

HOW CAN YOU BEST HELP YOUR CHILD?

Parents often feel the need to know all the details of the abuse from their child. Please do not question your child about the incident; this can make the official investigation more difficult. The best thing you can do to help your child is to just listen if your child wants to talk about what happened.

If your child is feeling guilty or responsible for the abuse, it is important to reassure them that they are not responsible for what happened, you are not angry with them and you support them completely, no matter the outcome of the investigation.

Please remember that disclosing abuse is very difficult and your child may be feeling a range of emotions. Let them know that they will be able to recover from the experience, both physically and emotionally.

Most of all, let your child know that you love them. It is important that they have someone to trust during the process of disclosing and investigation.

Please watch this preparation video with your child before your appointment.



Child Advocacy Center Office

Crime Victim Services

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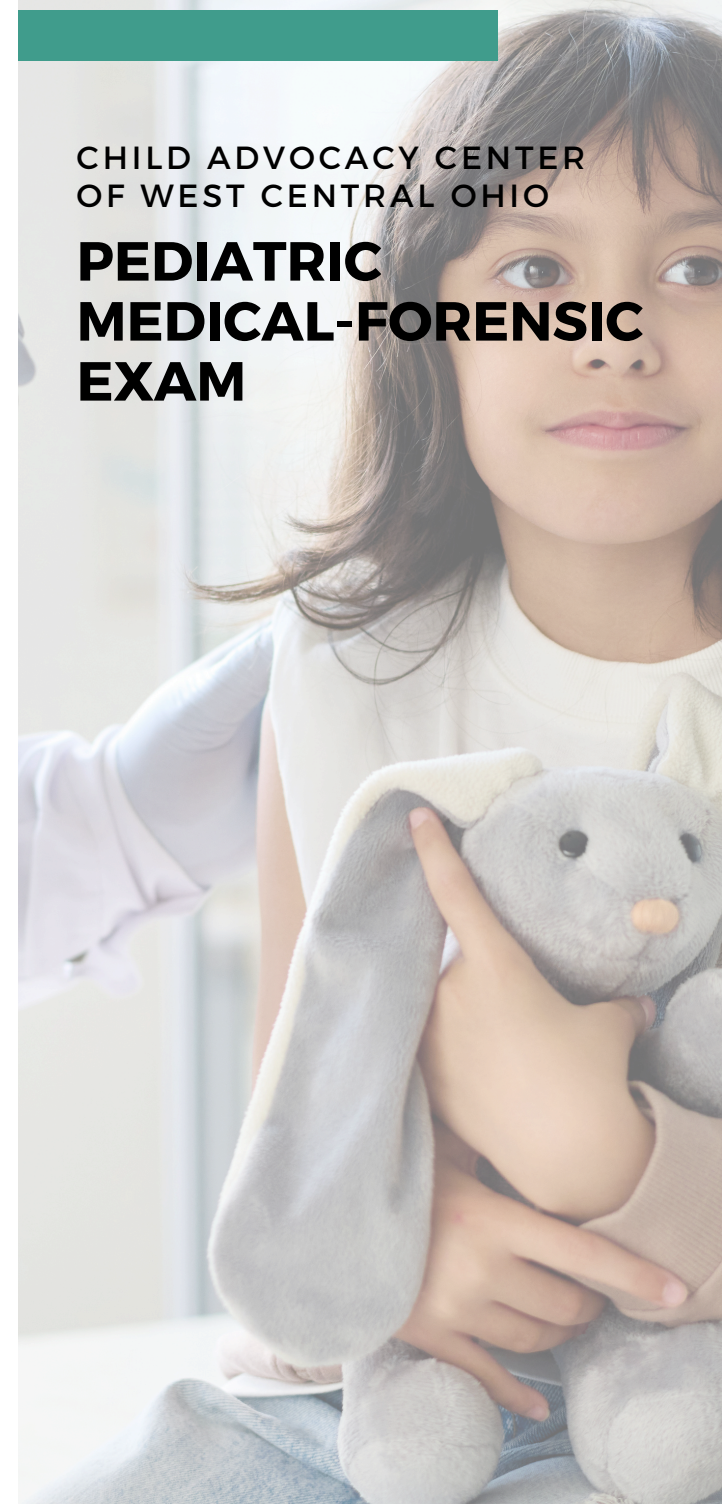
Date of Medical Exam

My Advocate

CrimeVictimServices.org
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CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
OF WEST CENTRAL OHIO

PEDIATRIC MEDICAL-FORENSIC EXAM



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does my child need a medical exam?

To look for old and new injuries.

To collect evidence of potential sexual contact.

To answer any questions they may have about their body or health.

Why can't our regular pediatrician do the exam?

This exam requires special training and knowledge concerning sexual abuse.

Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (PSANEs) are specially trained and provide trauma-informed, patient-centered exams.

What will the exam involve?

The PSANE will start by doing a head-to-toe exam, similar to a routine pediatrician visit. They may do a genital and anal exam. This will involve gently touching the genitals to thoroughly examine for old or new injuries.

Photographs will be taken at this time as well. In some cases, cotton swabs will be used to collect evidence from different areas of the body.

How long will the exam take?

The entire exam will take about an hour and a half, including a forensic interview. The PSANE will be able to answer questions after the exam is completed.

If the contact happened a long time ago, why does my child need an exam?

It is important to have an exam to assess healed injuries, and answer any questions the child or caregiver may have.

Most importantly, we want to assure the child that their body is healthy.

Will the exam hurt or make them feel uncomfortable?

The PSANEs are specially trained to examine children who have been abused. It is always our priority to ensure the child's experience is as comfortable as possible.

We will not force an exam if the child appears to be uncomfortable. We allow all patients to have control over their body during the exam process.

Will the nurse be able to tell if my child has been abused?

In most cases, we cannot make that determination. If the exam is normal, this does not mean that abuse could not have happened. Most types of sexual abuse do not cause injury or infection. If there was an injury, it may have fully healed by the time of the examination.

Can I stay with my child during the exam?

You can stay in the room during the exam if it provides comfort to your child, but we will ask to speak with your child in private first.

We allow children to assent to the examination and choose who they would like to be in the room.

Many children choose to do the exam by themselves, and that's okay, too. A chaperone will always be present.

Will there be any evidence collection during the exam?

Forensic (DNA) evidence will be collected during your child's visit if the incident occurred within the allowable timeframe, typically 96-120 hours. If the incident occurred beyond this timeframe, the likelihood of evidence recovery is slim, but an examination is still very important

What is the difference between a CAC visit and a SAFE exam at the hospital?

Forensic exams will be conducted similarly in either location. Additional medical interventions may be available at the hospital, however, and will incur a cost.

Will I get a bill for my child's exam?

No, CAC clinic exams are completely free.