Drug Endangered Children Investigations

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Video Clip

Excerpt From:
A&E Investigative Reports: “Meth’s Deadly High” 1997
Course Objectives & Overview

-Learn how to build a child endangerment case
  - Identify Victims
  - Elements of Forensic Interview
  - Documentation
    - Hazards
    - Evidence Collection
    - Photographs
    - Written Reports
Clandestine labs and drug endangered environments are in every community and law enforcement officers must recognize that the children living in these environments are victims of Child Abuse.
Identify Victims

- In the past the narcotic officer would place the child with a family member, friend or neighbor.

- Now children are recognized as victims and potential witnesses.

- Apply appropriate DEC protocols
  - Medical
  - Psych/Social
Multi-Discipline Response

Use your resources available for the investigation

• Child Protective Services
• Narcotics Officers
• Medical Personnel
• Specialize/Local Law Enforcement Investigations
• Prosecutors
Child Abuse laws

- Insert State Law
Elements of Forensic Interviews

- Victims
  - Record on Audio Tape as a minimum
  - Determine who is the primary caregiver
  - Establish the Daily Routine
  - What rooms does the child have access to.
  - What the victim has seen in the home
  - Are there any strange smells
  - Does mom or dad ask them to take stuff or money to friends
Semi Modified Cognitive Forensic Interview

**RAPPORT BUILDING**
- GENERAL INFORMATION

**NARRATIVE**
- ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

**DIRECT QUESTIONS**
- BASE QUESTIONS ON THE INFORMATION THAT IS OBTAINED DURING THE NARRATIVE

**NEUTRAL CLOSE**
- CHANGE THE TOPIC

Interviews (continued)

- Suspect (s)  
  *Miranda warnings*
- Determine the time they cook
- Where are the children when they are cooking the Meth
- Does the Child Go into the Lab
- Ask about their usage of Drugs
Interviews (continued)

- Witnesses

- Ask if they have ever seen the Children in the Lab

- Have they seen any of the Children's toys, or belongings in the Lab
Documentation

- Hazards
- Scene Survey
- Evidence Collection
- Photographs
- Written Reports
The Scene - Photographs

- Photograph everything
- Identify the Hazards and photograph
- Measurements
  - Heights
  - Distances to the Victims belongings
S-L-X Denatured Alcohol


Alcohol Desnaturalizado
Diluyente de goma laca. Limpia vidrio y metal. Combustible de baja polución para harnos marinos.

DANGER! POISON. FLAMMABLE. MAY BE FATAL OR CAUSE BLINNESS IF SWALLOWED. VAPOR HARMFUL. Read other cautions on back panel.

ONE GALLON 3.785 LITERS

Measure Height and Distance
Measure the Victims
Height and Reach
Backpack lab
Acid – but no pool
Drink bottles

Why would a child check for a hazardous chemical in something familiar?
This was found on the floor
“The baby is never in there”

Baby formula in lab area
This is a school age child’s bedroom

• Where is the bed?

• What clothes are clean?
The baby’s world!

Item used in HCL Gas Generator
This is where the child sleeps
Borrowed electricity

The child’s world
Electrical wiring on the ground

Notice the extension cord near the child’s slide
Look for the hazards

Large and Small

Rescue, Defend, Shelter, Support.
A child’s play area
Iodine stains on the child’s bedroom wall
Orange juice and pizza

Acid
Two layer liquids
Written Documentation

- **Police Reports**
  - Drug Department Report
  - Supplemental Child Abuse Report
  - Include a Supplement Describing the scene

- **Diagrams**
  - Overall Layout of the Residence
  - Specialized Diagrams
    * Duct Work
    * Electrical
Mr. Collin Raye wrote, produced, and recorded this song for the CHILDHELP FOUNDATION.

The 11th Commandment

Available: www.childhelpusa.com
“Children living in clandestine labs and drug endangered environments need to be heard, you the investigators can give those silent victims a voice”
Meth Labs and Children Don’t Mix

It’s Child Abuse

To Report Suspicious Activity Call 1.877.STP METH