

**A Sample Continuum of Questions Used in Taking a Medical History from Children Alleged to Have Been Abused and Confidence in Responses**

	<b>Question Type</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Child Response</b>	
<b>OPEN-ENDED</b>	A. General	Why are you here today?	Because Uncle John was mean to me.	<b>MORE CONFIDENCE</b>
	B. Focused	What happened with Uncle John?	He hit me.	
		Where (on your body) did he hit you?	He hit my legs.	
		What did he hit you with?	A stick.	
	C. Multiple Choice	Did he hit you with a stick, a cane, a whip or something else?	He used a stick.	
Did this happen in the daytime or nighttime?		In the day and night.		
<b>CLOSED-ENDED</b>	D. Yes/No Questions	Did he tell you not to tell?	Yes, he said not to tell my mother.	
		Did you have your clothes off?	No, but my pants were down.	
<b>CLOSED-ENDED</b>	E. Leading Questions	He pulled your pants down, didn't he?	Yes.	<b>LESS CONFIDENCE</b>
		Didn't he pull your pants down before he hit you?	Yes.	

SOURCE: Adapted from Faller KC. A continuum of types of questions used in interviewing children alleged to have been sexually abused and confidence in responses. *The Advisor* 1990; 3(2).

## Text Description

This table illustrates five types of questions and that confidence in the response decreases as questions become closed-ended.

- Open-ended, general questions like "Why are you here today?" and a child's response of "Because Uncle John was mean to me." provide the most confidence in the response.
- Open-ended, focused questions such as "What happened with Uncle John?" and a response of "He hit me." or "Where (on your body) did he hit you?" and a response of "He hit my legs." or "What did he hit you with?" and a response of "A stick." provide just slightly less confidence.
- Multiple-choice questions like "Did he hit you with a stick, a cane, a whip, or something else?" and a response of "He used a stick." or "Did this happen in the daytime or nighttime?" and a response of "In the day and night." provide less confidence in the answer because the questions are no longer open-ended.
- Answers to yes/no questions like "Did he tell you not to tell?" and a response of "Yes, he said not to tell my mother." or "Did you have your clothes off?" and a response of "No, but my pants were down." provide less confidence because the questions are closed-ended.
- Questions like "He pulled your pants down, didn't he?" and a response of "Yes." or "Didn't he pull your pants down before he hit you?" and a response of "Yes." provide the least confidence in the response because they are leading questions.