

False Allegations in Cases of Child Sexual Abuse

A Bibliography



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Introduction and Scope

The issues pertaining to false allegations of abuse by children are among the more complex to understand psychologically and to interpret accurately. According to Lipian, Mills and Brantman (2004), false allegations of abuse may derive from (1) submitting to suggestion by authority figures; (2) the result of "pseudo memories;" or (3) the product of evading honest answers. This bibliography focuses specifically on literature related to false allegations of abuse experienced in childhood.

Organization

The publications listed here are books, chapters in books, and journal articles published in English, 1995-2019. The bibliography does not include theses and dissertations, conference papers, technical reports, audiovisual materials, or ephemera. This bibliography is arranged chronologically, from most recent to oldest publication date. When possible, the abstracts that were included with the original publication are used in this bibliography. These are designated with as Author Abstract. When an original abstract was not available, abstracts were written by staff of the National Children's Advocacy Center Research Library and are designated as NCAC Abstract. In some cases, abstracts are drawn from the American Psychological Association's PsycInfo® database and are used here with permission of American Psychological Association.

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False Allegations in Cases of Child Sexual Abuse

A Bibliography

Korkman, J., Antfolk, J., Fagerlund, M., & Santtila, P. (2019). [The prevalence of unfounded suspicions of child sexual abuse in Finland](#). *Nordic Psychology*, 71(1), 39-50.

Scholars and investigators of child sexual abuse (CSA) have long pointed out that some CSA allegations may be unfounded. However, no population-based estimates of presents the first population-based prevalence estimates of unfounded allegations of CSA. We analyzed two data collections: first, a representative sample of adolescents (N = 11,364; aged 12 or 15 years), and second, a representative sample of adults (N = 2,484, mean age 34 years). Experiences of CSA were reported by 2.4% of adolescents CSA had taken place) were reported by 1.5% of adolescents and 1.9% of adults. Of the unfounded suspicions, 14.5% and 9.1%, for adolescents and adults, respectively, had been reported to the authorities. The prevalence of CSA seems to decrease while more and more allegations reach the authorities. Whereas a low threshold for reporting suspicions of CSA to authorities is in the interest of protecting as many actual CSA victims as possible, more research is needed to separate unfounded vs. founded allegations to minimize the risk of erroneous conclusions in investigations of CSA.

O'Donohue, W., Cummings, C., & Willis, B. (2018). The frequency of false allegations of child sexual abuse: A critical review. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 27(5), 459-475.

The rate of false allegations has been a topic of research spanning back to as early as the 1970s. Studies have often relied on data gathered by Child Protective Services workers and court administrators. Some researchers have also used hypothetical scenarios to estimate rates. However, given the plethora of sampling methods, there is a large variation in estimated rates of false allegations of sexual abuse depending on the data source and context of the allegation. Additionally, methodological problems such as unclear or invalid criteria used to judge truth or falsity of an allegation, unrepresentative samples, and ignoring important contextual variables such as the stage at which an allegation is made, currently all render the determination of actual rates of false child sexual abuse allegations to be unknown. This examination of literature is intended to gain a firmer understanding of the frequency at which allegations are false and during which stage of prosecution they occur, thus assisting with the legal practice of distinguishing between a false

versus positive allegation. Research reviewed supports two general conclusions: (a) the vast majority of allegations are true but (b) false allegations do occur at some non-negligible rate. Suggestions for future research, as well as cautions about claims about specific rates of false allegations in the courtroom, are provided.

Talwar, V., Hubbard, K., Saykaly, C., Lee, K., Lindsay, R. C. L., & Bala, N. (2018). Does parental coaching affect children's false reports? Comparing verbal markers of deception. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 36(1), 84-97.

The present study examined differences in children's true and false narratives as a function of parental coaching by comparing the verbal markers associated with deception. Children (N = 65, 4–7 years old) played the same game with an adult stranger over three consecutive days. Parents coached their children to falsely allege that they had played a second game and to generate details for the fabricated event. One week after the last play session, children were interviewed about their experiences. For children with the least amount of parental coaching, true and false reports could be distinguished by multiple verbal markers of deception (e.g., cognitive processes, temporal information, self-references). The fabricated reports of children who spent more time being coached by a parent resembled their truthful reports. These findings have implications for real-world forensic contexts when children have been coached to make false allegations and fabricate information at the behest of a parent.

The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. (2016). APSAC position paper on allegations of child maltreatment and intimate partner violence in divorce/parental relationship dissolution. Chicago, IL: Author.

Faller, K. C. (2016). [Commentary on the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children's position paper on allegations of child maltreatment and intimate partner violence in divorce/parental relationship dissolution](#). *Journal of Child Custody*, 13(4), 307-316.

In January, 2016, the Board of Directors of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children approved a position paper on allegations of child maltreatment and intimate partner violence in divorce/parental relationship dissolution. This commentary describes the range of

dynamics that can lead to allegations of interpersonal violence in divorce/ relationship dissolution, outlines the process employed in developing the position paper, and provides a description of the contents of the position paper.

Happel, R. F. (2016). The process of disclosure for child victims. In *Forensic Interviews Regarding Child Sexual Abuse* (pp. 107-122). Springer International Publishing.

Pépin-Gagné, J., & Parent, S. (2016). Coaching, touching, and false allegations of sexual abuse in Canada. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 40(2), 162-172.

Whether in sports training or in physical education contexts, touching is an integral component of the coaches' tasks. However, recent evidence suggests that touching has become a significant concern for coaches in Canada and elsewhere, maybe due to the increased sensitivity toward child protection discourses. In fact, it appears that some coaches are concerned that touching children while coaching can potentially lead to false allegations of abuse by young people in their care or by the young person's parents. These apprehensions are pushing some coaches to protect themselves by adopting various strategies or by avoiding certain situations, like touching. Recent evidence suggests that fears of false allegations can represent an obstacle for the prevention of sexual abuse. Moreover, these fears can have a significant impact on the victims of these crimes. Throughout this article, we explore the question of touching in coaching and the fears of false allegations of sexual abuse sometimes associated. The authors focus on understanding the foundations of these fears and offer some answers to the difficult questions that arise from this situation from a Canadian perspective.

Smit, A. E., Antokolskaia, M. V., & Bijleveld, C. C. (2015). [Between Scylla and Charybdis: A literature review of sexual abuse allegations in divorce proceedings](#). Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. 12 p.

Beker, J., & Robin, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Assessing child maltreatment reports: The problem of false allegations*. New York: Routledge.

MacKay, T. (2014). False allegations of child abuse in contested family law cases: The implications for psychological practice. *Educational & Child Psychology, 31*(3), 85-96.

Educational psychologists are working increasingly with children who are not only from families where there has been divorce or separation but who are also the subject of contested family law cases. This study investigates 107 children from 72 families in which residence issues had been previously settled but which were subject to ongoing disputes regarding contact or change of residence. Such cases are marked in general by allegations and counter-allegations of each parent in regard to the historical or current conduct of the other. This study considers the frequency of allegations of child physical or sexual abuse in cases of this kind, with a particular focus on false allegations. It also notes the high prevalence of mental health problems among the children involved in the disputes. Implications for educational psychology practice are examined.

Poole, D. A., Dickinson, J. J., Brubacher, S. P., Liberty, A. E., & Kaake, A. M. (2014). Deficient cognitive control fuels children's exuberant false allegations. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 118*, 101-109.

In eyewitness studies as in actual investigations, a minority of children generate numerous false (and sometimes incredulous) allegations. To explore the characteristics of these children, we re-interviewed and administered a battery of tasks to 61 children (ages 4–9 years) who had previously participated in an eyewitness study where a man broke a “germ rule” twice when he tried to touch them. Performance on utilization, response conflict (Luria tapping), and theory of mind tasks predicted the number of false reports of touching (with age and time since the event controlled) and correctly classified 90.16% of the children as typical witnesses or exuberant (more than 3) false reporters. Results of a factor analysis pointed to a common process underlying performance on these tasks that accounted for 49% of the variability in false reports. Relations between task performance and testimony confirmed that the mechanisms underlying occasional intrusions are different from those that drive persistent confabulation and that deficient cognitive control fuels young children's exuberant false reports. © 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Ahern, E. C., Lyon, T. D., & Quas, J. A. (2011). Young children's emerging ability to make false statements. *Developmental Psychology*, 47(1), 61-66.

This study examined the origins of children's ability to make consciously false statements, a necessary component of lying. Children 2 to 5 years of age were rewarded for claiming that they saw a picture of a bird when viewing pictures of fish. They were asked outcome questions ("Do you win/lose?"), recognition questions ("Do you have a bird/fish?"), and recall questions ("What do you have?"), which were hypothesized to vary in difficulty depending on the need for consciousness of falsity (less for outcome questions) and self-generation of an appropriate response (more for recall questions). The youngest children (2½ to 3½ years old) were above chance on outcome questions, but it was not until age 3½ that children performed above chance on recognition questions or were capable of maintaining false claims across question types. Findings have implications for understanding the emergence of deception in young children. (Author Abstract)

Lindahl, M. W. (2009). Beyond Munchausen by proxy: A proposed conceptualization for cases of recurring, unsubstantiated sexual abuse allegations. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 18(2), 206-220.

In the emerging literature, cases involving recurring, unsubstantiated allegations of child sexual abuse have generally been categorized as Munchausen by proxy. Recent scholars have recommended restricting the label to the original conceptualization, involving purposeful deception motivated by psychological needs for medical attention. This leaves many cases unclassified that do not fit the Munchausen by proxy criteria, involve significant risks to the child, and ultimately fall outside of existing structures for Child Protective Services/legal intervention. This paper presents a reconceptualization of such cases, proposing to label them "recurring sexual abuse allegation" cases. Defining the set of cases more clearly can aid child protection workers in their management and encourage research on prevalence, consequences to children, treatment strategies, and needed legal reforms. (Author Abstract)

Lyon, T. D., Malloy, L. C., Quas, J. A., & Talwar, V. A. (2008). Coaching, truth induction, and young maltreated children's false allegations and false denials. *Child Development, 79*(4), 914-929.

This study examined the effects of coaching (encouragement and rehearsal of false reports) and truth induction (a child-friendly version of the oath or general reassurance about the consequences of disclosure) on 4- to 7-year-old maltreated children's reports (N = 198). Children were questioned using free recall, repeated yes – no questions, and highly suggestive suppositional questions. Coaching impaired children's accuracy. For free-recall and repeated yes – no questions, the oath exhibited some positive effects, but this effect diminished in the face of highly suggestive questions. Reassurance had few positive effects and no ill effects. Neither age nor understanding of the meaning and negative consequences of lying consistently predicted accuracy. The results support the utility of truth induction in enhancing the accuracy of child witnesses' reports. (Author Abstract)

Faller, K. C. (2007). Coaching children about sexual abuse: A pilot study of professionals' perceptions. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 31*(9), 947-959.

Examines professionals' perceptions on coaching children about sexual abuse. Relevant to the coaching issue is a recent analysis of the Canadian Incidence Study 98 Data (data collected periodically in Canada and used to project the rates, types, and risk factors for child maltreatment, 2005). Trocmé and Bala explored the issue of intentional false allegations of all kinds of maltreatment (as opposed to unsubstantiated cases, which were 31% of the dispositions), who made the false reports, and on what types of cases. This study is a survey of 7,672 child protection workers and, therefore, represents their opinions regarding intentionality. Overall, the researchers found an intentional false allegation rate of 4%. The most frequent type of maltreatment to involve a false allegation was neglect, although slightly higher proportions of sexual abuse cases (6%) were deemed false than other types of child maltreatment (neglect = 4%, physical abuse = 4%, and emotional abuse = 2%). Non-custodial parents' (usually fathers) allegations of all types of maltreatment were more likely to be intentionally false (15%) than custodial parents' (2%) (usually mothers). Only 2% of false reports were made by children; none of children's false reports involved sexual abuse. On the other hand, the child protection workers involved in Trocmé and Bala's study report the frequency of false allegations in custody disputes as 12%, three times the overall rate of false allegations. They did not differentiate coaching from other types of false allegations. (Author Abstract)

Kopetski, L. M., Rand, D. C., & Rand, R. (2006). Incidence, gender, and false allegations of child abuse: Data on 84 parental alienation syndrome cases. In R. A. Gardner, S. R. Sauber, & D. Lorandos (Eds.), *The International Handbook of Parental Alienation Syndrome* (pp. 65-70). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher Limited.

This chapter presents descriptive statistics on 84 cases of parental alienation syndrome (PAS), compiled by a custody evaluator in Colorado. Kopetski's work on alienation began in the 1970s and was fully developed by the time she learned of Richard Gardner's work. In 1991, Kopetski presented her work on PAS at the Fifteenth Annual child custody Conference in Keystone, Colorado (Kopetski, 1991). She recognized Gardner's contribution in the introduction, and described her astonishment upon learning of his work in 1987. Simultaneously, while unaware of Gardner's work, she had arrived at observations and conclusions that were remarkably similar in many respects. The paper included descriptive statistics on 84 cases, which Kopetski used to test some of Gardner's findings and hypotheses, such as those relating to the disproportionate number of alienating mother. Kopetski's clinical observations of PAS families were eventually in *The Colorado Layer* (Kopetski, 1998). Her descriptive statistics on 84 cases are published here for the first time. They document a significant increase in PAS cases from 1976 to 1990. The ratio of mothers to fathers alienating was 2 to 1. False allegations of child abuse, defined as physical or sexual abuse, or child neglect, appeared in 54 percent of cases, with child neglect alleged primarily by alienating fathers and sex abuse alleged primarily by alienating mothers. (Author Abstract)

Trocmé, N., & Bala, N. (2005). False allegations of abuse and neglect when parents separate. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 29(12), 1333-1345.

The 1998 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-98) is the first national study to document the rate of intentionally false allegations of abuse and neglect investigated by child welfare services in Canada. This paper provides a detailed summary of the characteristics associated with intentionally false reports of child abuse and neglect within the context of parental separation. A multistage sampling design was used, first to select a representative sample of 51 child welfare service areas across Canada. Child maltreatment investigations conducted in the selected sites during the months of October-December 1998 were tracked, yielding a final sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations reported to child welfare authorities because of suspected child abuse or neglect. Consistent with other national studies of reported child maltreatment, CIS-98 data indicate that more than one-third of maltreatment investigations are unsubstantiated, but only 4% of all cases are

considered to be intentionally fabricated. Within the subsample of cases wherein a custody or access dispute has occurred, the rate of intentionally false allegations is higher: 12%. Results of this analysis show that neglect is the most common form of intentionally fabricated maltreatment, while anonymous reporters and noncustodial parents (usually fathers) most frequently make intentionally false reports. Of the intentionally false allegations of maltreatment tracked by the CIS-98, custodial parents (usually mothers) and children were least likely to fabricate reports of abuse or neglect. While the CIS-98 documents that the rate of intentionally false allegations is relatively low, these results raise important clinical and legal issues, which require further consideration. (Author Abstract)

Lipian, M. S., Mills, M. J., & Brantman, A. (2004). Assessing the verity of children's allegations of abuse: A psychiatric overview. *International Journal of Law & Psychiatry*, 27(3), 249-263.

This overview discusses the evaluation of children's allegations of physical and sexual abuse. Like similar false allegations by adults, false recounts by children can be the result of one of three different scenarios: (1) the false claims come from submitting to suggestion by authority figures; (2) the false allegations are the result of "pseudo memories;" or (3) the false claims are the product of evading honest answers. The authors of this article examine all these scenarios in detail. The factors underlying false accusations are explored, including how child development may affect accusations, how emotions may influence cognition, how memory functions in children of different ages, and how suggestible and reliable youngsters' statements are. Analysis is supplemented by practical suggestions to evaluate whether a child's allegation is true or false. Such evaluations are critical to appropriately work with the child and the accused offender in clinical and legal settings. (NCAC Abstract)

Poole, D. A., & Lindsay, D. S. (2002). [Reducing child witnesses' false reports of misinformation from parents](#). *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 81(2), 117-140.

This study explored whether a source-monitoring training (SMT) procedure, in which children distinguished between events they recently witnessed versus events they only heard described, would help 3- to 8-year-olds to report only experienced events during a target interview. Children (N 5 132) who witnessed science demonstrations and subsequently heard their parents describe nonexperienced events received SMT before or after a forensic-style interview. SMT reduced the number of false reports that 7- and 8-year-old children reported in response to direct questions but had no impact on the

performance of younger children. Combined with earlier results, these data suggest a transition between 3 and 8 years of age in the strategic use of source-monitoring information to support verbal reports, such that only 7- and 8-year-olds generalize training to a difficult memory task that does not include mention of specific alternative sources. © 2002 Elsevier Science

Savvidou, I., Bozikas, V. P., & Karavatos, A. (2002). False allegations of child physical abuse: A case of Münchausen by proxy-like syndrome? *International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*, 32(2), 201-208.

The diagnosis of factitious disorder by proxy is still under investigation. Few studies have researched the psychological status and potential underlying psychopathology of the perpetrator, as well as the impact on the child's development and the pathological reactions of rearing a child within the context of a distorted reality. In this article, we present the case of a 12-year-old boy where this diagnosis was suspected. Both he and his parents brought forth false allegations of repeated physical abuse induced by his schoolteacher. The parents presented with shared psychosis and the child presented with conduct disorder, factitious disorder, and emotional problems. We suggest that this case represents a Münchausen by proxy-like syndrome involving both the legal and medical systems. Hypotheses regarding the pathogenesis of symptoms in the child are noted, underscoring the differences between Münchausen by proxy syndrome appearing in infancy with that appearing in older children. (Author Abstract)

Ahlgrim-Delzell, L., & Dudley, J. R. (2001). Confirmed, unconfirmed, and false allegations of abuse made by adults with mental retardation who are members of a class action suit. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 25(8), 1121-1132.

The purpose is to explore differences in confirmed, unconfirmed, and false allegations of abuse made by consumers with mental retardation in regards to type of abuse and perpetrator. Interviews were conducted with 1,220 people with mental retardation who were part of a class action lawsuit in North Carolina. A content analysis of abuse allegations was performed. Frequencies of responses and subgroup differences are reported for type of abuse allegation and perpetrator. Unconfirmed claims are the most frequent. Females made more allegations of abuse than males in general, and more allegations of rape. There are no significant differences among the subgroups (confirmed, unconfirmed, and false allegations) by type of abuse allegation. There are significant differences among the subgroups in regard

to the alleged perpetrator. Other consumers with mental retardation are most frequently accused of confirmed assaults. Staff members are most frequently accused in false allegations. Ability of the alleged victim to report information and timing of the investigation are important factors in substantiating abuse. Awareness of consumer-to-consumer violence and prevalence of false accusations against staff necessitates increased safeguards for both consumers and staff. (Author Abstract)

Bala, N., Lee, J., & McNamara, E. (2001). Children as witnesses: Understanding their capacities, needs, and experiences. *Journal of Social Distress & the Homeless*, 10(1), 41-68.

Historically the law regarded children as inherently unreliable and made it difficult for them to testify. Since 1975 awareness of child abuse has increased and research has established that children can be reliable witnesses. Governments began to recognize the needs and capacities of children and enacted legal reforms to facilitate prosecutions for child abuse. This paper reports on a survey of victim witness workers and other justice system professionals which reveals some of the continued failings of that system in dealing with children. Although relatively rare, there are cases of false allegations of abuse, usually a result of investigations by poorly trained professionals. Further legal reforms and better human supports are required to ensure that the needs of children are met and their capacities as witnesses are fully appreciated. (Author Abstract)

Hershkowitz, I. (2001). A case study of child sexual false allegation. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 25(10), 1397-1411.

The objectives of the case study reported in this article were twofold. The first objective was to follow the path by which a naive suggestion made in the course of a mother-child conversation was transformed into an allegation of severe sexual abuse. The second objective was to analyze the child's interview scientifically and explore the limitations of scientific tools for detecting implausible allegations. Independent case facts were collected and analyzed to determine whether the event described by the child was likely to have happened. The credibility of the child's account was assessed using Criterion-Based Content Analysis and the information provided in both the "implausible" and "corrected" statements was compared to quantify the fabricated details in the implausible statement. The event described by the child was "very unlikely to have happened" but the credibility assessment failed to detect its implausibility. Comparison of the two statements revealed that the child did fabricate central

details but incorporated them into a description of an event she really experienced, and most of the information provided was truthful. The pressure to conform to suggestions can be irresistible, inducing some children to make false allegations of severe sexual abuse. Scientific tools designed for credibility assessment are limited and may fail to detect implausible statements especially when they incorporate information about genuinely experienced events. (Author Abstract)

Ost, J., Costall, A., & Bull, R. (2001). False confessions and false memories: A model for understanding retractors' experiences. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry, 12*(3), 549-579.

The present paper examines reports by 'retractors' (i.e. adults who have retracted their earlier claims of childhood abuse) to explore suggestions in the literature of possible similarities between their experiences and the experiences of individuals who falsely confess to criminal acts. Despite concerns about the reliability of retractors' reports, these individuals provide valuable insight into the processes involved in making and then repudiating claims of abuse. The present analysis revealed similarities between the contexts in which retractors came to report that they were sexually abused and the contexts in which false confessions arise. Although caution must be taken in generalizing from these findings, these similarities indicate that models of false confession could serve as a useful basis for conceptualizing the processes involved in the development of claims of childhood sexual abuse that are subsequently retracted. (Author Abstract)

Wood, J. M., & Garven, S. (2000). How sexual abuse interviews go astray: Implications for prosecutors, police, and child protection services. *Child Maltreatment: Journal of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, 5*(2), 109-118.

This article argues that child sexual abuse interviews can go astray in two different ways: (a) improper interviewing has the potential to elicit false allegations from children, and (b) clumsy interviewing does not typically produce false allegations, but may have other negative consequences, particularly for child victims. The article clarifies the distinction between the two kinds of bad interviewing and suggests that clumsy interviewing is the more common of the two. The potential negative consequences of both improper and clumsy interviewing are described, along with implications for prosecutors, police, and child protection services. In the authors' opinion, improper interviewing can probably be eliminated rather easily, but clumsy interviewing may be considerably more resistant to change. (Author Abstract)

Anderson, E. M., & Levine, M. (1999). Concerns about allegations of child sexual abuse against teachers and the teaching environment. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 23(8), 833-843.

The major objective was to determine teachers' awareness of the potential for child abuse allegations against themselves and the effects on the teaching environment. Of 3,000 questionnaires sent out to a random sample of New York state teachers, 515 were returned. The responding teachers were similar to New York state teachers in terms of gender, age, and racial/ethnic distribution. A large percent of the respondents (56%) were aware of false allegations made against a teacher in their school district. About a third (36.5%) expressed concern that a child abuse allegation could be made against them. In response to a vignette, forty-two (42%) advised a new teacher against being alone in a room with a student; 62% advised against casual touching; 70% advised against hugging or putting an arm around a student. Males more than female teachers, especially those teaching upper grades, advised against such contact. The more teachers expressed concern about abuse allegations against themselves, the more teachers advised against contact. Fear of abuse allegations are salient for teachers. Fears may cause teachers to limit contact with students with potentially adverse consequences for students and the teaching environment. (Author Abstract)

Dammeyer, M. D., Nightingale, N. N., & McCoy, M. L. (1997). Repressed memory and other controversial origins of sexual abuse allegations: Beliefs among psychologists and clinical social workers. *Child Maltreatment: Journal of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children*, 2(3), 252-263.

The purpose of this study was to assess beliefs about repressed memory and other controversial origins of sexual abuse allegations. This was examined by conducting a national survey of psychologists and clinical social workers. The results indicated that experimental psychologists and clinicians differ regarding belief in repressed memory, with clinicians expressing more confidence that such memories can and do exist. No differences were found between clinicians with different types of academic training. However, academic degree and level of research involvement were found to be related to views toward one or more of the following: (a) usefulness of anatomical dolls, (b) leading questions, or (c) the possibility of therapeutic techniques leading to false allegations of sexual abuse. Although the respondents' sex often accounted for a significant portion of the variance, removing this influence did not alter the overall pattern of the results. Possible explanations for these results are discussed. (Author Abstract)

Everson, M. D., Boat, B. W., Bourg, S., & Robertson, K. R. (1996). Beliefs among professionals about rates of false allegations of child sexual abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *11*(4), 541-553.

A total of 244 judges, law enforcement officers, mental health practitioners, and child protection service (CPS) workers were surveyed to explore their beliefs about the frequency with which children lie or fail to tell the truth when they allege sexual abuse. Results indicated that judges and law enforcement officers were significantly more skeptical of children's reports than were mental health and CPS workers. Although age, gender, and years of experience did not appear to affect beliefs about credibility, those professionals who dealt with more cases of child sexual abuse in the previous year were significantly more likely to believe the reports of children than were professionals who worked with fewer cases. Significant differences also were found among professional groups on whether children never or frequently lie about sexual abuse. Finally, across all groups, reports of sexual abuse made by female adolescents were viewed as significantly less believable than other groups of children. The implications of these findings for professionals are discussed. (Author Abstract)

Conte, J. R. (1995). Assessment of children who may have been abused: The real world context. In T. Ney (Ed.), *True and false allegations of child sexual abuse: Assessment and case management* (pp. 290-302). Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel.

This chapter examines the nature of difficult cases that must be assessed for possible sexual abuse, discusses selected studies on such aspects of assessing these cases as child witnesses and the difference between "true" versus "false" reports, and identifies some of the "real world" issues that make assessment of some cases tougher than others. (NCAC Abstract)

Ehrenberg, M. F., & Elterman, M. F. (1995). Evaluating allegations of sexual abuse in the context of divorce, child custody, and access disputes. In T. Ney (Ed.), *True and false allegations of child sexual abuse: Assessment and case management* (pp. 209-230). Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel.

The authors' purposes in this chapter are (1) to discuss the extent, nature, and credibility of sexual abuse claims in divorce and custody cases; (2) to familiarize the professional with contexts in which these allegations might occur; (3) to summarize major issues in assessing abuse allegations during divorce, custody, and visitation disputes; and (4) to examine ethical and professional matters pertaining to

clinical practice in these cases. In the conclusion, 10 recommendations for professionals working on divorce and custody cases are presented. (NCAC Abstract)

Ney, T. (1995). *True and false allegations of child sexual abuse: Assessment and case management*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel.

Ney wrote this book for a wide-ranging readership of seasoned professionals and students training to be social workers, child and youth care workers, probation officers, counselors and psychologists, nurses, medical practitioners, and teachers. Legal professionals may also find it helpful. Ney's aim is to address the many questions professionals confront concerning true and false allegations of child sexual abuse. The book focuses on improving skill level, competent assessment, and case management. While Ney and authors of the other chapters examine complex theory, they write in ways more readable for the lay person. Using every day and legally relevant examples, complicated principles are translated into practical recommendations for practice. A lengthy list of references for further research is presented after each chapter. (NCAC Abstract)

Mikkelsen, E. J., Gutheil, T. G., & Emens, M. (1992). False sexual-abuse allegations by children and adolescents: Contextual factors and clinical subtypes. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 46(4), 556-570.

The authors present a typology of false allegations of sexual abuse against children that is derived from the literature and their clinical experience. The specific subtypes described are false allegations (1) arising out of custody disputes, (2) stemming from accusers' psychological disturbances, (3) resulting from conscious manipulation, (4) being caused by iatrogenic elements.