ADVANCED PRACTICE IN FORENSIC INTERVIEWING OF CHILDREN

NEW EVIDENCE-BASED ONLINE CURRICULUM LEADS THE WAY

ABOUT THE TRAINING FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Since its inception in 1985, CCAA has had a commitment to providing new and innovative forensic child interview training for police officers and child protection workers. In keeping with our tradition of offering “cutting edge” well researched training, CCAA is collaborating with the Centre for Investigative Interviewing to offer the first international evidence-based online training for interviewers.

This fully online course is designed for any professional who conducts or supervises investigative interviews with children, particularly interviews about alleged child abuse. The course focuses on the elicitation of narrative detail from children. Topics include choosing effective questions, eliciting reliable disclosures of abuse and tailoring interview techniques to the needs of individual children. Strategies for working with children from cultural minority groups and with complex communication needs are covered. The course also addresses the requirements of prosecution and the degree to which certain evidential details need to be clarified or followed up.

Trainees progress through the modules at their own pace and receive a certificate on completion. The course has been continually evolving over 10 years and is highly practical in nature. It includes innovative interactive computer exercises, which have been demonstrated in empirical research to promote adherence to best-practice (narrative based) interviewing. Each module also includes films (made by a professional film maker) that illustrate aspects of child development and interviewer skills, quizzes (where instant feedback on performance is provided), practical readings, and mock interview exercises (conducted with a tutor or a virtual child).

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE FORENSIC TRAINING IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

- Emphasizing a joint multidisciplinary approach to investigation.
- Building further investigation skills by adapting the investigation to the complexities of abusive families and recent research.
- Structuring training materials to use a competency-based approach to activities that will build on the investigator’s existing skill set.
- Utilizing dynamic, engaging instructors with significant expertise in their field.
- Offering knowledge relevant to work situations with results that can be immediately applied.

A preliminary evaluation of the training program has shown six important findings:

1) The proportion of open-ended questions utilized by interviewers has significantly increased, while the proportion of specific and leading questions have significantly decreased.
2) The length of interviews has significantly reduced.
3) There is no significant decrease in the elicitation of essential information (i.e., identification of the offender, location and time of abuse, the nature of the offence, possible witnesses and physical evidence) in field interviews.
4) Interviewers are successfully adhering to the narrative-based protocol in field interviews.
5) Interviewers have shown a significant improvement in the amount of positive “behaviours” or techniques displayed in interviews (e.g., using minimal encouragers, avoiding asking developmentally inappropriate questions).
6) Improvements in performance were well maintained over time, long after the training program had ceased.
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OUR TEAM

Lynn Barry, Ph.D. candidate, is the founder and Executive Director of CCAA. She has conducted forensic interviews as a child welfare worker for over 20 years and has developed and taught forensic child interviewing courses since 1985.

Martine Powell, Ph.D., Founding Director of the Centre for Investigative Interviewing, Australia
Martine has previously worked as a teacher and child abuse therapist, and has over 20 years experience as a researcher in child witness testimony and in the implementation and evaluation of investigative interviewer training programs internationally.

Sonja Brubacher, Ph.D., Researcher and Trainer
Sonja is a researcher and industry trainer, with a background in child memory development. She assists in the administration and management of vulnerable witness training programs in Canada.

Mairi Benson, Bsc, Ph.D. candidate, Researcher & Trainer, Australia
Mairi is a researcher and industry trainer who specializes in the administration of the computerized learning management system.

TRAINING MODULES

1. Establishing what constitutes ‘best practice’ guidelines
2. Defining the various questions
3. Understanding memory and language development
4. Choosing the most effective open-ended questions
5. Putting the right questions into practice
6. Introducing the topic of concern and eliciting a disclosure
7. Introducing the interview protocol
8. Assessing your progress
9. Repeated events
10. Evidentiary requirements
11. The “whole” story approach to investigating and interviewing
12. Cross-cultural issues
13. Interviewing witnesses with complex communication support needs
14. Putting it all together

The first 8 modules must be completed within one year of registration. The remaining modules are to be completed within 18 months.

STARTING APRIL 2015

HOW DO YOU REGISTER?
Go to: reg.conexsys.com/advancedforensic

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PARTICIPATE?

- A computer with internet (high speed or dial-up)
- Internet Explorer 10 or higher, Google Chrome, or Safari (recommended)
- An email address

COST FOR THE SERIES
- $2000

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS
If you have any special needs, we will do the best to accommodate you. Please let us know.

GRIEVANCES
Should be directed to the CCAA Board of Directors

CO-ORDINATORS
Lynn Barry
Martine Powell
Mairi Benson
Sonja Brubacher

CONTACT INFORMATION
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An Approved Provider of Category A Training for Social Workers (provider #1100 approved through ACE-ASWB). The Association is certified as an educational institution and approved by the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.