

## Child Investigative Interviewing: Is there a gold standard?

Police departments across the United States are routinely questioning young children concerning child [sexual abuse](#) allegations. Frequently the police are untrained in the correct techniques to utilize for investigating interview of the children. There is a gold standard for child investigative interviewing in the area espoused by Lamb et al. (2008). Lamb discusses how he trains police and investigators in the use of open-ended questioning with children yet the [police](#) and investigators revert to using the same techniques (i.e., closed-ended and suggestive questioning). This can be conducive to erroneous allegations. There are standards for police interviewing young children. This involves manner of dress, wearing a weapon, establishing rapport, etcetera. However, social service departments and law enforcement are frequently found to not follow such procedures or keep abreast of them.

Ceci notes the significant error involved in improper questioning of children and speaks to the suggestibility of young children.

All of these factors speak for a comprehensive forensic [psychological](#) assessment in child sexual abuse allegations to examine the nature and approach used in questioning with young children. Young children want to please adults and to acquiesce. Thus they will say things which they think the adult wants to hear. Moreover, multiple parties question the child, which increases the probability of distortion.

Correct conducting of these interviews is essential to extracting accurate information from children and protecting the accused from false allegations.

Lamb, et al. (2008) [Tell Me What Happened](#), Wiley.