



Narrative Practice in Forensic Interviews of Children

A Bibliography

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Scope

The bibliography lists publications that cover topics related to narrative practice in the child forensic interview.

Organization

Publications include articles, book chapters, reports, and research briefs and are arranged in date descending order. Links are provided to full text publications when possible. However, this collection may not be complete. More information can be obtained in the Child Abuse Library Online.

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Narrative Practice in Forensic Interviews of Children

A Bibliography

Henderson, H. M., Wylie, B. E., & Lyon, T. D. (2025). [The comparative productivity of the birthday narrative in 6- to 11-year-old maltreated children](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 30(2), 221–228. DOI:10.1177/10775595241264279

We asked 111 6- to 11-year-old maltreated children to tell “everything that happened” on their last birthday, the last time they did something they liked to do outside, and yesterday. All children produced details in response to the like to do and yesterday narratives, compared to 98% of children in response to the birthday narrative. Questions about yesterday were more likely to elicit productive responses (93%) than questions about the child’s birthday (90%) or things they liked to do (88%). Older children produced the most details in response to questions about yesterday, and older children’s birthday narratives were more productive than those about favorite activities. Narratives about children’s birthday and yesterday produced comparable percentages of negative details (15%), whereas 32% of children mentioned something negative when discussing a favorite activity. The results suggest that although children find yesterday easier to recall than their last birthday, the birthday narrative is a productive tool for encouraging children to practice recalling more remote events, preparing them for abuse disclosures.

Johnson, M. S., Grung, R. M., Røed, R. K., Pripp, A. H., & Baugerud, G. A. (2025). [Children’s elaboration of forensically relevant information in response to invitations: A national study of investigative interviews with preschool-aged abuse victims](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 0(0). DOI:10.1177/10775595251328933

This field study investigated the use and efficacy of main and cued invitations in eliciting forensically relevant information from a national sample of forensic interviews conducted with preschool-aged (2- to 6-year-old) alleged victims of abuse. Among 1065 invitations posed by the interviewers, 43 (4%) were classified as main invitations, while 1022 (96%) were identified as cued invitations. Both subtypes of invitations were equally effective in

eliciting event-specific, forensically relevant information from the children. Nearly 70% of main invitations yielded forensically relevant information, compared to 83% for cued invitations. Interviewers typically presented only one invitation before resorting to other prompts, predominantly directive, option-posing, and suggestive questions. The effectiveness of invitations increased significantly when posed later in the interviews, suggesting a decline in children's productive responses as the interview progressed. This study highlights potential barriers to the effective use of invitations and discusses implications for developing tailored training programs for interviewers working with preschool-aged alleged victims.

Lee, S., & Shin, M. (2025). [Effects of the narrative elaboration technique and open-ended rapport on accuracy of children's recall according to age](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1298759. DOI:10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1298759

This study explored the impacts of the narrative elaboration technique (NET) and open-ended rapport building on younger ($n = 30$, ages 5–6) and older ($n = 30$, ages 7–8) children's free recall and suggestibility. Children were randomly assigned to either a NET condition or an open-ended rapport condition after engaging in a photo-taking play session with an experimenter. Then, a novel interviewer asked them about the play session. The effects of the experimental conditions on children's free recall and suggestibility were examined according to children's age groups. Results revealed that open-ended rapport played a more significant positive role in young children's free recall and suggestibility when compared to NET. No significant differences were observed in the effects of NET and open-ended rapport on older children's memory performance. Practical guidance is provided in terms of prioritizing open-ended rapport over NET to maximize young children's spontaneous and accurate recall.

Yi, M. (2025). [Narrative practice in investigative Interviews of individuals with intellectual disability](#). *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 38(3), e70074.
DOI:10.1111/jar.70074

Individuals with intellectual disabilities are amongst the groups most vulnerable to sexual crimes. However, their limited cognitive abilities can make it challenging to obtain detailed statements from victims during investigative interviews. This study examined whether practising answering open-ended questions early in the interview increases the accuracy and abundance of incident-related information provided by individuals with intellectual disability. Forty-eight adults with intellectual disabilities and 32 children without disabilities aged 5–7 were interviewed about a photography event. When practising with open-ended questions, adults with intellectual disability and children without disabilities gave greater detail than those whose practise narrative involved specific questions. Furthermore, both groups provided more information in response to open-ended questions. No effects were observed for inaccurate details. Narrative practices could afford individuals with intellectual disability the opportunity to familiarise themselves with open-ended prompts, enabling them to provide more information during the substantive phase of the interview.

Danby, M. C. (2024). [Five considerations about memory processes for child investigative interviewers](#). *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 18, paad097.
DOI:10.1093/police/paad097

In cases of child abuse, children are required to retrieve details from their memory as accurately as possible. Previous research has shown that children's memory reports can be heavily influenced by an interviewer, but many interviewers do not understand memory processes or know how their practices impact children's memories. While interviewers are commonly recommended to adhere to expert guidelines, the current article aims to explain the memory-related reasons underlying *why* some interview practices are recommended and further aims to dispel some misconceptions about

memory. Five considerations about children's memory are described: (1) the rate that details are forgotten from memory cannot justify rushed interview planning, (2) considerations for eliciting details from different subsystems of long-term memory, (3) how question phrasing impacts children's memory retrieval processes, (4) the inaccuracies caused by the reconstructive nature of memory, and (5) the memory challenges for children reporting multiple incidents of abuse.

Gerryts, D. D., Deck, S. L., & Powell, M. B. (2024). [Expert interviewers' approach to navigating forensic interviews with adolescents who are reluctant to disclose sexual abuse](#). *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 0(0), 1–19.
DOI:10.1080/13218719.2024.2362134

Adolescents are often reluctant to disclose experiences of sexual abuse in forensic interviews. In these situations, there is consensus that interviewers should respond supportively, yet they appear to have considerable difficulty doing so. In the current study, we sought to provide practical guidance on how interviewers can adopt a supportive approach when interviewees are reluctant. Twenty-one expert interviewers were asked how they engage and support adolescents who are reluctant to share information when sexual abuse is suspected. The findings indicate that the expert interviewers approach reluctance by leaning into and exploring the interviewee's perspective, and tailor their response based on an awareness of the unique needs of the interviewee. Several key support strategies were identified to facilitate this approach. The findings of this study provide practical guidance for how interviewers can approach reluctant interviewees, while also generating novel directions for future research.

Kemppainen, H., & Kamotskin, T. (2024). [The construction of a narrative space for children in an institutional interview interaction](#). *Nordic Social Work Research*, 4(3), 332–345. DOI:10.1080/2156857X.2024.2306370

This article examines the space afforded to children's narratives by the phrasing of questions concerning children's experiences of domestic violence. The interview questions were posed in an institutional interactive setting in an aim to investigate the domestic violence experienced by children. The interviews were conducted in nine shelters for victims of domestic violence using the iRiSk interview method. The data includes the recorded interviews of 12 children ($N = 12$) interviewed by a shelter employee. The interviews were found to include questions linguistically constructed around the perspectives of recollection, knowledge and ability. The children primarily reacted to these questioning strategies by applying an answering strategy in which they focused only on the used questioning strategy, therefore limiting their narration. Children may also took the questioning strategy into consideration in their answers before producing their narration, or completely ignored the strategy. Based on the results, the phrasing of these questions constructed in the interaction process set a frame for children's narrative space in two ways. First, they guided children to re-examine their recollection, knowledge and ability instead of providing a narrative of their experiences of domestic violence. Second, the questions that were originally intended as open-ended ended up being closed-ended instead. The results reveal that there are vulnerabilities related to using a method that supports children's narration that may pose a challenge to children's narratives. Professionals should pay attention to any such vulnerable areas when conducting interviews with children.

Wylie, B. E., Henderson, H. M., London, G. M., & Lyon, T. D. (2024). [Forensic interviewers' difficulty with the birthday narrative](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 152, 106752.
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106752

Narrative practice increases children's productivity in forensic interviews, and one recommended topic is the child's last birthday, though interviewers have raised concerns about its productivity. STUDY 1 OBJECTIVE: Study 1 surveyed forensic interviewers' use of and attitudes about the birthday narrative. Participants included 170 forensic interviewers who subscribed to a webinar promoting use of the birthday narrative ($M_{\text{age}} = 43$ years, $SD = 10.2$, 94 % female). Over half (55 %) of interviewers reported that they rarely/never asked about children's birthdays, and non-users were especially likely to view the birthday narrative as never/rarely productive. Although interviewers viewed memory difficulties as more likely to occur with the birthday narrative than other practice topics (the child's likes, the child's day), non-users did not view memory difficulties, reluctance, generic reports, or religious objections as especially problematic. Open-ended responses identified negative experiences with the birthday as an additional concern, and interviewers' recommended wording of the prompts suggested suboptimal questioning strategies. STUDY 2 OBJECTIVE: Study 2 assessed the use of the birthday narrative in forensic interviews. The sample included 350 forensic interviews with 4- to 12-year-old children ($M_{\text{age}} = 8.85$, $SD = 2.59$). Only 4 % of children failed to recall substantive information if interviewers persisted, though another 11 % failed when interviewers stopped persisting. Invitations were more effective than other question types, especially among older children. 21 % of children mentioned a negative detail during their narrative. Interviewers' skepticism about the birthday narrative may be due to suboptimal questioning and sensitivity to occasional failures and negative information.

Briere, J. L., & Marche, T. A. (2023). The comprehensive narrative elaboration technique: Expanding the narrative elaboration technique to increase the quantity and quality of children's autobiographical recall. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 25(4), 751–782.

The Comprehensive Narrative Elaboration Technique (CNET) was designed to pictorially cue multiple components of autobiographical memory (sensory/somatosensory, procedural, contextual, temporal, emotional/affective, cognitive) to increase the quantity and quality of information reported without compromising accuracy or requiring direct questioning. To determine whether the CNET increased the quantity of details reported and the quality of those reports, children ($n = 82$) recalled two emotional memories, one at a time. For each memory, children first freely recalled all they could ("Tell me everything you remember... Is there anything else?") and then reported any additional details through the CNET pictorial cues ("Does this card remind you to talk about anything else?"). For both memories, significantly more details were reported with the CNET portion of the output protocol than with the free recall portion, and the quality of the information elicited in each portion of the protocol differed. The CNET appears to increase both the quantity and quality of children's reports beyond that obtained with free recall.

DeCosta, P., Skinner, T. C., Sørensen, J. L., Krogh Topperzer, M., & Grabowski, D. (2023). [Narrative and play-based interviewing: A framework for eliciting the perspectives of young children](#). *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 20(3), 337–362. DOI:10.1080/14780887.2023.2195366

The aim of this article is to provide researchers a detailed framework for conducting high-quality research with young children 3–6 years of age. We argue that young children's insider perspectives, perceptions and experiences are underrepresented in research owing to methodological challenges. In this article, we present a narrative and play-based approach to eliciting the perspectives of young children, 3–6 years of age, through a developmentally sensitive and child-centred approach to interviewing. We will present a practical step-by-step guide to conducting narrative and play-based interviews with

young children. Throughout the article, we will provide practical examples and insights from young children. We will discuss the theory and guiding principles of child-centredness and the child's perspective that underpin the method. Last, we will consider the advantages and limitations of the method.

Henderson, H. M., Konovalov, H., Williams, S., & Lyon, T. D. (2022). [The utility of the birthday prompt in narrative practice with maltreated and non-maltreated 4- to 9-year old children](#). *Applied Developmental Science*, 26(4), 679–688.
DOI:10.1080/10888691.2021.1963729

Forensic interviewers are encouraged to elicit a practice narrative from children in order to train them to answer free recall questions with narrative information. Although asking children about their last birthday has been recommended, concerns have been raised that many children will have nothing to report. This study asked 994 4- to 9-year-old maltreated and non-maltreated children to recall their last birthday. Although a fair number of children initially failed to recall information (9%), virtually all children recalled information with persistent encouragement (99%). Younger children and maltreated children were less responsive and spoke less, but nevertheless, 93% of the youngest children (4-year-olds) and 97% of maltreated children recalled information with persistent encouragement. The results suggest that children's failures to recall information about birthdays are predominantly attributable to a failure to provide additional support.

Lyon, T. D., & Henderson, H. (2021). [Increasing true reports without increasing false reports: Best practice interviewing methods and open-ended wh-questions](#). *APSAC Advisor*, 33(1), 29–39.

A consensus has emerged among forensic interviewers that narrative practice rapport building, introducing the allegation with a “why” question about the reason for the interview, and eliciting allegation details with invitations (broad free recall questions)

constitute best practice. These methods are favored because they increase true reports with little risk of increasing false reports. We discuss how interviewers can maintain this balance with open-ended wh- questions designed to elicit details often missing from children's narratives. Conversely, we show that recognition questions (including yes/no and forced-choice questions) pose risks of impairing children's productivity and accuracy, and discuss how future research can find ways of replacing recognition questions with open-ended wh- questions.

Canning, H. S., & Peterson, C. (2020). [Encouraging more open-ended recall in child interviews](#). *Psychiatry, Psychology, and Law*, 27(1), 81–94.
DOI:10.1080/13218719.2019.1687045

The goal of child forensic interviewers is to obtain as much information as possible through open-ended recall. Unfortunately, typically interviewers quickly switch to focused questions. This article suggests a way of eliciting more open-ended recall by using the narrative elaboration (NE) procedure, which includes four initial prompts about event participants, context, actions, conversations, and thoughts. The procedure uses line drawings on cards as prompts and requires pre-training; although it substantially increases open-ended recall, in practice it is too time-consuming for regular use. The original NE procedure is compared with two streamlined versions with 3- to 7-year-olds: using NE cards with no pre-training and simply providing parallel NE verbal prompts without using the cards. The children in the streamlined NE interview with verbal prompts were found to provide as much additional information as those in the full NE interview, and considerably more than those in the control interview. Therefore, incorporating NE verbal prompts near the beginning of child interviews is an easy way to increase the amount of information that children provide in open-ended recall.

Duron, J. F. (2020). Searching for truth: The forensic interviewer's use of an assessment approach while conducting child sexual abuse interviews. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 29*(2), 183–204. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2018.1484833

This study examined the assessment approach interviewers use while conducting interviews to assess truth as narratives are gathered in children's disclosure statements by examining 100 forensic interviews completed at a Children's Advocacy Center. A descriptive review was used to examine the steps engaged by interviewers as they followed a protocol and content analysis was used to identify interviewers' questioning strategies as they assessed children's disclosure narratives during interviews. Findings indicate that interviewers apply a protocol in order to support advancing to a phase of eliciting details in children's narratives. Questioning strategies included using a variety of question types to progress from general to specific, incorporating interview aids sparingly as necessary, and integrating multidisciplinary team feedback. Findings suggest that an assessment approach is inherent to the process of actively conducting a forensic interview. Rather than assessment beginning strictly upon completion of children's narratives, this paper describes how interviewers incorporate an assessment framework throughout interviewing.

Lavoie, J., Dickerson, K. L., Redlich, A. D., & Quas, J. A. (2019). [Overcoming disclosure reluctance in youth victims of sex trafficking: New directions for research, policy, and practice](#). *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 25*(4), 225–238. DOI:10.1037/law0000205

An alarming number of youth worldwide are victims of commercial sexual exploitation, particularly sex trafficking. Normative developmental processes and motivations across the adolescent period—the age when youth are at greatest risk for trafficking—combined with their history, make them highly likely to be reluctant to disclose their exploitation to police, who often encounter victims because they are suspected of delinquency and crime and who interrogate the victims as suspects. Little scientific and policy attention has been devoted to understanding how to question these victims in a way that reduces

their disclosure reluctance and increases their provision of legally relevant information. In the current review, we describe research concerning trafficking victims' histories and exploitative experiences, juvenile suspects' and victims' encounters with the legal system, and best-practice forensic interviewing approaches to elicit disclosures from child victims. We highlight the implications of these areas for understanding the dynamics between how police encounter and interact with adolescent trafficking victims and whether and how the victims disclose trafficking details during these interactions. We close with an agenda for research to test interviewing methods for suspected victims of sex trafficking and with policy and practice recommendations for interviewers.

Yi, M., & Lamb, M. E. (2018). The effects of narrative practice on children's testimony and disclosure of secrets. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 32(3), 326–336.
DOI:10.1002/acp.3385

The present study explored the effects of different types of narrative practices on the accuracy and abundance of information elicited from children and the disclosure of secrets. Seventy-one children ages 3–6 years experienced a scripted encounter with a photographer; then they were interviewed about the event after participating in one of four different narrative practices. The narrative practices comprised either a discussion of topics drawing from episodic memory or topics drawing from semantic memory. Further, either open-ended prompts were used during the practice narratives or directive questions were used. The episodic topics were related to past experienced events, whereas the semantic topics consisted of general knowledge about what they liked to do. The results showed that children who were trained to respond to open-ended prompts early in the interview responded more informatively later, but the specificity of the topics had no effect on their accuracy and informativeness. Neither the topics nor types of questions had effects on the results of disclosure.

Danby, M. C., Brubacher, S. P., Sharman, S. J., & Powell, M. B. (2017). [The effects of one versus two episodically oriented practice narratives on children's reports of a repeated event](#). *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 22(2), 442–454.
DOI:10.1111/lcrp.12110

Previous research has found that children's reports of repeated events can be influenced by the presence and type of narrative practice in which they engage immediately prior to substantive recall. In particular, children's reports have been shown to benefit from practice providing narratives about an autobiographical repeated event. A gap remains, however, with regard to understanding whether practice narrating one episode of a repeated event encourages children to think about unique features of specific episodes, or whether practice of two episodes is required. The current study addressed this gap. Five- to nine-year-olds (N = 167) experienced four classroom activity sessions and were later interviewed. Children provided a practice narrative about either one or two episodes of an autobiographical repeated event prior to discussing individual episodes of the activities. Older children recalled more details from the activities when they had practised recalling two episodes compared to one episode. Younger children did not benefit from the second episodic practice. Many similarities were observed across conditions for children of all ages. Older children were likely receptive to the subtle differences between conditions because of their advanced cognitive abilities. Interviewers may assist older children to recall a larger amount of information if they first provide practice recalling two episodes of an autobiographical repeated event. However, a practice narrative about one episode may be sufficient to assist many children should two-episode practice be unfeasible or interviewees are too young to benefit from recall of a second episode.

Anderson, G. D., Anderson, J. N., & Gilgun, J. F. (2014). The influence of narrative practice techniques on child behaviors in forensic interviews. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 23(6), 615–634. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2014.932878

During investigations of child sexual abuse, forensic interviewers must maintain a delicate balance of providing support for the child while collecting forensic evidence

about the abuse allegation required for credible evidence for court purposes. The use of narrative practice techniques can achieve both goals by creating conditions that facilitate the possibility that children will feel safe enough to provide detailed descriptions of the alleged abuse. This article reports findings from an evaluation of a change in practice using the CornerHouse Forensic Interview Protocol in which narrative practice techniques were incorporated into the interview format. Findings show that children provided more detailed accounts of abuse when interviewers used open-ended questions and supportive statements through narrative practice.

Lyon, T. D., Wandrey, L., Ahern, E., Licht, R., Sim, M. P., & Quas, J. A. (2014). [Eliciting maltreated and nonmaltreated children's transgression disclosures: Narrative practice rapport building and a putative confession](#). *Child Development*, 85(4), 1756–1769. DOI:10.1111/cdev.12223

This study tested the effects of narrative practice rapport building (asking open-ended questions about a neutral event) and a putative confession (telling the child an adult “told me everything that happened and he wants you to tell the truth”) on 4- to 9-year-old maltreated and nonmaltreated children’s reports of an interaction with a stranger who asked them to keep toy breakage a secret (n = 264). Only one third of children who received no interview manipulations disclosed breakage; in response to a putative confession, one half disclosed. Narrative practice rapport building did not affect the likelihood of disclosure. Maltreated children and nonmaltreated children responded similarly to the manipulations. Neither narrative practice rapport building nor a putative confession increased false reports.

Price, H. L., Roberts, K. P., & Collins, A. (2013). The quality of children's allegations of abuse in investigative interviews containing practice narratives. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 2(1), 1–6.
DOI:10.1016/j.jarmac.2012.03.001

To enhance the accuracy and completeness of children's testimony, recommendations have included implementing a practice narrative, during which children are prepared for their role as informative witnesses before discussing the allegations. In the present study, we aimed to systematically examine interviewer behaviour and the informativeness of children's testimony in a field setting. As predicted, interviewers posed fewer prompts, proportionally more open-ended prompts, and children provided proportionally more details in response to open-ended prompts in the substantive phase when preceded by a practice narrative than when no practice narrative was conducted. The relationship was enhanced when the practice narratives were conducted as recommended vs those that were conducted in a less open-ended manner. Together with experimental studies showing clear benefits of practice narratives on children's reports, these results underscore the value of a simple practice narrative as a means of enhancing the reliability of children's testimony.

Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2012). [Narrative practice and the transformation of interview subjectivity](#). In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Hostein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinnery (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research. The complexity of the craft* (pp. 27–44). Sage Publications.

Lyon, T. D., Ahern, E. C., & Scurich, N. (2012). [Interviewing children versus tossing coins: Accurately assessing the diagnosticity of children's disclosures of abuse](#). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 21(1), 19–44. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2012.642468

We describe a Bayesian approach to evaluating children's abuse disclosures and review research demonstrating that children's disclosure of genital touch can be highly probative of sexual abuse, with the probative value depending on disclosure spontaneity

and children's age. We discuss how some commentators understate the probative value of children's disclosures by: confusing the probability of abuse given disclosure with the probability of disclosure given abuse, assuming that children formally questioned about sexual abuse have a low prior probability of sexual abuse, misstating the probative value of abuse disclosure, and confusing the distinction between disclosure and nondisclosure with the distinction between true and false disclosures. We review interviewing methods that increase the probative value of disclosures, including interview instructions, narrative practice, noncontingent reinforcement, and questions about perpetrator/caregiver statements and children's reactions to the alleged abuse.

Roberts, K. P., Brubacher, S. P., Powell, M. B., & Price, H. L. (2011). Practice narratives. In M. E. Lamb, D. J. La Rooy, C. Malloy, & Carmit Katz (Eds.), *Children's testimony: A handbook of psychological research and forensic practice* (pp. 129-145). Wiley. DOI:10.1002/9781119998495.ch7

This chapter contains sections titled: Rationale: Why a Practice Narrative is Important and Useful, What Should you Expect from a Practice Narrative? Cognitive and Motivational Advantages of Practicing Narratives, Common Reasons for not Conducting a Practice Narrative, Practical Guidelines for Practice Narrative, & Conclusions.

Lyon, T. D. (2010). Investigative interviewing of the child. In D. Duquette & A. Haralambie (Eds.), *Child welfare law and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 87-109). Bradford.

Children, if questioned in a supportive manner, are capable of providing enormous amounts of productive information in response to open-ended questions. The irony is that many direct and suggestive methods once thought necessary to overcome abused children's reluctance to disclose abuse have been found counterproductive in two ways: they minimize the number of details in true allegations at the same time that they increase the risk of false allegations.

Steele, L. C. (2010). [Narrative practice \(What is it and why is it important?\): A research to practice summary](#). National Children's Advocacy Center.

Licht, R. C., Wandrey, L. E., Ahern, E. C., Cooper, A., Sim, M., Quas, J., & Lyon, T. D. (2009, August 3). [The effect of rapport building and putative confessions upon maltreated and nonmaltreated children's disclosure of a minor transgression](#) [Paper presentation]. CELS 4th Annual Conference on Empirical Legal Studies, University of Southern California.

This study examined the effects of rapport-building (open-ended narrative practice vs. closed ended questioning) and a putative confession (telling the child that an adult "told me everything that happened and he wants you to tell the truth") on 4- to 9-year-old maltreated and comparable non-maltreated children's reports of a minor transgression (N = 264). An adult engaged each child in play with a series of toys, two of which appeared to break in the child's hands. The adult warned the child that they should not have played with half the toys, including the broken toys, and asked the child to keep that play a secret. Children were questioned following either open ended narrative practice or closed-ended questioning using free recall and yes-no questions. Open-ended narrative practice increased children's productivity but did not affect the likelihood that they disclosed breakage. Putative confessions increased children's disclosure of breakage. Neither age nor maltreatment affected the results. The implications of the findings for questioning children about transgressions are discussed.

Sternberg, K. J., Lamb, M. E., Hershkowitz, I., Yudilevitch, L., Orback, Y., Esplin, P. W., & Hovav, M. (1997). Effects of introductory style on children's abilities to describe experiences of sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 21(11), 1133-1146.
DOI:10.1016/S0145-2134(97)00071-9

The goal of this study was to evaluate the relative effectiveness of two rapport-building techniques for eliciting information from children who made allegations of sexual abuse. Fourteen interviewers conducted 51 investigations of child sexual abuse with children

ranging from 4.5 to 12.9 years of age. In 25 of the investigations, interviewers used a script including many open-ended utterances to establish rapport, whereas in 26 of the investigations the same interviewers used a rapport-building script involving many direct questions. Both rapport-building scripts took about 7 minutes to complete. All children were asked the same open-ended question to initiate the substantive phase of the interview. Children who had been trained in the open-ended condition provided 2.5 times as many details and words in response to the first substantive utterance as did children in the direct introduction condition. Children in the open-ended condition continued to respond more informatively to open-ended utterances in the later (unscripted) portion of the interview. Two-thirds of the children mentioned the core details of the incident in their responses to the first substantive utterance and a further 20% mentioned core details more vaguely. These results demonstrate that children respond more informatively to an open-ended invitation when they have previously been trained to answer such questions rather than more focused questions. These results demonstrate the sensitivity of children to the goals and expectations of forensic interviewers. Structured interview protocols also increase the amount of information provided by young interviewees.