



Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials

Welcome!

Sasha Rutizer, Chief of Staff, Office for Victims of Crime



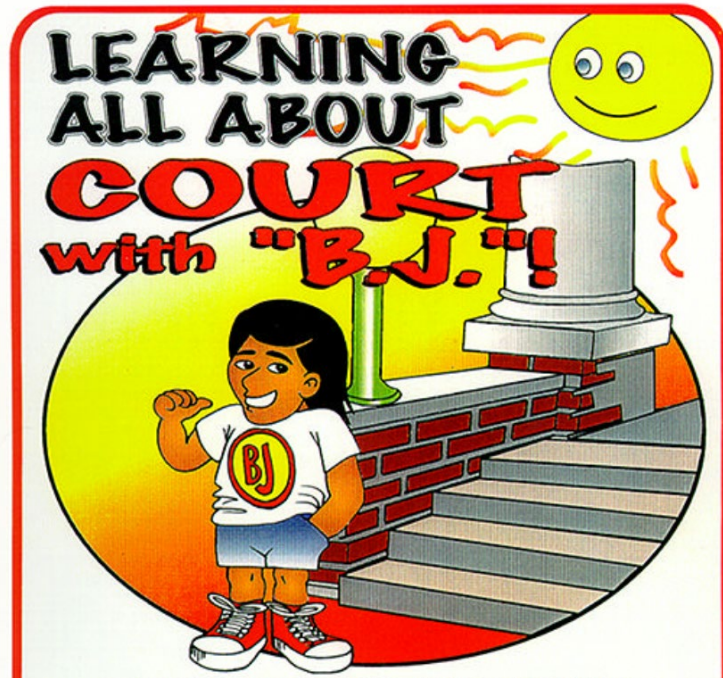
Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials

Presented by

Bethany Case, Victim Justice Program Specialist
U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs



Inspiration for the Materials



OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

Recursos en Español | FAQs

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS • JUSTICE FOR ALL



Through Our Eyes: Children, Violence, and Trauma
Videos and Resources

vision 21

Transforming Victim Services



Kids Are Not
Little Adults

Child victims have unique needs.
See it through their eyes.

Find special resources for kids at
www.ovc.gov/throughoureyes.

#ThroughOurEyes



OVC

DEFENDING
CHILDHOOD
PROTECT HEALTH THRIVE



Opportunity for the Materials

- Systems' response to young victims has improved
 - Chance to model trauma-informed responses
 - Minimize re-traumatization, reduce stress
- We know more about HOW children experience trauma
 - Feel responsible, alone, confused, isolated
 - Respond to their needs—developmentally, emotionally



Opportunity for the Materials, Cont.

- Diversity of victims
 - Time to portray a true range of victims
 - Ages, identities, races, and ethnicities





Development of the Materials

- Formation of Stakeholders Group
- Needs Assessment
- Developing Content and Style
- Pilot Testing
- Peer Review
- Publication





Partners & Stakeholders

- Aequitas
- Alliance for HOPE International
- Association of Prosecuting Attorneys: Child Abuse Prosecution Project
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Victim Services Department
- Casa de Esperanza
- Center for Urban Pedagogy
- Gundersen National Child Protection Center
- Institute on Disabilities of Temple University
- Native American Children's Alliance
- National Center for Victims of Crime
- National Children's Advocacy Center
- National Children's Alliance
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- New York Police Department
- New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- Safe Horizon



Needs Assessment

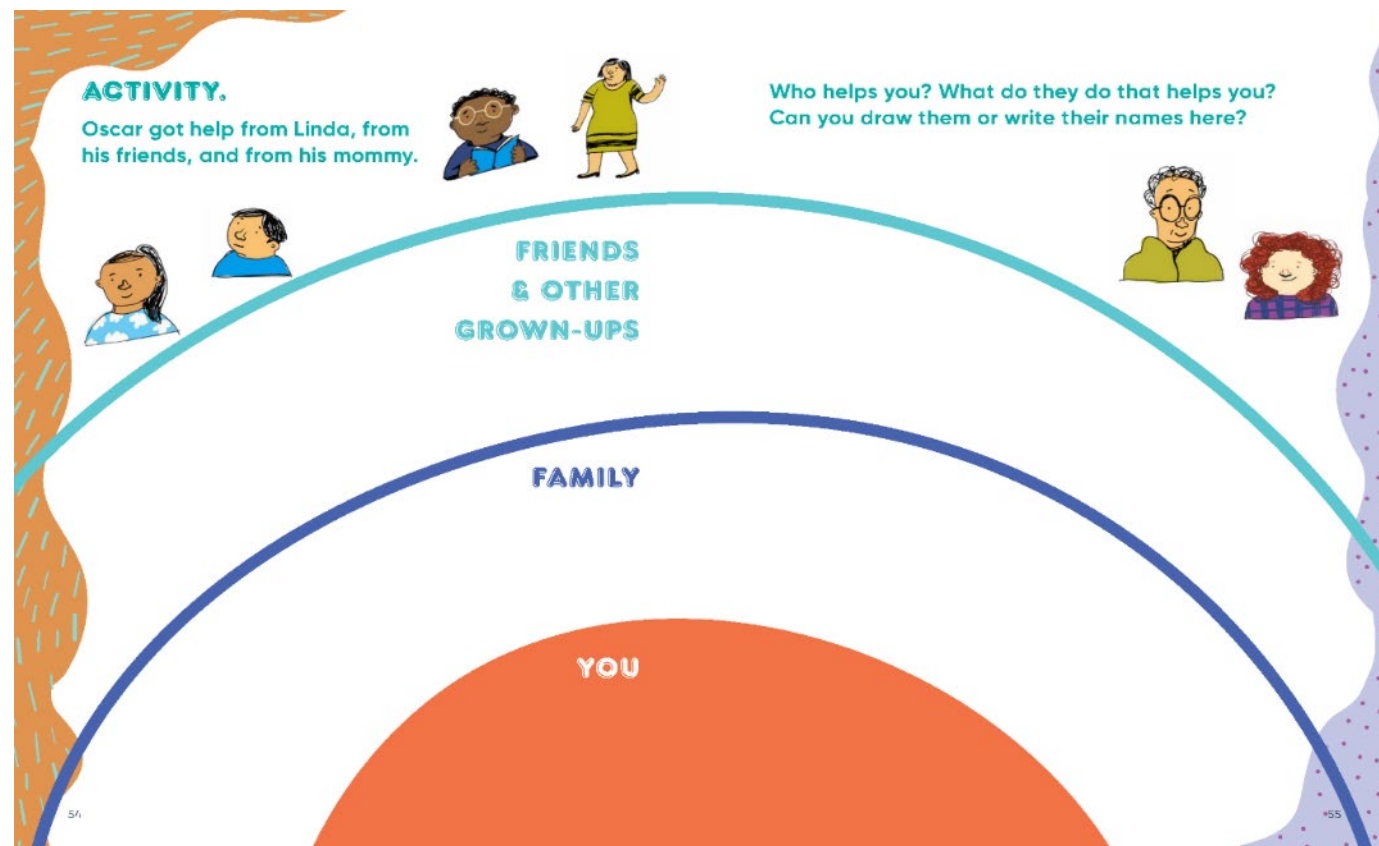
- Reviewed 90 publications and 92 journal articles, analyzed existing child witness support materials
- Conducted 61 interviews, 21 focus groups
- Online practitioner survey
- Compiled a report with findings and recommendations





Developing Content and Style

- Describing process in general terms
- Modeling helpful responses
- Identifying common thoughts and feelings
- Planting healthy “seeds”- affirmations, activities
- Storyboarding





Pilot Testing

- Draft materials pilot tested with children, adolescents, caregivers and practitioners
- June 2018 – April 2019
 - Northeast: New York (NYC)
 - West: California (Los Angeles), Oregon (Portland)
 - Southeast: Alabama (Huntsville)

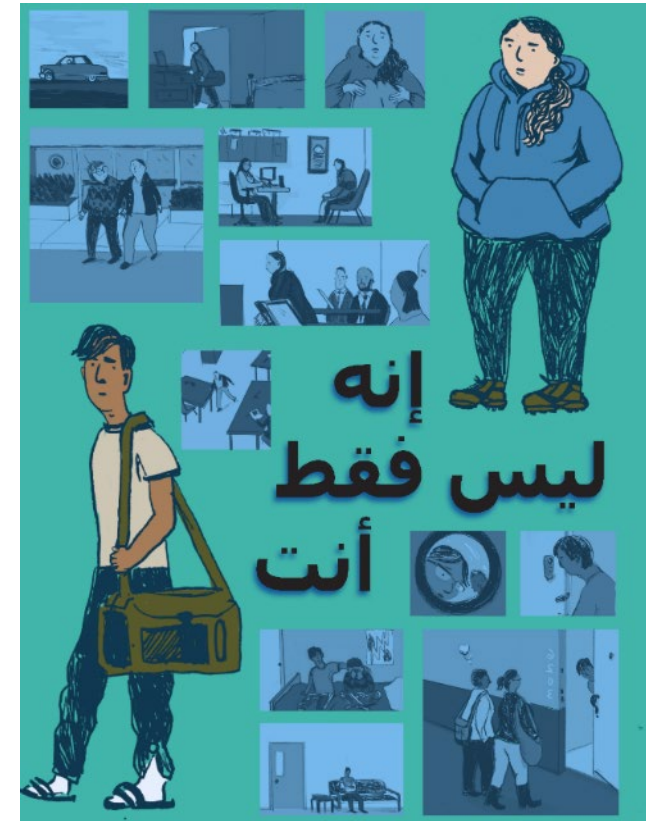


Expert Peer Review



- Reviewers included a children’s book editor at Scholastic, a disability specialist, victim advocates, attorneys, and other practitioners
 - 71% currently work directly with child victims and/or witnesses
 - 82% have over 15 years of experience
- 90% described the materials as ‘effective’ or ‘very effective’

Publication



Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials

Presented by

Chris Newlin, Executive Director, National Children's Advocacy Center





















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Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials

Presented by

**Suamhirs Piraino-Guzman, Partnerships Manager,
Kings County Health and Human Services**







There are so many people in my business!









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1.



Pon tus manos sobre tu barriga.

2.



Inhala profundamente, contando 1, 2, 3. Siente cómo tu barriga sube cuando inhalas.

3.



Luego exhala, contando 1, 2, 3. Siente cómo tu barriga baja.

4.



Haz otra respiración profunda, contando 1, 2, 3. Luego exhala, contando 1, 2, 3.

5.



Haz una tercera respiración profunda, contando 1, 2, 3. Luego exhala, contando 1, 2, 3.

Moving your body can be a good way to relieve stress.

Omar and Jamal took a short walk.

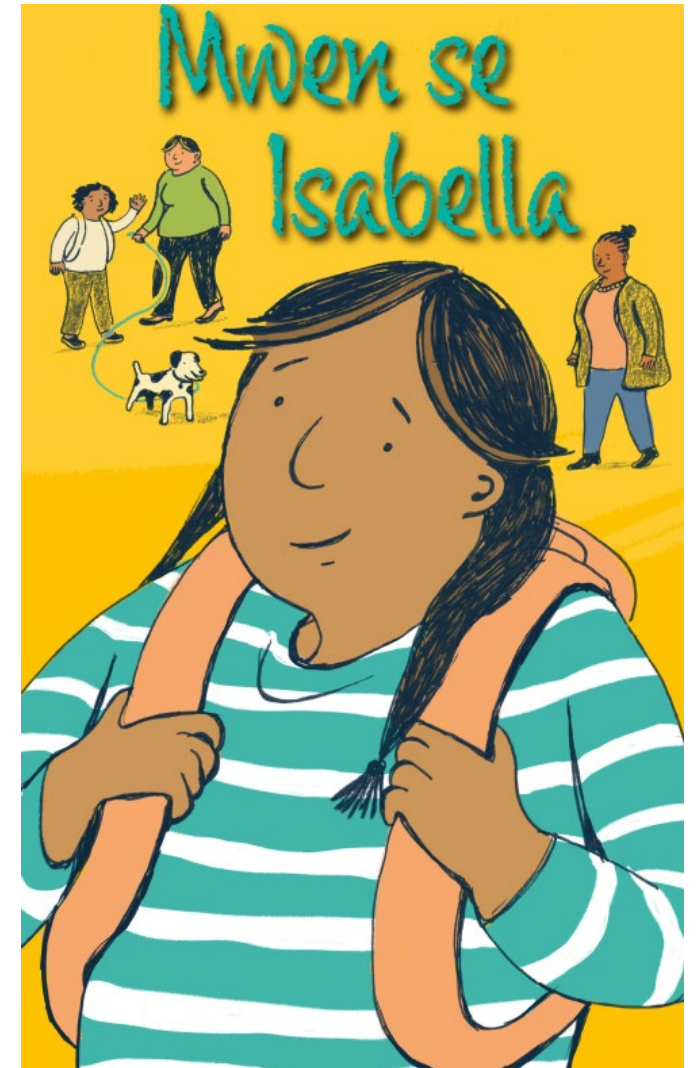


You can also do stuff like jump, jog, exercise, or even dance to get rid of extra energy and help your body calm down.



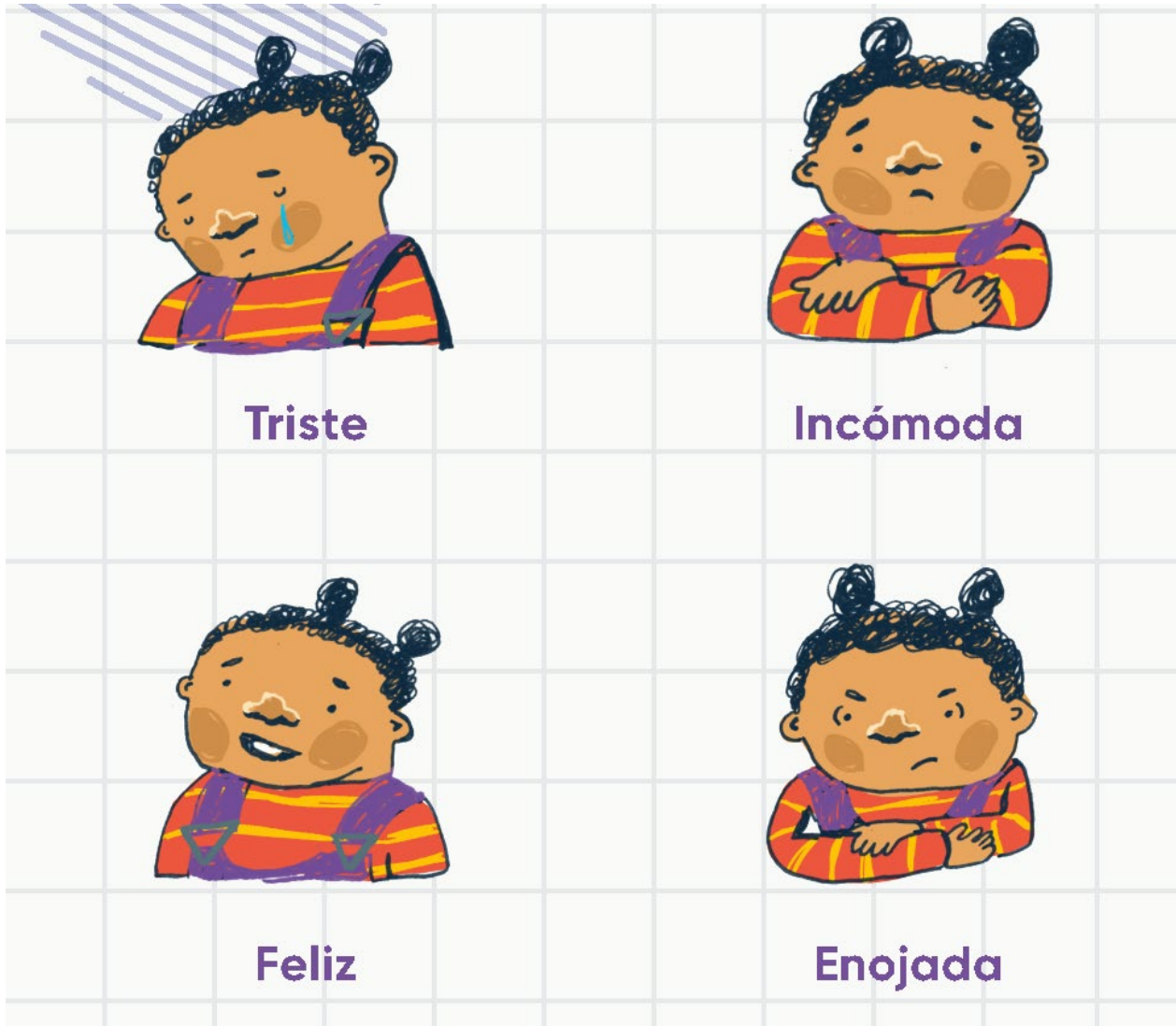
¿CUÁL ES
TU TRABAJO?

En el Tribunal Penal









Triste

Incómoda

Feliz

Enojada

Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials

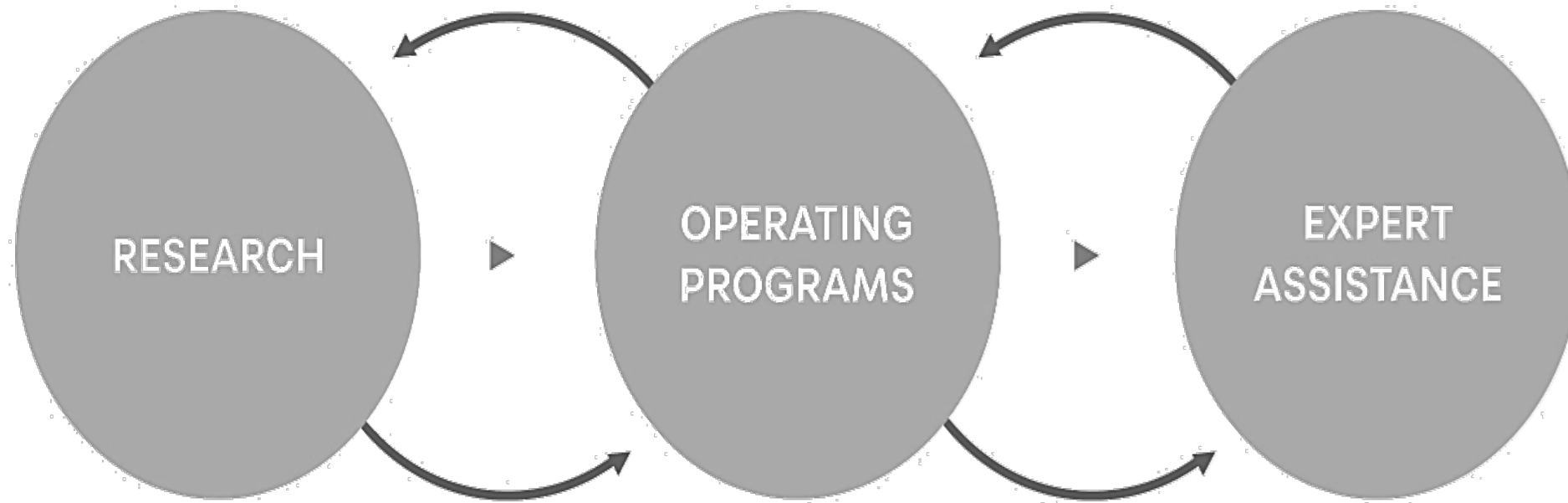
Presented by the Center for Court Innovation

Kathryn Ford, Director of Child Witness Initiatives

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About the Center for Court Innovation





The Materials

- Three age groups (2–6, 7–12, 13–18)
- Separate materials: criminal legal and child welfare systems
- Narrative style, developmentally appropriate
- Trauma-informed and emotionally validating
- Topics covered:
 - Roles of practitioners
 - Rights of child victims and witnesses
 - System responses and processes
 - Healthy coping strategies



Maya looked around the room.

She saw the grown-ups that had come to her house. She saw her mommy. And she saw other people she didn't know.



Ages 2-6: Brave Maya

COURT REPORTER

The court reporter's job is to write down everything people say in the courtroom.



Ages 7–12: I am Isabella



She showed me some things I can do on my own to help me calm down when I start to feel stressed.



The Breathing Trick

Ms. Mary showed Isabella how to use breathing exercises to feel calm. You can try this when you're feeling stressed or worried.

Put your hands on your tummy. Take a big breath in for a count of three, letting your belly fill up with air.

Hold your breath for a count of two.

1 2 3

1. 2..

Then breathe out slowly and let out all the air in your tummy.

Repeat this three times.

1 2

1. 2..

You can also close your eyes while you breathe or put your hand on your tummy to feel the breath go in and out.

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Ages 13–18: There's More to Me



Slowly take a big breath in, counting 1 - 2 - 3 as you fill your stomach with air.



Then hold your breath while you count 1 - 2.



Then breathe out slowly and let out all the air, feeling your stomach empty out. Repeat this three times.



If it helps, you can try closing your eyes while you breathe, or put your hand on your stomach to feel the breaths go in and out.



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For children and youth, participating in the justice system as a victim or witness can be especially confusing, distressing, and even re-traumatizing. *Child Victims and Witnesses Support Materials* was created to support children and youth during their involvement

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Translation

Five languages:

- Arabic
- Chinese (Simplified)
- Haitian Creole
- Spanish
- Vietnamese



Specialized Materials

- Young survivors of trafficking
 - Published January 2022
- Native American child victims and witnesses
- Practitioner guides



Questions? Thank you!



Kathryn Ford

Director of Child Witness Initiatives

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Questions?

Enter in the Q&A section, selecting All Panelists

