Picture This: The Disconnect Between Research and Practice in the Usage of Anatomical Diagrams
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Effective Use of Anatomical Diagrams
- Interviewer must understand the purpose for using anatomical diagrams
- Interviewer must be able to articulate purpose for using anatomical diagrams

Use of Anatomical Diagrams
- Pre-disclosure aid
- Clarification post-disclosure
- Use to supplement disclosure

Developmental Capabilities of the Child
- Use of diagrams requires dual representation of objects
- Symbolic object must have physical similarity to the represented object

Purpose for Using Anatomical Diagrams
1. Build rapport
2. Assess attention span
3. Gender differentiation
4. Assess the child’s self-representational skills
5. To arrive at a common language for body parts
   - Idiosyncratic terminology for parts of the body
   - Reinforces use of child’s words

Purpose for Using Anatomical Diagrams
1. To explore a child’s willingness and ability to communicate about touch
   - Practice narratives regarding positive and negative touch
2. Overcome motivational, developmental, linguistic or memory barriers to communication
3. Aid to facilitate broaching the topic of concern
4. To evaluate a child’s sexual abuse experience
   - Evaluation of child’s developmental level
   - Clarify ambiguous description of sexual activity
   - Idaho v. Wright, 497 U.S. 805 (1990)

Concerns with Utilizing Anatomical Diagrams
1. “Obviously, human figure drawings can be suggestive intrinsically.”
   - (Aldridge et al., 2004)
Recent Recommendations about Use of Diagrams

- “To minimize contamination, therefore, it is preferable that human figure drawings be introduced as late as possible in investigative interviews.” (Aldridge et al., 2004)
- “We caution professionals against the use of body maps in clinical and legal interviews.” (Willcock et al., 2006)

Recent Recommendations about Use of Diagrams

- “Despite relatively neutral questioning in association with the body diagrams, accuracy also declined, suggesting that the risks associated with HBD outweigh the advantages.” (Brown et al., 2011)
- “Forensic interviewers should immediately ceases [sic] using body outlines to elicit initial disclosures of abuse.” (Dickinson, 2011)

Research on Use of Anatomical Diagrams

Problems with Recent Research

Research does not replicate real world interviews
- Ethical restrictions on research
- Research does not address reluctance of child to report (Lyon, 2011)
- False reports not probed for details (Poole et al., 2011)
- If conducted in forensic context, false statements not corroborated or fully assessed for reliability (Aldridge et al., 2004; Dickinson, 2011; Teoh et al., 2010)

Problems with Recent Research

Research uses gender-neutral diagrams (Aldridge et al., 2004; Teoh et al., 2010)
- Research uses clothed human figure diagrams (Bruck, 2009; Dickinson, 2011)
- Body parts imprecisely located (Brown et al., 2007; Willcock et al., 2006)
- Developmentally, children may not see HFDs as representative of them (Bruck, 2009; Willcock et al., 2006)

Problems with Recent Research

False reports of touch were elicited using presumptive questioning
- “I heard that last time you were here (a minute ago) [the confederate’s name] helped you put on a fire service costume. What I want you to do now is I want you to use this picture to show me where [the confederate’s name] touched you when she put the costume on. Point to where she touched you.” (Willcock et al., 2006, p. 612)

Problems with Recent Research

False reports of touch were elicited using developmentally inappropriate questioning
- “That action was not touching.” (Bruck, 2009, p. 369)
- Diagrams utilized after exhaustive NICHD investigative interviews (Aldridge et al., 2004; Teoh et al., 2010)
- Research “touches” were innocuous / not salient (Brown et al., 2011; Bruck, 2009; Willcock et al., 2006)
- Children frequently innocently touched by adults

Problems with Recent Research

HFDs were utilized to probe for information on prior questions answered (Steward & Steward, 1996)
- “Before I asked you if you touched the magician’s chin and you said you didn’t. So when you did something with the wand on her face, did you touch her?” “Why did you not tell me about the touching before?” (Bruck, 2009, p. 366)
Problems with Recent Research

- Research utilized repeated, “mildly suggestive questions” with HFDs (Bruck, 2009, p. 363)
- Researchers told children they made mistakes with use of diagrams (Brown et al., 2005; Bruck, 2009)
- Diagrams used to “test” children’s comprehension of body names (Bruck, 2009)
  - Children asked to point to parts named by interviewer

Problems with Recent Research

- Research does not employ diagrams in manner consistent with forensic interview protocols
  - Purposeful introduction
  - Utilized with instruction/explanation to child
  - Yes/no questions employed to avoid presumptive questioning
  - Yes/no questions paired with open-ended questions
  - Physical demonstration alone inadequate for disclosure

And the Irony ...

- The selfsame researchers who eschew the utilization of anatomical diagrams in interviews to avoid “priming” the child to talk about sexual abuse will introduce actual pictures of sexual exploitation to encourage disclosures.
  - See, e.g., Dickenson, 2011

Do Props Help Children? Encouraging Research

Using a Human Figure Drawing (Aldridge et al., 2004)

- Used as post-disclosure aid after exhausting recollection w/ NICHD protocol
  - Validated investigative interviews by LE of 90 children 4 – 13 YO
  - 18% of total of forensically relevant details from use of human figure drawings; 27% for 4 – 7 YO
  - Use of diagrams generally accompanied by use of more direct questioning (recall memory)

Human Figure Drawings (Bruck, 2009)

- Children ages 3 to 7 years
- Clothed human figure drawings
- Children had difficulty recalling innocuous events that involved touching
- Difficulties may reflect incomplete encoding or lack of concept of touch

Do Human Figure Diagrams Help? (Teoh et al., 2010)

- 88 children; 4 – 13 YOs
- HFDs especially helped clarify reports by the oldest rather than the youngest children
- Did not evaluate the accuracy of the children’s reports

Do Human Figure Drawings Help? (Brown et al., 2007)

- 79 children 5 – 7 YO w/ photographer; touched in 7 places during costume changes/photographs
- Clothed & unclothed diagrams used post-disclosure after full NICHD interview
- Diagrams did not improve accuracy
- Unclothed diagrams NOT inherently suggestive
  - More than half failed to report innocuous touches received
  - No increase in false, forensically relevant reports
• Direct questions resulted in more false denials than assents
• Clothed body diagrams may lead to imprecision of reports

27 How Diagrams / Body Maps Assisted in Interviews
• Use of HFDs increased reports of new touches not previously disclosed in exhaustive interviews (Teoh et al., 2010)
• HFDs produced large numbers of forensically relevant details not previously disclosed (Aldridge, et al., 2004)
• Introduction of HFDs lead to elaborations of touches received (Teoh et al., 2010)

28 How Diagrams / Body Maps Assisted in Interviews
• Visual body cues help younger children access memories (Teoh et al., 2010; Aldridge et al., 2004)
• 4 – 7 YOs particularly benefited from use of HFDs in eliciting details (Aldridge et al., 2004; Teoh et al., 2010)
• HFDs helped clarify reports by older children (Teoh et al., 2010)

29 Encouraging Conclusions
• “We do not know whether the drawings might have been more useful, and less error inducing, if they had been introduced at the beginning of an interview, for example, to name body parts or to clarify verbal reports of touches as recommended by several professional and academic sources.” (Brown et al., 2007, p. 41)

30 Encouraging Conclusions
• “Perhaps HFDs could be used at the very beginning of interviews only to assess children’s knowledge of body part names while the interviewer is also assessing other cognitive functions.” (Bruck, 2009, p. 371)

31 Encouraging Conclusions
• “It appears that the advantages of using media outweigh the disadvantages.... Interviewers should use media in a planned manner.” Faller, 2007, p. 113)

32 Instructive Research on Anatomical Dolls
• Dolls alone do not encourage sexual acting out (Everson & Boat, 1990)
• Dolls are not traumatizing (Boat et al., 1990)
• When used by trained interviewers in the absence of suggestive questioning, dolls can be beneficial (Faller, 2005)

33 Legal Use and Implications
• Refresh recollection
• Demonstrates internal consistency
• Provides clarification
• Evidentiary purposes
• Demonstrative evidence
• Not hearsay or testimonial
• Neither cumulative nor probative in nature

34 Defending the Use of Anatomical Diagrams
• Understand and articulate purpose for use
• Follow a recognized protocol
• Distinguish use in interviews from articles critiquing their efficacy
• Understand and reference suggestibility research
• Be familiar with applicable research on anatomical dolls
Work within an MDT
Clarify all reported touches and CORROBORATE

References on Diagrams

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Questions or comments?