

# Minimal Facts Interviewing for First Responders to Child Abuse



**If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.  
Otherwise, call the Child-At-Risk-Hotline:  
1 (800) 792-5200 and report the Minimal Facts.**



58 Arch St, Fall River, MA 02724 | 508-674-6111 | [www.cacofbc.org](http://www.cacofbc.org)

The child should only be questioned if an adult is not available to provide the information necessary to file a report with DCF. If an adult is not available and the child did not provide the below information in their initial disclosure, complete a non-leading minimal facts interview. Use open-ended questions (e.g. “what happened?” “where were you?”). **Do not question the child in the presence of the alleged perpetrator or caretaker.**

## Determine:

**What** happened? **When** did it happen?

**Where** did it happen? **Who** did this?

**Never ask a child why abuse occurred.**

Ensure the child receives any necessary medical attention. If there has been a sexual assault, evidence collection may be possible, please refer to the below guidelines and assist the child to a local emergency room if met.

- Child age 11 and younger: Penetration within the last 72 hours (3 days), oral penetration within the last 24 hours
- Child over 12 years: Penetration or any type of assault within 120 hours (5 days)

## Do not conduct an extensive interview of the child

Report to DCF and/or the police. If child will be in the presence of the alleged perpetrator, tell DCF or police that an emergency response is required.