

INTERVIEWING CHILDREN

The Science of Conversation in Forensic Contexts

DEBRA ANN POOLE



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Because of children's incomplete language development, their greater risk of retrieving inaccurate information in response to memory cues, and their desire to say what they think the interviewer wants to hear (whether truthful or not), child eyewitness testimony can be unreliable. In this book, Debra Ann Poole presents a flexible, evidence-based approach to interviewing children that reduces the ambiguities and errors in children's responses. Through her descriptions of best practices, brief summaries of supporting research, and example interview dialogs, Poole provides a roadmap for anyone working in a forensic context. This book is essential reading for those who interview children, supervise interviewers, review interview findings, or craft local policies about interviewing children.

2016 · Hardcover · 232 pages

List: \$69.95

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Item #: 4317408

ISBN: 978-1-4338-2215-5

"*Interviewing Children* is undoubtedly the most insightful book on children and the law published so far this century. Lucidly written and intelligently researched, it provides a stunning guide through the labyrinth of conflicting claims and confusing scientific findings. It is a must-read for students, attorneys, scholars, law enforcement, and child welfare professionals."

—Stephen J. Ceci, PhD, H. L. Carr Professor of Developmental Psychology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

"Poole has done it again! This book contains the most up-to-date science on interviewing children in forensic contexts and it is full of examples that are engaging, entertaining, and informative. If you work in the industry, study in the field, or are simply interested in how to interview children in a forensic context, you must read this book!"

—Deborah A. Connolly, PhD, LLB, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debra A. Poole, PhD, is a professor of psychology at Central Michigan University. Since receiving a doctorate in developmental psychology from the University of Iowa, she has conducted studies on children's eyewitness testimony and interviewing techniques. Her research, funded by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Science Foundation, has explored the effects of repeated questioning, how children respond to different question forms, the influence of misinformation from parents on children's event narratives, children's ability to report the sources of their knowledge, and the risks and benefits of interview props. Dr. Poole has worked with policy groups in Michigan and Maine to craft interview protocols and is on the editorial boards of the journals *Law and Human Behavior*; *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*; and the *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*.

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