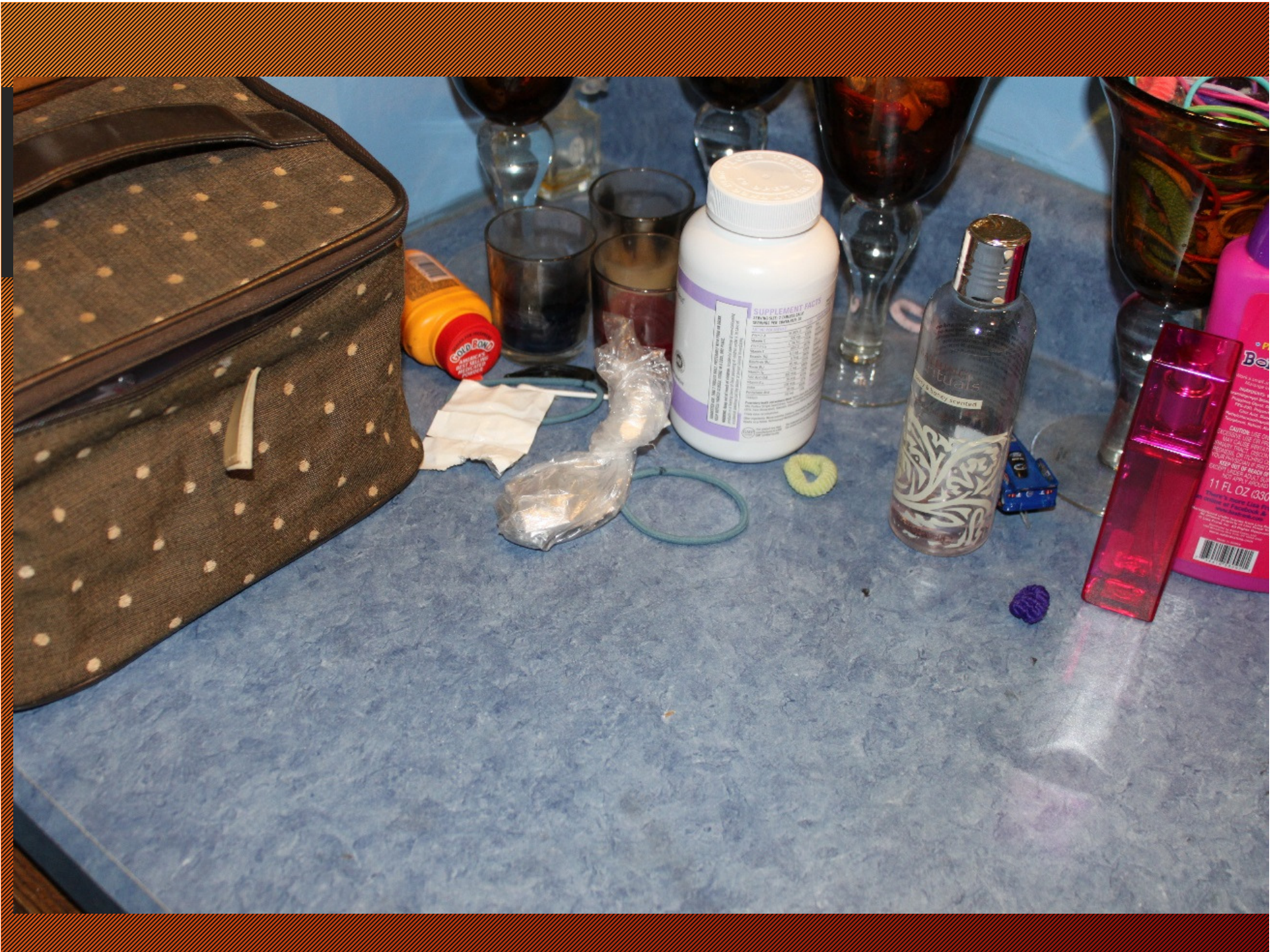


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Overview

- Don't forget the interview of a crucial witness
- Develop a plan with your team about what you hope to gain from the interview. What do you want to learn?
- Share information with your interviewer
- Remember no two children are alike
- You may not always be successful, but it's important to try, for your case, and for the ongoing safety of children involved



“The Team approach has become a valuable model of intervention for children and families endangered by the devastating intergenerational cycle of alcohol and drug abuse of all kinds...No one must add to the trauma and suffering these children have endured, and, more important, no one must fail to respond to their needs.”

~FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin

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