

TECHNICAL ROOM AND MATERIAL

Because “telling is living again”, it is necessary to avoid the repetition of the trauma: the audio-visual recording is one of the answer.

In the technical room:

- a cupboard with two video tape recorders, one double cassettes video recorder, one sound table,
- one control screen,
- auricles,
- one computer.



In the hearing room:

- One camera,
- micros,
- auricles,
- platform with little steps
- table, chairs
- toys



Between the two rooms:

- a tinted window.

AN EXEMPLARY PARTNERSHIP

Result of a partnership approach, these projects of medical and legal units have given rise to a deep thought. They have leaded up to the elaboration of protocols for the medical and the judicial taking charge of children victims of maltreatments.

These signatory partners are :

The district prosecutor, the judges, the Hospital Center, (urgent paediatric services), the Police, the Gendarmerie, the departmental administrative institution, the National Education, a representative of the government, the Association for childhood protection and help of victims.



MEDICAL - JUDICIAL UNITS IN A HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT, FOR CHILDREN VICTIMS OF MALTREATMENT AND/OR SEXUAL VIOLENCES.

WHAT IS A MEDICAL - JUDICIAL UNIT?

The law of the 17 June 1998 on “the special procedure applicable to sexual offences and to the protection of minors victims” plans to record the child’s hearing. The Child’s Voice, for a real application of the 17 June 1998 law, has initiated and supported, since this date, the creation of Multidisciplinary Medical - Judicial Units (MJU) in a hospital environment.

The evidence of the child victims of maltreatments should be collected in the best conditions as possible and in particular in a special place: secure and especially arranged for it.

Therefore, the Medical - Judicial Units have the aim to combine :

- the recognition of the child’s suffering in the medical, psychological and social fields.
- the needs of the investigation and/or the legal instruction, which have the aim of finding out the expression of the truth.

Nowadays, eighteen units are open and twenty others are in project for 2007-2008 on the French territory. The Child’s Voice reminds that theses Units have been realised thanks to the financial support of its partner SFR (a French GSM operator).



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WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN THE MEDICAL - JUDICIAL UNIT?

The respect of the complementarity of the skills preserves the specificity of each function: the judge, the child psychiatrist, the psychologist, the legal police officer, the legal doctor, the social services, the associations for childhood protection and the association of victims' assistance.

The professionals engage themselves for the child, in a single place, for a global taking care.

WHY?

Because a child victim of sexual offences is, first of all, a suffering child before being a plaintiff child.

The child or the teenager victim of sexual violences should be treated like a victim, whatever the seriousness of the offences and the trauma. Deeply mistreated in their body and in their psychism, they need a particular care, because of the weakness of their means of defence and their vulnerability.

The necessity of a particular legal treatment for children victims of sexual violence is now a priority for all professionals.

- Ensuring a unity of place, time and action is nowadays for us, the most adapted answer to take care of suffering children and teenagers.
- The understanding of the pain and the seek of the truth impose a total decompartmentalization between the professionals.

THE STAGES OF THE PROCEDURE

After a complaint or a denunciation, the district prosecutor submits the competent police or gendarme services.

Reception in a Medical - Judicial Unit:

- Reception of the child by the staff in the hospital. Presentation of the place and the professionals.
- The child's hearing, recorded by audio-visual means, leading by a policeman or a gendarme, in presence of a child psychiatrist or a psychologist.
- Medico legal examination, if necessary, after the hearing.

THE TAKING CARE OF THE CHILD VICTIM IN THE MEDICAL - JUDICIAL UNIT

Put the child or teenager into confidence: information on the development of the hearing and the importance of the audio-visual recording.



- If the aggression has recently happened, the priority is given to:
 - the urgent care
 - the audio-visual recording hearing
 - the medical and legal examination if needed.

(The doctor can be behind the tinted window or can look at the cassette recorded before the examination to avoid to the child to repeat himself).

- If the child's situation requires it:
 - hospitalization
 - accompaniment of the child by an educational service (designed by the juvenile judge or designated in the frame of the judicial proceeding)
- If the violence is passed:
 - audio-visual recording of the child's evidence
 - medical and legal examination if needed

THE PLACE WHERE THE HEARING TAKES PLACE

The soundproofed room is adapted to the reception of the child.

Everything is implemented for his comfort, serenity and security.

A small, two steps, platform has been placed in the room to consent to the child to be at the same height of the adult.



This two photos have been taken during the inauguration of a Medical and Judicial Unit.