



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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MEMORADUM FOR: Assistant Directors  
All Deputy Assistant Directors  
All Special Agents in Charge

FROM: **(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)**  
Acting Director, Office of Investigations

SUBJECT: The Forensic Interview Program

The Victim Assistance Program (VAP), Investigative Services Division, has recently hired two full-time Child Forensic Interview Specialists. <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> and **(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)** are available to support your investigations involving victims, particularly in the areas of child exploitation and human trafficking. <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> has ten years of experience in the field of child abuse, working along side law enforcement, medical doctors and mental health professionals. <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> most recently worked at the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center as the Forensic Interviewing Manager where she completed over 2,500 forensic interviews. **(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)** is equally competent, having conducted over 1,700 forensic interviews. **(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)** most recently served as the Executive Director of the Southwest Family Advocacy Center in Phoenix, AZ. <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> has a wide array of experience working with a variety of law enforcement agencies.

The purpose of a forensic interview is to assist in the determination of whether or not a crime has occurred and to assess the victim's safety in his/her current situation. The forensic interview should be the primary interview of the child and it should not be viewed as a supplemental interview. The interview is conducted in a victim-sensitive manner in order to obtain the most reliable and accurate statement from the victim, taking into consideration the individual's developmental, language, and cognitive abilities, as well as the their psychological state. All efforts are made to minimize the trauma of the investigation for the victim while maximizing the amount of information obtained. Interviewing victims is a task that requires an open, yet analytical and critical perspective on the part of the interviewer in order to maintain the integrity of the investigative process and minimize any contamination of the victim's memory and statements. With that being stated, in the best interest of the case and the victim, the number of interviews a victim receives should be limited. All efforts should be made to have the forensic interviewer conduct the interviews of child victims, as they are the experts in this area. All statements gathered during a forensic interview may be used as evidence in court proceedings and are conducted in a non-leading and legally defensible manner. <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup> and <sup>(b)(6); (b)(7)(c)</sup>

are qualified as experts in the field and have testified in court proceedings, both as factual and expert witnesses.

The forensic interview specialists are available to assist on cases involving victims, particularly, children and adolescents, both domestically and internationally. Both team members are bilingual in English and Spanish and will conduct the interviews in the language which the victim is most comfortable. In cases where the victim's native language is something other than English or Spanish, the interview will be conducted with the use of an interpreter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) will be available to conduct interviews for ICE investigations in the western half of the United States, Asia and Pacific Islands, and Latin America. (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) will be available to conduct interviews for ICE investigations in the eastern half of the United States, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. They will also be developing training for ICE agents on the fundamentals of forensic interviewing.

The Forensic Interview Program welcomes case referrals, questions and assistance in the area of victimization, particularly for children and adolescents. For questions and technical assistance, (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) can be reached at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) or by e-mail at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c)@dhs.gov. (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) can be reached at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) or by email at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c)@dhs.gov.

To request assistance with scheduling a forensic interviewer to assist in your investigation, please contact (b)(6); (b)(7)(c), Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Victim Specialist, VAP, Investigative Services Division, at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) or by email at (b)(6); (b)(7)(c)@dhs.gov.