

# Interviewer Question Types (Adapted from "Tell Me What Happened")

## Invitations or Open-Prompts

- These are questions or statements used to elicit free-recall responses, and do not restrict the content of the child's responses. For example, "Tell me everything that happened."
- Open-prompts may also be used to follow-up on details previously disclosed by the child. For example, "You mentioned X. Tell me everything about X."
- Open-prompts, by definition, are interviewer utterances that can be responded to by using more than just one or two words.
- Children's responses to open-prompts become longer and more detailed as they get older.
- **These are considered to be the best type of prompt to use with children.**

## Directive or 'Wh-' Questions

- These are questions that refocus the child's attention on details that *have already been mentioned* and request additional information about a specific aspect of the event. For example, "What *time* did that happen?"
- This type of question can normally be answered using only a few words.

## Option-Posing and Yes-No Questions

- These are forced-choice and yes-no questions that focus the child's attention on details that have not been previously mentioned, without indicating a particular expected response. For example, "Had you met him before?"
- This type of question can normally be answered using one word or only a few words, as the child will select an interviewer-provided option, or answer by saying 'Yes' or 'No.'

## Suggestive Questions

- These are questions stated in such a way that the interviewer strongly communicates what response is expected, assumes details that have not already been provided by the child, or introduces information that has not been provided by the child. For example, "Has he ever hurt you?" (when the child has not previously mentioned this).
- Suggestive questions are problematic because they may ask for details about events that did not happen or are not well remembered. When questioned suggestively, children may go along with the interviewer's suggestions even if the event did not happen.
- **Interviewers are universally advised not to use suggestive questions or ask children to elaborate on suggestions.**