

NOTHERN ILLINOIS TRAINING ADVISORY BOARD

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16-Hour Child Maltreatment and Child Sexual Abuse Investigations

Date: October 26-27, 2026 **Registration Deadline: September 26, 2026**

Times: 0800-1600 hours

Location: Dixon Elks Lodge 779
1279 Franklin Grove Road
Dixon, IL.

Instructor: Detective Jennifer Hillgoth

Member Fee: \$0 Non-MTU Member & Non-Sworn Fee: \$150

The following course has been approved by ILETSB for the following Mandates:

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect – 3.0 hour
Constitutional & Proper Use of LE Authority – 1.0 hours
Human Rights – 9.0 hours
Lead Homicide Investigator– 16 hours

PURPOSE OF COURSE: Provide officers guidance regarding their response to and the investigation of child physical abuse, neglect, endangerment, sex crimes against children and child deaths. We will discuss the unique characteristics involving a child's disclosure, adverse childhood events and how they manifest in a child's mental health and behaviors, discuss components of these crimes that officers can recognize upon their responses and consider best practices when documenting such information. This course will also discuss elements of an investigation that are not only needed for criminal charges but also for juvenile court proceedings as they pertain to the safety of a child. This 16-hour session is designed to take the medical and legal aspects of child abuse into an educational discussion relatable to law enforcement and interviewers so they better understand how this information applies to their cases.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to provide law enforcement officers with a comprehensive overview on various crimes against children involving child abuse. Each topic will be discussed in a way that professionals working child abuse can recognize and distinguish various offenses involving children, appreciate their unique characteristics, dispel common myths and outdated practices, discern how injuries and evidence may or may not present, understand the complexities involved and learn how to overcome the challenges these cases

present. This session will also provide guidance with responses to these specific calls while acknowledging the unique characteristics and discuss how to work with an MDT for the best outcome. The importance of an adequate investigation will be highlighted on cases where victims are unable to tell their story. We will discuss investigative techniques involving interviews, crime scene integrity and evidence collection. We will also discuss the unique characteristics involving a child's disclosure, adverse childhood events and how they manifest in a child's mental health and behaviors, discuss components of these crimes that officers can recognize upon their responses and consider best practices when documenting such information. The focus will include real case scenarios of incident investigation, suspect interviews, child interviews, non-offending caretaker/witness interviews, crime scene evaluation and creation of timelines. In addition to child sexual abuse, neglect and child endangerment, the most common forms of physical abuse will be discussed, which will include bruises, burns, fractures and abusive head trauma as well as child death investigations.

COURSE GOALS: The goals of this course are as follows:

- Officers can recognize and distinguish offenses of child maltreatment
- Investigators will be able to discuss interview techniques, scene integrity and evidence collection
- Officers can appreciate how responses may appear and the unique characteristics of crimes against children, including challenges and barriers specific to child victims
- Dispel common myths and outdated practices with physical abuse and child sexual abuse
- Recognize the importance of trauma informed and victim centered responses
- Recognize what Adverse Childhood Experiences are and how they may impact a victim's demeanor
- Appreciate disclosures and variables that affect a child's ability to disclose
- Understand the importance of a child forensic interview, particularly with child sexual abuse
- Discern how injuries may or may not be present
- Understand the complexities involved with evidence in neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse and death investigations
- Learn how to overcome challenges these types of crimes present
- Demonstrate how to identify and utilize the evidence to interpret who and what caused a child's injuries and/or death.
- Explore the necessary MDT investigative process needed to determine mechanisms behind serious abusive injuries and death investigations
- Apply medical aspects of child maltreatment to a comprehensive MDT investigation of child abuse and/or death

COURSE PREREQUISITES: Student willing to learn about child maltreatment investigations.

METHODS OF EVALUATION: Student Written Evaluation

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: This course is conducted using the following methods of instruction:

- Lecture
- Case Study
- Discussion
- Review of Material
- Q&A