



## **DEC Checklist for Asking Questions of Children in the Field**

***All officers and/or social workers must document in writing or on digital recorder all spontaneous statements made by children from onset of contact.***

### **Basics**

- *Open-ended Questions:* Prompts an invitation to provide information about an event or activity. Prompts to elaborate on circumstances of visit or previous given information.
- *Specific Questions:* These focus the inquiry or ask directly about a particular topic. These questions are often used to clarify information given by the interviewee.
- *Leading Questions:* These are to be used with extreme caution. Such questions contain information that has not previously been mentioned by the interviewee.
- *Suggestive Questions:* Seldom used in forensic interviews. They are questions that imply or include an expected answer.

***Remember to start your questioning by establishing a rapport with the child by asking less threatening questions. Remember to introduce yourself. Depending on child's age, first name may be more appropriate. Just relax and visit like you would with any other child.***

What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_ How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a pet? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you play sports? \_\_\_\_\_

What's your favorite thing to do? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you go to school? \_\_\_\_\_ Who is your teacher? \_\_\_\_\_

What school do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_ What's your favorite class? \_\_\_\_\_

***Forensic Interview – establish truth/lie; consequences for telling a lie, follow directions, knowledge of counting, ABC's, time measurement***



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Who do you live with? \_\_\_\_\_

***Get all of their names – may need to assess any safety/issues or abuse by them***

Do you have any brothers or sisters? \_\_\_\_\_

***If not all children are accounted for, follow-up and locate***

What are their names? \_\_\_\_\_

Who takes care of you? \_\_\_\_\_

When was the last time you ate? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you have? \_\_\_\_\_

Who fixed that for you? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever go to bed hungry? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you always have food in the house? \_\_\_\_\_ Who buys it? \_\_\_\_\_

When was the last time you had a bath/shower? \_\_\_\_\_

Did somebody help you? \_\_\_\_\_

Who wakes you up for school in the mornings? \_\_\_\_\_

Does anyone take you to school or pick you up? \_\_\_\_\_ Who? \_\_\_\_\_

Is anyone at home with you after school? \_\_\_\_\_

Who cleans the house? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have chores? \_\_\_\_\_ What happens if you don't do them? \_\_\_\_\_

When you get in trouble, what happens? \_\_\_\_\_

Who punishes you? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of punishment do you receive? \_\_\_\_\_



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### Drug Allegations

Does anyone in your home smoke? \_\_\_\_\_ What do they smoke? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like? \_\_\_\_\_ What does it smell like? \_\_\_\_\_

Where do they get the cigarettes? \_\_\_\_\_

Does anyone make the cigarettes or do they buy them? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever seen them smoke anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like? \_\_\_\_\_ What color is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever seen any white or yellow powdery stuff around? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you seen baggies of white or yellow stuff around? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

***Assess whether it is accessible to the child.***

Does anyone take any medicine at your home? \_\_\_\_\_ What kind? \_\_\_\_\_

What do they look like? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever see anyone get shots? \_\_\_\_\_

Do they give the shots to themselves? \_\_\_\_\_

Where do they get the shots on their body? \_\_\_\_\_

What do they do with the shots when they are done? \_\_\_\_\_

***See if minor can explain this process. Assess whether child has access to the syringes.***

***After each of the following questions, ask how this makes them feel. This gives the child the opportunity to tell you something you didn't ask and gives them a chance to talk.***

Do your mom and dad have lots of friends who come and visit? \_\_\_\_\_

Do they come all the time and at all hours of the day and night? \_\_\_\_\_



## **DEC Checklist for Asking Questions of Children in the Field**

Where do they go when they come over? \_\_\_\_\_

*(Bedroom, garage, bathroom, shed, travel trailer, etc)*

What do they do in the (room)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever see them leave with anything? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your parent sleep a lot? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you do when they are sleeping? \_\_\_\_\_

Who takes care of you when they are sleeping (food, bathing, school)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever have to wake them up or care for them? \_\_\_\_\_

Who takes care of siblings, others in the home while parents are sleeping? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Ask about alcohol use, does the child care for the parent when drunk?***

If the parent is drinking, does the child ever get in the car with them? \_\_\_\_\_

***Ask about name calling to the minor.***

### **Drawing**

Kids love to draw pictures. Give them paper, preferably on a clip board, with a drawing instrument and have them draw things that they have described: the cigarette or pipes, water bongs, grow lights, growing marijuana, drug lab. Also encourage them to draw their feelings, emotions, family, etc.