Forensic interviews with children in Scotland:
A survey of interview practices among police.

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Abstract

The present study surveyed 91 police interviewers in Scottish police forces about their perceptions of how well they adhered to the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines. Almost all respondents (97%) received the appropriate national training and overwhelmingly indicated (again 97%) that their training equipped them either quite, very, or extremely well for conducting their interviews. Not surprisingly, therefore, that most interviewers (88%) believed that their interviews allowed them to obtain full and complete accounts of the events being investigated. However, aside from this positive self evaluation there are reasons to be concerned about some aspects of the interviews being conducted; 1) Most interviewers (78%) received no refresher training, 2) no interviewers received formal feedback about the quality of interviews that they conducted, 3) practice interviews were reportedly not included in most interviews, 4) the use of open-ended prompts were not widely used with 20% of interviewers indicating that they were rarely used, and 5) interviews are not currently being electronically recorded. These results are discussed with respect to the context of child interviewing in Scotland and recommendations for future training.

Keywords: forensic interviewing, child abuse, police practice, survey

Forensic interviews with children in Scotland:

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Child abuse is a significant problem and one of the primary reasons that children are brought to the attention of police. A recent survey of 2869 young adults in the UK revealed that 11% of the boys and 21% of the girls had experienced sexual abuse, and that 6% and 8%, respectively, had experienced physical abuse before they turned 18 (May-Chahal & Cawson, 2005). Child abuse is similarly prevalent in other developed countries (Fanslow, Robinson, Crengle, & Perese, 2007). In the vast majority of cases, abusers are family members or known members of the children's communities, and it is common for children to be repeatedly victimized. It is also common for children to delay disclosure, perhaps because they have been sworn to secrecy, feel embarrassed or ashamed, or want to protect people they love (Pipe, Lamb, Orbach, & Cederborg, 2007; May-Chahal & Cawson, 2005) and an unknown number of abuse victims never report their experiences to anyone.

The problems stemming from child abuse are manifold and often long-lasting. For example, many children in the UK who were abused before the age of 7 years reported re-victimization as well as externalizing problems, educational difficulties, and health problems when interviewed as teenagers (Frothingham, Hobbs, Wynne, Yee, Goyal, & Wadsworth, 2000). Victims of child sexual abuse are twice as likely to become involved in abusive relationships later in life (Fanslow et al., 2007). Moreover, participation in the legal system and testifying in court are associated with poorer mental health

outcomes, especially when the experiences are particularly stressful for the individuals concerned (Quas, et al. 2005). It is difficult to estimate the full costs of child abuse to society, but they are likely to be large given the numbers of children involved and the long-term consequences.

Recognizing the broad social consequences of child abuse, considerable efforts have been made to protect children by effective policing, with emphasis on the collection of evidence in forensic interviews with children. Investigators must rely a great deal on children's formal statements because there is often very little other evidence. Children's statements not only provide accounts of what happened, but may also reveal investigative leads that can be followed up to corroborate the children's reports (Darvish, Hershkowitz, Lamb, & Orbach, 2008).

Information gained in investigative interviews thus plays a crucial role in the investigation of child abuse. Fortunately, more than 30 years of research on child interviewing clearly shows how investigative interviews should, and should not, be conducted (see Brainerd & Reyna, 2005; Eisen, Quas, & Goodman, 2002; Kuehnle & Connell, 2009; Lamb, Hershkowitz, Orbach, & Esplin, 2008; Milne & Bull, 1999; Poole & Lamb, 1998; Westcott, Davies, & Bull, 2002). Interview guidelines have been informed by the findings of experimental research and literature reviews (Bruck, Ceci, Francoeur, & Renick, 1995; Bussey, 1992; Steward & Steward, 1996; for reviews see Bull, 2001; Eisen, Quas, & Goodman, 2002; Poole & Lamb, 1998; Westcott, Davies & Bull, 2002) as well as field studies of actual forensic interviews with alleged victims (Lamb, Hershkowitz, Sternberg, Esplin, Hovav, Manor, & Yudilevitch,

1996; Orbach, Hershkowitz, Lamb, Sternberg, Esplin, & Horowitz, 2000; Sternberg, Lamb, Davies, & Westcott, 2001).

All experts agree on the importance of allowing children to provide accounts of what happened *in their own words*. The most reliable information is obtained when interviewers use open-ended prompts for information such as “tell me what happened” and “tell me more about that;” such prompts also yield information that is most likely to be accurate (Dent & Stephenson, 1979; Goodman, Hirschman, Hepps, & Rudy, 1991; Lamb et al., 2008; Orbach & Lamb, 2001). By contrast, information is likely to be of poorer quality when interviewers interject information or ask leading/suggestive questions that communicate what they expect to be told (see Kulkofsky & London, in press; London & Kulkofsky, 2010 for reviews).

Professionals have over the years translated these research findings into guidelines for interviewers in many different jurisdictions and countries. These include for example, the Memorandum of Good Practice (Home Office, 1992), The Evidence of Children and other Vulnerable Witnesses (Law Comission, 1997), Achieving Best Evidence (Home Office, 2002, 2007), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Protocol (Lamb et al., 2008; Orbach, Hershkowitz, Lamb, Sternberg, Esplin, & Horowitz, 2000) and the Guidance for Interviewing Child Witnesses and Victims in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2003). The Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines are thus informed by an evidence base used in the development of several other interview guidelines of which some have continued to be the subject of intensive research efforts (i.e., the NICHD Protocol, Lamb et al., 2008).

The Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines require that forensic interviews be jointly conducted by both social workers and police officer. One interviewer takes the lead role and asks questions while the other keeps a handwritten record of what is said by the lead interviewer and the child. In Scotland, interviewers are typically trained for 1 week by experienced interviewers and social workers. Once the training is complete police officers begin to conduct interviews with children. Training involves familiarizing interviewers with the guidelines, practicing interviews with trained actors, receiving feedback on practice interviews, learning about communicative and developmental issues, and learning about the role of the interview in the wider context of criminal proceedings. As with other existing guidelines the following components are emphasized (see Scottish Executive, 2003, for further details):

1) *Rapport building*: *I*nterviewers should always establish rapport to put children at ease. This is an opportunity for interviewers to overcome reticence, and to gain insights into the children's ability and/or willingness to communicate. 2) *Ground rules:* Children need to be made aware that they are in control of the interview, that they should not feel pressured to answer questions if they do not know the answers and that they can ask interviewers to explain anything that they do not understand. 3) *Telling the truth:* Interviewers should explain importance of giving true accounts of what happened. 4) *The practice interview:* A practice interview about a neutral topic extends rapport-building and should precede discussion of substantive issues so that children learn that they will be doing most of the talking**.** 5) *Free narrative using open-*

ended prompts: The style of prompting used in the practice interview should be continued into the substantive phase where children are encourage to provide free-recall narratives of what happened in their own words. 6) *Specific questions:* After children have described what happened in their own words, interviewers often need to ask additional focused questions, often in the form of 'Wh' questions. These questions should only ask about topics that have been mentioned by the children. 7) *Closed questions:* That yield 'yes' or 'no' responses are sometimes required, however they can often yield incorrect answers as they may refer to details that are not remembered well, causing children to guess in an effort to provide an answer. 8) *Leading questions and suggestive questions*: Children should not be asked questions that imply that particular answers are correct or contain information about events that the child has not already disclosed.

The present study

There has been no previous evaluation of the quality of forensic interviews with children in Scotland, so we do not know whether interviewers are adhering to the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines. Accordingly, we surveyed police interviewers throughout the Scottish police forces, using a questionnaire based on one used by Dando, Wilcock, and Milne (2008), asking how frequently respondents used the recommended interview techniques, and how effective they perceived these techniques to be. Respondents were asked to describe their general experience of interviewing, and could provide any other information about forensic interviewing.

Respondents indicated how long they had been conducting interviews and what training they had received. Additional comments were invited.

Method

Sample and procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to 160 serving police officers working in Family/Child Protection Units in all 8 of the Scottish police forces (Central Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway, Fife, Grampian, Lothian & Borders, Northern, Strathclyde, and Tayside). The numbers of surveys distributed to each police force was determined in advance by face-to-face consultations with managers in the Family/Child Protection Units. In small units, all staff members were given opportunities to complete questionnaires, whereas managers in larger forces determined that this would be too resource intensive, so they selected respondents so as to sample the geographic areas involved comprehensively.

A cover letter explained that the aim of the survey was to gather interviewers' impressions of forensic interviews with children. Respondents were provided envelopes in which they could seal their completed questionnaire and be assured that their anonymity would be protected. No data was collected to indicate the individual police forces of the respondents to further protect the respondents' anonymity. The questionnaires remained in their sealed envelopes and securely stored in the respective police stations until they were collected by the first author. Some questionnaires were mailed back to the first author. The decision as to how the questionnaires were returned was decided by each police force individually. The questionnaires were distributed and collected between May 2008 and February 2009.

Respondents completed the questionnaires during work time and received no payment for their participation. The project was reviewed and approved by the School of Social and Health Science Research Ethics Committee at Abertay University Dundee in advance of data collection.

Materials

The questionnaire was based on one used by Dando et al. (2008). It asked for both quantitative and qualitative information of the following types: 1) *Personal information:* Respondents were asked for information about their age, gender, rank, and length of service. 2) *Experience interviewing:* Respondents were asked about the amount of time they spent conducting forensic interviews, the numbers of interviews they had conducted, the types of crimes that they interviewed children about, and whether they thought their interviewing yielded full and accurate accounts of what happened. They were also asked to indicate whether they felt they were under time pressures to complete interviews and, if so, to describe those pressures. 3) *Training:* Respondents were asked about any specialist training that they had received in addition to their initial training, refresher training courses they had attended, and how long ago they had received such training. They were also asked whether they thought their training had provided them with the skills needed to conduct interviews effectively and whether there were any aspects of training that could be improved. 4) *Feedback:* Respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not they received feedback about their interviews from other interviewers or supervisors and, if so, to describe the nature of the feedback. 5) *Specific interview components:* Respondents were then asked to

provide details about specific components of the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines. They were asked about the extent to which they complied with recommendations regarding rapport-building, ground rules, telling the truth, the practice interview, open-ended questions, specific questions, closed questions, and leading questions, and were then asked to indicate whether the recommended practices had the desired effect using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). 6) *Overall impressions:* A final section allowed respondents to provide qualitative data about their overall impressions based on their operational experience. The respondents' handwritten comments were transposed to a computer file, and categorized by 3 raters.

Results

Sample details and personal information

The total response rate was 63% (100 responses). Nine responses were excluded because the interviewers indicated that they did not actually conduct forensic interviews with children as lead interviewers, thus, 91 were included in the analyses. The respondents' mean age was 37.13 years (SD= 6.40; range = 25 to 52); 42% were males and 58% females. The mean length of service was 11.21 years (SD= 5.60 years; range = 3.83 to 26.75). Most of the respondents indicated they were Constables (95.6%) which is the rank at which police officers enter the police force while the remaining officers were Sergeants which is one rank higher (4.4%).

Experience interviewing

On average, the respondents had been conducting forensic interviews with children for 4.22 years (SD = 4.19; range = 0.5 months to 23 years) with 1.9 interviews (SD = 1.30; range = 0.04 to 5.0) conducted each week. Most respondents interviewed children about sexual abuse (92.3%) and physical abuse (69.7%); fewer interviewed children about neglect (23.1%). Respondents claimed that they usually (64%), almost always (21.3%) or always (2.2%) obtained full and complete accounts whereas 12.4% reported that they rarely obtained full and complete accounts.

When asked why they were not able to obtain full and complete accounts, most respondents referred to characteristics of the interviewees. For example, 23% of respondents commented that factors such as secrecy, unwillingness to talk to the police, and the desire to protect suspects were important. A further 9% of respondents indicated that the children's ages prevented them from providing full and accurate accounts, while 10% said that the quality of the interview 'depends on the child.'

Most respondents indicated that they never (23.1%) or rarely (60.4%) experienced time pressures, although a minority (16.5%) indicating that they usually or almost always did. Reasons for time pressure were described by 52% of respondents. For 30% of respondents, pressure was created by the need to proceed urgently, without adequate preparation time, to interview multiple suspected victims and witnesses, to coordinate with social workers to be present, especially when suspects were already in detention. Other sources of time pressure included the need to complete interviews before the end of a school day (12% of respondents) or without parental knowledge (7%

of respondents), and pressure from parents eager for interviews to end. Limited child attention span was indicated as a source of time pressure by 9% of respondents, while the concern that children were at risk of further abuse was cited by 8% of respondents. Only 2% of respondents indicated that other duties created pressure to complete interviews more quickly than they would have liked.

Training

Almost all (96.7%) of the respondents had received Joint Investigative Interviewer Training. When asked whether they had received any additional refresher type training 22% indicated that they had, with the majority (78%) reporting no additional training. On average, the last training course attended by the respondents was 1.82 years earlier (SD = 2.46; range = 1 month to 12 years). Respondents thought that the training had equipped them with the necessary interviewing skills quite well (52.7%), very well (33.0%) or extremely well (11%), with only a very small number indicating that the training had not equipped them very well to conduct interviews (3.3%).

Nineteen respondents questioned the content of the training, with a number of respondents highlighting the inadequate attention paid to the demands of note-taking. A further 8 respondents said that ‘experience’ was the best ‘training, ’ while 8 respondents were concerned about the absence of refresher training.

When asked to comment about aspects of the training that could be improved, 25% of respondents recommended more practice interviews, information about what to do when children did not disclose, practical

exercises, more input from experienced interviewers, information about the technical aspects regarding video recording, courtroom training, examples of real interviews and feedback about their interviews. In addition, 11% of respondents indicated a need for refresher training.

Feedback

Only 39.6% of the respondents indicated that they received any feedback about the interviews they conducted; 24% of the respondents said that they received verbal feedback from colleagues, social workers, or managers usually immediately after the interviews were conducted. Much of the ‘feedback’ was about case-specific issues rather than the quality of interviewing; as one respondent wrote: “A debrief is always conducted but this assesses the *content* of the interview rather than the *quality* [emphasis added].” Only 2% of the respondents indicated that they received written feedback by email and this was not further detailed.

Specific interview techniques

Perceived frequency of use. Table 1 displays the frequencies with which officers engaged in specific practices described in the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines. During the pre-substantive phase of the interviews, 97% of the respondents reported that they always or almost always established rapport, 85% always or almost always explained the ground rules and demonstrated understanding truth and lies. However, 87% never or rarely conducted practice interviews.

Insert Table 1 about here

In the substantive phase, 88% of the respondents indicated that they always or almost always used specific *Wh*. questions, whereas only 43% of respondents indicated that they always or almost always used open prompts. However, 20% of the interviewers never or rarely used open prompts to elicit information during interviews. Almost all of the respondents, fully 99%, indicated that they never or rarely asked leading or suggestive questions.

A subsequent analysis explored whether adherence to the guidelines varied depending on the amount of experience interviewing children. Respondents were divided into two groups of respondents based on their years of experience interviewing children. There were no significant differences between these groups, with all X^2 values lower than 9.51 and all p values greater than .05. These findings clearly indicate that the amount of self-reported experience of interviewing children does not affect the perceived use of various interview techniques.

Perceived effectiveness. Table 2 displays the officers' average perceptions regarding the extent to which the various recommended practices helped children describe their experiences. A Chi-square analysis of the respondents' ratings revealed significant differences for each component with all X^2 values exceeding 7.76 and p values lower than .05. Therefore, we can conclude that these respondents clearly perceived some techniques to be more useful than others.

Insert Table 2 about here

Inspection of Table 2 shows that rapport, ground rules and the truth and lie demonstration were all seen to be, at the very least, 'quite' effective

components of the pre-substantive phase of the interview by 85% of the respondents. However, the respondents were split regarding the perceived effectiveness of practice interviews, with 52% indicating that practice interviews were not very effective or not at all effective, whereas the remaining 48% thought that they were quite, very, or always effective.

In the substantive phase of the interview, 12% of respondents indicated that open prompts were not effective while the remaining 88% thought that open questions were either quite, very, or always effective. However, only 15% of respondents thought that closed Y/N questions were not effective, while the remaining 85% indicated that closed Y/N questions were quite, very and always effective.

Specific Wh. questions were rated as quite, very, or always effective by 100% of the respondents. The majority of respondents (83%) reported that leading questions were not effective components of the interview, however, while the remaining 17% thought that leading and suggestive questions were quite effective.

As above, a second set of analyses asked whether the perceived effectiveness of specific guidelines varied depending on the respondents' experience. There were again no associations between years of experience and ratings of effectiveness with all X^2 values lower than 6.79 and p values greater than .08.

Overall impressions of interviewing

Nearly 60% of the respondents provided general comments about investigative interviewing on the final page of the questionnaire. The most

common theme, voiced by 30% of the respondents, concerned having to write down what was said in interviews because 1) it disrupted the flow and created long pauses that were sometimes filled with ‘small talk’ while the scribes caught up, 2) children found it distracting and it thus adversely affected the rapport that had been established, 3) children sometimes forgot what they had just said when asked to repeat their answers, 4) scribes missed out details, 5) scribes found it particularly difficult to note the lengthy responses to open prompts and thus preferred more direct and focused questions, 6) non-verbal behavior was not captured, and 7) it was sometimes not possible to read illegible and poorly spelled notes. A similar number of interviewers welcomed the possible introduction of electronic recording, typically noting that “Child interviews need to be visually recorded.” One interviewer placed the issue poignantly in context by writing that “I find it appalling that we can tape record all accused persons but still manually record interviews of children.”

Discussion

This survey of police officers yielded a number of important insights regarding the quality of investigative interviews of children in Scotland. Almost all (97%) had received JITT training as part of their work which they felt equipped them quite, very, or extremely well with the skills they needed. Not surprisingly, therefore, the majority of interviewers in this sample (88%) also believed that their interviews allowed them to obtain full and complete accounts of the events discussed. Therefore, it appears that interviewing practices in Scotland are perceived to be very good by interviewers included in this study.

However, other responses raise potential concerns about interviewing practices. First, many interviewers (78%) indicated that they had received no additional ‘refresher’ training after their initial 1-week initial training course. Because half of the police officers had been interviewing children for more than 3 years (some as long as 23 years), they would surely benefit from additional opportunities to broaden and extend their knowledge beyond that which can be conveyed in the initial 1-week courses. It is important to recognize the value of continued professional development for police officers in what is a challenging, demanding and specialized area of policing. Effective interviewing demands a broad understanding of many aspects of child development and of the complexity of child maltreatment. The 1-week courses that are currently used should be complemented with further training opportunities being made available on a regular basis. Advanced and supplementary training is particularly important in light of dramatic improvements in our knowledge and understanding of child forensic interviewing and of children’s eyewitness memories both here and abroad (Bull, 2010; Lamb et al., 2008; Lamb, La Rooy, Katz & Malloy, In Preparation; La Rooy, Katz, Malloy & Lamb, In Press; La Rooy & Lamb, 2010). Providing access to up-to-date training that incorporates new information is essential to ensure that current practice reflects the best evidence available.

Second, there was little evidence that interviewers received feedback about the quality of their interviews with children. Although about 40% of respondents indicated that they did receive feedback, they noted that the ‘feedback’ normally pertained to the specifics of the cases at hand rather than their developing skills as interviewers. Field research shows that continued

feedback about interview practices are essential to ensure that interviewers adhere to recommended practices (Lamb, Sternberg, Orbach, Esplin, & Mitchell, 2002a; Lamb, Sternberg, Orbach, Hershkowitz, Horowitz, & Esplin, 2002b, Fisher, 2010). One-off training sessions currently of the type provided in Scotland and elsewhere around the world increase knowledge and awareness of desirable practices but seldom affect the way that interviewers actually interview children, particularly with regard to the use open-ended prompts (that draw on free recall memory) and the avoidance of focused prompts (that draw on recognition memory) (Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Sternberg et al., 2001; Orbach et al., 2000). Only when interviewers are given specific feedback on the quality of their interviews on a regular basis do they continue to perform interviews of high quality (Lamb et al., 2002b, 2008). Providing ongoing feedback and support to child interviewers should be considered a priority

Third, there were disconcerting responses regarding specific components of the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines. Most interviewers (87%) reported that they never or rarely conducted practice interviews (discussion of neutral topics designed to prepare the child for the main part of the interview) even though nearly half (48%) believed the practice interview to be quite, very, or always effective or helpful. In fact, the amount of information obtained using open-prompts can be further maximized when interviewers practice using open-ended prompts in the pre-substantive phase of the interview. In one study, children who were given practice interviews reported as much as 2 ½ times more information in response to the first question asked during the substantive phase of the interview (Sternberg et al., 1997). Practice

interviews thus lay the groundwork for the information gathering that follows (Brubacher, Roberts & Powell, 2009; Sternberg et al., 1997). One possible explanation of these findings is that the respondents were unclear as to what the practice interview actually is. Although, the practice interview is clearly described in the Scottish Executive (2003) guidelines it may be that the interviewers perceive it as a form of rapport building. Indeed, practice interviews do extend the opportunities for rapport building and the guidelines may have blurred the distinction between rapport and the benefits of a practice interview by subsuming them under the single heading "Rapport building with a practice interview." Managers and police trainers may thus need to clarify the role and benefits of the practice interview in future training.

Fourth, it appears that interviewers do not use open-ended prompts as frequently as they should; there is extensive evidence that they are the most effective way of obtaining information from children in forensic interviews (Dent & Stephenson, 1979; Goodman, Hirschman, Hepps, & Rudy, 1991; Lamb et al., 2008; Orbach & Lamb, 2001). Fewer than half of the respondents (43%) indicated that they always, or almost always used open-ended prompts whereas a large minority (20%) indicated that they never, or only rarely, used open prompts, even though most (88% overall) believed that open prompts are indeed quite, very, or always effective. Previous research shows that interviewers tend to exaggerate their use of open-ended questions, the most important element of evidence based practice in this area, so these responses raise serious concerns about the quality of investigative interviewing in Scotland. Of course, the reason that fewer than expected open-prompts are being used may be due to the fact that interviews are not routinely

electronically recorded in many parts of Scotland. Writing down long responses to open-prompts is likely to be very difficult, if not impossible, for child interviewers.

Fifth, most interviewers (88%) indicated that they always, or almost always used Wh. questions, while all respondents thought that these type of focused questions were quite, very or always effective in eliciting information. These findings starkly contrast with responses regarding the perceived use and effectiveness of open prompts. Again, the widespread use of these prompts may also be related to the lack of electronic recording facilities in Scotland in that interviews need to ask questions that elicit shorter answers because they have to write them down. It is also noteworthy that while the advantages of using open-ended prompts as opposed to Wh. questions have been known to psychologists for decades, the results of such research have taken time to reach a broad audience (e.g., Lamb et al., 2008)

The survey has clearly yielded support for suggestions that investigative interviews with children should be electronically recorded (Scottish Executive, 2007). Available evidence overwhelmingly shows that electronic recording of interviews is the best way to preserve evidence: is not possible to know exactly what was said in interviews unless they were recorded because handwritten notes omit too much information (Ceci & Bruck, 2000; Lamb, Orbach, Sternberg, Hershkowitz, & Horowitz, 2000; Warren & Woodall, 1999). Research has also shown that the types of questions asked also affect the types of answers received, again underscoring the need for exact recordings of what was said (Ceci & Bruck, 2000). Evidence is lost when interviews are not recorded. Further, the absence of recorded interviews

makes it impossible to accurately and directly determine whether or not the Scottish Executive (2003) recommendations are being followed by the police officers interviewing children and also makes it very difficult for interviewers, trainers and managers, to review interview practices and facilitate individual professional development. Moreover, as already noted, the absence of electronic recording may cause interviewers to favor asking closed questions simply because it is easier to write down short answers to questions.

Previous research in the UK makes clear that Government guidelines about interviewing child witnesses are not always implemented (Lamb et al., 2009; Sternberg et al., 2001). Rather, the release of Government guidelines is the *beginning* of a process designed to improve interviewing standards – not the end of a process. The quality of interviews must be regularly checked to ensure that standards are achieved and maintained. Such evaluations also allow training resources to be targeted most effectively (Lamb et al., 2002a, 2002b).

Substantial resources are currently invested in training police officers and social workers in Scotland. It is vital to evaluate the success of training initiatives, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the training provided. Such evaluation is needed because more resources are likely to be invested in training when the electronic recoding of interviews in Scotland becomes mandatory in the near future. This survey has identified that police interviewers follow some but not all of the recommendations in the current guidelines which may help focus future training initiatives. Future research in other jurisdictions as well as with other groups of professionals (e.g., Social Workers) may be similarly illuminating.

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Table 1. Police officers' reported practices (Percentages).

Component	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Usually	4 Almost Always	5 Always	N
Pre-Substantive Phase						
Rapport	0	0	3.3	17.6	79.1	91
Ground rules	0	3.3	12.2	25.6	58.9	90
Telling the truth	0	1.1	13.3	17.8	67.8	90
Practice interview	60.0	26.7	2.2	8.9	2.2	90
Substantive Phase						
Open prompts	3.4	17.0	36.4	29.5	13.6	88
Specific Wh. questions	0	0	12.1	41.8	46.2	91
Closed Y/N questions	2.2	19.1	33.7	29.2	15.7	89
Leading	56.7	42.2	1.1	0	0	90

Table 2. Police officers' ratings of the *effectiveness* of specific recommended practices (Percentages)

Component	1 Not effective at all	2 Not very effective	3 Quite effective	4 Very effective	5 Always effective	N
Pre-Substantive Phase						
Rapport	0	1.1	38.5	49.5	11.0	91
Ground rules	1.2	11.0	59.8	25.6	2.4	82
Telling the truth	0	9.6	55.4	30.1	4.8	83
Practice interview	6.5	45.2	32.3	16.1	0	31
Substantive Phase						
Open prompts	0	11.8	52.6	34.2	1.3	76
Specific Wh. questions	0	0	25.3	57.1	17.6	91
Closed Y/N questions	2.2	12.4	48.3	31.5	5.6	89
Leading	37.3	45.8	16.9	0	0	59