

CHILD INTERVIEWING IN LEGAL CASES. A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Child interviewing in legal cases is a multidisciplinary, multiprofessional topic that has been addressed as a following realisation, that accurate and eligible oral evidence, information or confession from children can only be obtained by a specific genre of interviews. Child development experts and researchers have advocated for specialised techniques for forensic child interviewing since the 80s and 90s, along with specialised police training and practice. In the European Union the last decade could rightly be called the decade of child-friendly justice. During these ten years several legal instruments were implemented about children's involvement in legal proceedings and their special needs and rights as a vulnerable group. This shift is reflected in national legislations, however, there is still room for improvement, especially in the everyday practices within the interrogation rooms.

Keywords: *child-friendly justice, forensic interviewing, child interviewing, police training, children first*

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's involvement in legal proceedings has always been a controversial domain for developmental psychologists. While child interviewing in legal cases is mainly connected to police activity and criminal cases where a child is involved, children participate in civil proceedings, as well. Children may be victims, witnesses or offenders in criminal cases, and parties in civil cases, for example, in divorce cases. Whether they are a suspect, victim or witness a child can be assumed to have gone through at least one traumatic incident that may shape their perceptions and emotions, while it is also traumatic to talk about these events and personal feelings to strangers. International treaties on the rights of the child recognise children as a vulnerable group and ensure special rights to them during legal proceedings, for example, the right to be heard. Crimes related to children are a distinct focus of police work therefore it is – of special importance that police and prosecution should gain adequate and accurate information of what happened to the child.

One of the main challenges in cases where children are involved is that they are usually the only available sources of information about events. Even if physical, medical or psychological symptoms are present – which may be lacking in the vast

majority of cases – they may still be inconclusive and without any other witnesses the child's narrative is the only available source. (Baugerud and Johnson, 2018, p. 121) Therefore, police work rely heavily on the ability of the interviewer whose task is to "maximise the quality and quantity of information obtained from the child". (Baugerud and Johnson, 2018, p. 121)

Scientific examination of investigative interviewing started with William Stern, a German scientist, in 1903. (Stern, 1903, p. 103) Stern was researching techniques and questions that helped gaining the most valid information from people during interviewing. He introduced a distinction between open and closed questions and demonstrated the "superiority of open questions", proving that they helped acquire more and a better quality of adequate information compared to closed questions. (Stern, 1903, p. 103) Ten years later, in 1913, the Norwegian Women's National Council put forward a motion to the Norwegian Parliament, to "amend an existing law about investigative interviews of children who have fallen victim to sexual felonies". The amendment came into effect in 1926 which allegedly made Norway the first country in Europe to "statutorily outline how investigative interviews in child sexual abuse cases should be conducted". (Myklebust, 2018, p. 101)

2. FORENSIC CHILD INTERVIEWING MODELS IN EUROPE

Forensic or investigative interviews are designed to obtain as much accurate information as possible from victims of sexual crimes while reducing the stress of the interviewee as much as possible. As interviewing techniques developed, they were expanded to interviewing child victims and other vulnerable individuals and also witnesses of sexual or physical abuse. Many sexual abuse allegations do not include physical evidence, thus child investigative interviewing is a crucial element of child abuse investigations and it is absolutely vital that the information gained of events should be true and adequate.

On the other hand, there are potential dangers of interviewing children by the police or child protection professionals. As research shows children are increasingly vulnerable to suggestive interviewing techniques and are prone to creating false memories of abuse and abusive events. Moreover, there are several factors that can make children reluctant to disclose abuse, such as feelings of shame and fear of the consequences after disclosure. Forensic child interviewing was developed to interview victims or witnesses of crime, however, child offenders can also be investigated with the interviewing techniques. Child offenders are not very different from child victims or witnesses. They can also develop false memories of events as a result of improper questioning, and in many cases, they may feel deep shame of their actions or fear of the consequences of confession. However, there are certain types of interview questions that can minimize false memories and anxiety while producing detailed recall of events. (Erens et al., 2020, p. 1)

The superiority of open-ended questions over closed and yes/no questions is demonstrated in several researches and the benefit of using open ended questions is listed in many investigative interviewing guidelines. (Oxburgh, Myklebust and

Grant, 2010, p. 46) The three main benefits of open questions in child interviewing are the following: 1. When children are asked questions by adults they try to be as compliant as possible with perceived expectations. When they are encouraged to talk freely it helps them gain control over the situation which reduces anxiety, facilitates cognitive processes and is more compatible with a witness-focused approach. 2. Child interviewing should always happen according to the mental and emotional age of the child. Open questions facilitate elaborate responses and provide opportunity for the interviewer to assess the child's level of mental stage and language skills. Subsequent questioning style can then be adjusted accordingly. 3. Open-ended questions and attentive listening from the beginning of the interview build up an expectation in the child that they will do the most of the talking throughout the interview. (Myklebust, 2018, p. 103)

The type of memory that professionals are dealing with during forensic interviewing is episodic memory.¹ Since the 1980s a large body of research has investigated techniques in which episodic memories can be retrieved with the least possible transformation of true episodes. Due to the inherently constructive nature of human memory, perfect recollection of events is almost never possible. – The reduction of false memory of events, however, can be achieved by the proper techniques. There are several trainings to train child care professionals and law enforcement officers on how to conduct effective interviews. The trainings help prepare professionals to acknowledge the type of the interaction: interviewers have to take into account that the purpose of the interview is to investigate facts, and not to provide counselling or therapy to the child. – In order to minimize the number of traumatic interviews for the child, interviews are advised to be conducted by a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, social workers, police officers, prosecutors, and other professionals, they should be video-recorded to ensure accurate documentation and – be conducted in the early stages of the investigation.

2.1. Training of police

An interviewer's knowledge and level of competence can directly affect the responses of interviewees. (Fisher, Geiselman and Raymond, 1987) Thus, the more interviewers are trained in scientific findings of rapport-building, memory retrieval, and questioning techniques the more accurate police work may become. During the last two decades police interviewing has undergone serious transformation and professionalisation almost in every European country.

Despite extensive researching, the knowledge about how to conduct an "optimal" interview cannot always be automatically translated into practice. Therefore, researchers recommend that besides formal scientific academic training, police officers should undergo intensive short and practical sessions, with extended feedback

¹ Episodic memory is the ability to recall and mentally re-experience specific episodes and events from one's personal past. It is contrasted with semantic memory which is the recollection of knowledge related memory traces.

to the individual interviewers, and that these short training sessions should be – distributed over time. (Lamb et al, 2002) According to Powell and colleagues (Powell, Fisher, and Wright, 2005, p. 41) the core elements of the most successful trainings had been the use of “structured interview protocols; multiple opportunities to practice over an extended period; frequent expert feedback and ongoing supervision; and the internal motivation of the interviewer to enhance their individual performance”. (Powell, Fisher, and Wright, 2005, p. 41)

Cleary and colleagues assessed existing police investigative interviewing techniques in the US. (Cleary and Warner, 2016) They assessed the use of the most popular investigative techniques: the Reid Technique, the PEACE Model, the ChildFirst method in case of children’s involvement and HUMINT that is used mainly by military intelligence’s investigators. The researchers found that beside these scientifically elaborated methods US law enforcement officers use several other techniques that they learnt mainly on the job. (Cleary and Warner, 2016, p. 272) The Reid Technique comprises of the Behavior Symptom Interview (BAI), where officers are taught to evaluate interviewees’ nonverbal and verbal behaviour to detect indicators of guilt. “If the investigator is ‘reasonably certain of the suspect’s guilt’, the interaction then becomes an accusatory interview in which officers employ various persuasive tactics such as overcoming objections, developing themes, and handling denials in order to secure a confession.” (Cleary and Warner, 2016, p. 272)

In contrast with Reid, the PEACE model – the name comes from the abbreviation of Planning and Preparation, Engage and Explain, Account, Closure, Evaluation – is a non-accusatory, information- and evidence-based investigative technique. Non-accusatory interviewing techniques are considered more advantageous in cases where information gathering is the main focus. With the PEACE model interviewers are able to compare the new information with the interviewee’s previous statements and other available evidence. Due to its success as an effective alternative to accusatory interviewing the PEACE model became a legitimate interviewing technique in European countries. (Bull, 2014)

The Human Intelligence (HUMINT) interrogation is a method used primarily in military and intelligence contexts in the US. It focuses on information gathering about not only past, but present or future events that can cause a threat to national security.

The ChildFirst method was developed by the National Children’s Advocacy Center in 2015. It is built on forensic interviewing strategies and targeted toward child victims or witnesses.² The focus of this method is information gathering in a non-accusatory atmosphere, like in the PEACE model.

Apart from these formalized techniques researchers identified several individual interrogation strategies. For example, only in two California police department 25 different interrogation techniques were identified, (Leo, 1996) while in two London departments police officers used 9 different techniques (Pearse and Gudjonsson,

² National Children’s Advocacy Center, 2015 USA, Available at: <https://www.national-cac.org/> (Accessed: 16 August 2021).

1997) and 17 more tactics in other parts of the UK. (Soukara et al., 2009) When police officers were asked about interrogation techniques they use, they mentioned “suspect isolation, rapport building, and identifying contradictions in the suspect’s story” as the most frequent techniques, while “physical intimidation, threats for non-cooperation, and expressions of impatience/anger” were mentioned as rarely used techniques. (Kassin et al., 2007)

Cleary and colleagues also assessed what alterations of the frequently used interrogation techniques police officers apply – in case of juvenile offenders. Similarly to child victims and witnesses juvenile offenders react differently to police interviewing than adults. They are increasingly vulnerable to coercive interrogation techniques and more likely to produce false confessions as a result of “interrogative suggestibility”. (Cleary and Warner, 2016, p. 280) First studies starting in 2007 suggested that US police use of interrogation tactics “did not differ for child versus youth versus adult suspects” and included psychologically coercive techniques. (Meyer and Reppucci, 2007; Reppucci, Meyer and Kostelnik, 2010) In the same studies every third law enforcement officer expressed concerns about this practice and said that specialized trainings about interviewing youth and juvenile offenders would be necessary. In this regard, the 2015 introduction of the ChildFirst approach for police officers came as a gap filling exercise. However, it can be concluded, that scientifically based child-focused interview techniques may be in contrast with formal trainings and interrogation protocols, because these techniques leave relatively little room for incorporating “developmental sensitivity”. (Cleary and Warner, 2016, p. 280) On the other hand, police officers reported a relatively rare use of confrontational or aggressively coercive interrogation techniques, while rapport building, offering comfort and non-accusatory techniques were reported as the more frequent ones. Although, officers also reported that they use all techniques with adults and juvenile suspects alike sometimes with children as young as 10 years old. (Cleary and Warner, 2016, pp. 280–282)

2.2. The “Nordic Model”

The “Nordic model” of obtaining children’s testimony is a pre-trial process. It involves video recording of the child’s interview which is accepted in court as key evidence. The defendant is given the opportunity to view the recordings and give observations in court. Thus, the child does not have to appear in court or repeat their testimony several times to different audiences. (Myklebust, 2018, p. 101) In Iceland, the judge is present during the child investigative interview, while in other Nordic countries the police or the prosecution are in charge of the interviewing process. The interview is conducted by a specially trained professional and the parties’ legal representatives are allowed to question the interviewee only through this professional. (Myklebust, 2018, p. 101)

The Nordic model is based on the investigative interviewing model used in the Barnahus³ where interviews and medical examinations were “delivered under one roof in a child-friendly environment”. (Baugerud and Johnson, 2018, p. 122) The Nordic and Barnahus models were established as a response to the controversial outcome of two child sexual abuse cases of the end of the 20th century in Denmark and Norway.⁴ These cases shed light on the need for reliable and evidence focused investigative interviewing techniques in cases where children are involved and research demonstrated that a child-friendly environment, an interdisciplinary approach and a multi-agency cooperation could enhance the quality of the information that is gained from child investigative interviews.

Another important element of the Nordic model is the use of the NICHD (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) protocol. The protocol is based on a consensus among researchers, legal and development experts and law enforcement professionals. The protocol takes into account the nature of child memory and children’s communication and social skills and social knowledge, which has been translated into guidelines that aim to improve the quality of forensic interviews of children. (Baugerud and Johnson, 2018, p. 122) The NICHD protocol integrates knowledge about children’s “linguistic abilities, memory retrieval capacities, suggestibility, interviewer behaviour and the effects of stress and trauma”. (Baugerud and Johnson, 2018, p. 124)

As part of the Nordic model, police training in the Nordic countries also differs from other countries. In Nordic police training officers are trained to be generalists who are later authorised for multiple responsibilities. They can be tasked with crime prevention or operational patrolling police duties or even profound and scientifically based detective work. (Myklebust, 2018, p. 104)

Reflecting on this generalist training approach the Norwegian Police University College (NPUC) was founded in 1992. Police officers receive a bachelor degree after a three-year basic education in policing before beginning their patrol work. They may also continue further specialised training and education. (Myklebust, 2018, pp. 105–106) One of these specialised trainings is the forensic child interviewing. The training is based on three main principles: 1) a central national institution should provide the training; 2) the pre-structured interview models are based upon empirically validated guidelines and/or communication models; 3) the interview training is distributed over time with follow-up supervision and feedback to the interviewers. (Myklebust, 2018, pp. 105–106)

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS OF FORENSIC CHILD INTERVIEWING IN EUROPE

In Europe forensic child interviewing is not regulated by the European Union, however, mechanisms exist under national law. Nevertheless, the EU and the Council of

³ “The Children’s House” – child care system in Norway and other Nordic countries that dates back to the beginning of the 20th century.

⁴ The Roum case in Denmark (1989–1993) and the Bjugn case in Norway (1992–1994).

Europe did outline recommendations related to the topics of child interviewing. These recommendations are rooted in the general protection of children's rights, originally declared by the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).⁵ The CRC sets the age of the child under 18 years and highlights the need for special safeguards and appropriate legal protection for children. Article 12 of the convention states: "1. *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.* 2. *For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.*" As a part of the compliance mechanism with the CRC the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child regularly monitors children's rights in member states. "The Beijing Rules"⁶ on the minimum rules of juvenile justice was adopted by the United Nations by the end of 1985. Principle 1.2 of the document states that the juvenile is in a period of their life during which "she or he is most susceptible to deviant behaviour". Therefore, Member States should "endeavour to develop conditions that will ensure for the juvenile a meaningful life in the community" and "foster a process of personal development and education that is as free from crime and delinquency as possible".⁷ Other developments toward fostering wellbeing of the child involve, for example, the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. The initiative seeks to increase number of countries worldwide where violence toward children- including corporal punishment in the home and family is prohibited by law. The other goal of the initiative is to raise the number of countries where suspected cases of child physical abuse receive the same treatment as child sexual abuse, and suspected cases involve criminal investigation. (Lahtinen et al., 2020)

3.1. The Council of Europe

Under the Council of Europe children's rights are incorporated into the European Social Charter (ESC) or protected generally under the European Charter of Human Rights (ECHR). It has been debated whether Europe needs a separate treaty on the rights of children – such is the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

⁵ *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49.

⁶ *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice* ("The Beijing Rules"). Adopted by General Assembly resolution 40/33 of 29 November 1985.

⁷ Principle 1.2 of the *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice* ("The Beijing Rules"). Adopted by General Assembly resolution 40/33 of 29 November 1985.

Child (CRC).⁸ Although, it is alleged that in the practice of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) the rights of children are adequately protected under Article 3 (the right to protection from inhuman and degrading treatment) and Article 6 (the right to a fair trial), the need for a separate mechanism rises periodically.⁹

In 2007, the Lanzarote Convention was adopted in Spain. It is the first regional treaty dedicated specifically to the protection of children from sexual violence. The convention entered into force in 2010 and has been signed by all 47 Council of Europe Member States.¹⁰ Article 35 of the convention outlines the minimum requirements for forensic interviews with the child. The article states that member states should “take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure” that interviews take place without unjustified delay after the facts have been reported and in premises designed or adapted for this purpose. Interviews should be carried out by professionals trained specifically for this purpose and the same persons should conduct all interviews with the same child, while the number of interviews should be limited to the necessary minimum, the child may be accompanied by a legal representative or an adult. Interviews should be videotaped and the recordings should be made acceptable as evidence in the court.¹¹

Along with these endeavours the Council of Europe adopted its Guidelines on child-friendly justice in 2010. (Guidelines, 2010) The Guidelines state that all “children between birth and the age of 17 – be they a party to proceedings, a victim, a witness or an offender – should benefit from the ‘children first’ approach”. (Guidelines, 2010, p. 8) The document also introduces the term “child-friendly justice” which indicates that the judicial process, for either a victim or offender, should be age appropriate. (Guidelines, 2010, p. 17) The document is also promoting child-friendly actions such as creating child-friendly environment in interviewing and waiting rooms, (Guidelines, 2010, p. 30) or supporting “research into all aspects of child-friendly justice, including child-sensitive interviewing techniques and dissemination of information and training on such techniques”. (Guidelines, 2010, p. 33) The Guidelines address the problem of collecting evidence/statements from children and call for science based professional protocols in the area. (Guidelines, 2010, p. 87) Member states should allow evidence to be given via audio, video or TV link in the pre-trial phase and avoid possibility of re-victimisation. National judicial authorities should overview the process of establishing model interview protocols, rather than single judges.

⁸ *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49.

⁹ *Handbook on European law relating to the rights of the child*. Joint publication of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and Council of Europe, 2015, p. 30.

¹⁰ *Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, Lanzarote, 2007/2010.

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 46–47.

3.2. The European Union

The European Union's 2006 strategy on the rights of the child (Rights of the Child, 2006) stated that the protection of children's rights in Europe is fulfilled under the CRC, the ECHR, the practice of the ECtHR, and the practice of the European Court of Justice. However, the document declared that "children's rights are still far from being generally respected, and basic needs are not being met for each and every child within the EU". (Rights of the Child, 2006, p. 5) In 2012, the EU adopted the Charter of Fundamental Rights,¹² where Article 24 is dedicated to the rights of the child and paragraph 2 states that "in all actions relating to children, whether taken by public authorities or private institutions, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration".¹³ According to the wording of the paragraph public authorities mean bodies of the justice system as well as bodies of the childcare system. The 2012 EU Directive¹⁴ on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime mentions specific requirements towards child victims that can be read as "child friendly justice" as described in the Council of Europe's Recommendations and Guidelines.

In 2015, the Directorate-General for Justice of the European Commission collected all existing available data on children's involvement in civil, administrative and criminal proceedings.¹⁵ The study also described the legislation and policy in place with regard to children's involvement in justice in the (then) 28 Member States. In preparation, the study was built on the 2012 EU Directive and the Council of Europe's Guidelines on child-friendly justice.¹⁶

The 2016 EU Directive¹⁷ – on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings – takes into account the special needs of children during police questioning. Paragraph 42 states, that "*Children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings are not always able to understand the content of questioning to which they are subject*".¹⁸ In addition, paragraph 44 states that "questioning should in any event be carried out in a manner that takes into account the age and maturity of the children concerned"¹⁹ and in paragraph 59 "children should also have the right to be accompanied by the holder of parental

¹² *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*. (2012/C 326/02)

¹³ Article 24 (2) of the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*. (2012/C 326/02)

¹⁴ *Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision. 2001/220/JHA*

¹⁵ *Children's involvement in criminal, civil and administrative judicial proceedings in the 28 Member States of the EU*. Policy Brief. Child Law Clinic, University College Cork, European Commission, 2015.

¹⁶ *Summary of contextual overviews on children's involvement in criminal judicial proceedings in the 28 Member States of the EU*. DG Justice, European Commission, 2014, pp. 6–7.

¹⁷ Directive (EU) 2016/800 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

¹⁸ Directive (EU) 2016/800, paragraph (42).

¹⁹ Directive (EU) 2016/800, paragraph (44).

responsibility during other stages of the proceedings at which they are present, such as during police questioning”.²⁰ The Directive highlights the need for special training of judges and prosecutors who deal with criminal proceedings involving children *“in particular with regard to children’s rights, appropriate questioning techniques, child psychology, and communication in a language adapted to children. Member States should also take appropriate measures to promote the provision of such specific training to lawyers who deal with criminal proceedings involving children.”*²¹ Although, in paragraph 42 the questioning by police is expected to be audio-recorded, the 2016 Directive does not preclude such video recording to be accepted by the court as evidence or mention that the questioning of the child should only be carried out by a specialised expert. On the other hand, when debating about the protection of child victims these two principles appear periodically.

The European Forum on the rights of the child stated in 2015 that *“the investigation and forensic interviewing are carried out by specialists who are trained on rights of the child, child protection and on communicating and dealing with children. Treatment for the child is delivered by specialists and is child-sensitive, prevents secondary victimisation, and ensures adequate follow-up and reintegration measures, including additional school support to make up for time out of school.”*²² The European Commission’s latest strategy on victims’ rights²³ highlights the need for a better adoption of EU rules on rights of victims by Member States. One of the conclusions that the document states is that *“For the most vulnerable victims, such as victims of gender-based violence, child victims, victims with disabilities, elderly victims, victims of hate crime, victims of terrorism or victims of trafficking in human beings, it is particularly challenging to go through criminal proceedings and to deal with the aftermath of crime”*.²⁴ This is related to child victims of physical sexual assault and abuse. The Barnahus Promise network²⁵ regularly monitors the implementation of the Barnahus model to the protection of child victims and witnesses in the 21 EU states, and Ukraine, Scotland, Northern Ireland, England, Moldova, Albania, Georgia, and Norway. In Hungary, for example, the “Barnahus Act” came into force 1 Jan 2019, which was preceded by a number of other measures taken by the Hungarian authorities, the establishment of the National Competence Center for Barnahus in Szombathely.

²⁰ Directive (EU) 2016/800, paragraph (59).

²¹ Directive (EU) 2016/800, paragraph (63).

²² European Commission. Directorate-General Justice and Consumers. (30 April 2015). 9th European Forum on the rights of the child. Coordination and cooperation in integrated child protection systems. Reflection paper. p. 12.

²³ COM(2020) 258, (24. 6. 2020) EU Strategy on victims’ rights (2020–2025).

²⁴ Ibid. p. 2.

²⁵ <https://www.barnahus.eu/en/barnahus-news/> (Accessed: 23 August 2021).

4. CLOSING REMARKS

In Europe, forensic child interviewing protocols were first developed for interviewing child sexual abuse victims in Norway. The Nordic Barnahus model is still prevailing in effective child interviewing and is based on scientific considerations like the special memory functions of the child, or children's susceptibility to suggestive questioning and creating false memories of abuse. The Barnahus model – now a network and also a movement in Europe – sets out simple and practical recommendations how to overcome the pitfalls of interviewing children. Using video-recorded interview sessions, applying specially trained interviewers and enhancing close cooperation between law enforcement and child care professionals are the three main elements that every Member State should implement in the European Union. The European Commission have set four different guidelines for the protection of victims' rights and the protection of children from sexual abuse. These directives still urge Member States to implement appropriate procedural safeguards of victim and witness protection.

Nonetheless, measures for child offenders should also take into consideration the Barnahus model. Interviewing child suspects do have similar challenges of false memories or false confessions and specialized trainings for interviewers are needed in juvenile suspect interrogation, as well. The Council of Europe's child-friendly justice incorporates both domains of child interviewing. In this context, child-friendly justice means that any legal proceeding involving a child, whether a victim, a witness or an offender, should take into account the child's best interest before anything else.

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