

Goals of **C.A.R.T.**

- ◆ Reduce trauma to child victims by limiting the number of interviews and interviewers
- ◆ Coordinate the services provided by the participating agencies
- ◆ Increase both the number of prosecutions and the number of convictions for child abuse
- ◆ Provide support, therapy, and crisis intervention for victims and their families

Resources

Contact your local police immediately to file a child abuse report. They will contact CART to set up an interview.

Rape Crisis is available 24 hours to provide emergency response support. They also have information on counseling.
Tulare County Rape Crisis Hotline: (559) 732-RAPE

Tulare County Victim/Witness offers a variety of services to child abuse victims and their families, including court support and a counseling reimbursement program for those who qualify.
Tulare County Victim/Witness (559) 733-6753

Child Protective Services of Tulare County offers immediate emergency response and temporary placement to children in abusive situations.
Child Protective Services: 800-331-1585

CART Participating Agencies:
District Attorney
Law Enforcement
Child Protective Services
Medical Professionals
Victim/Witness program
Rape Crisis
County Council
Citizen Volunteers

For more information or to find out how you can help, please contact:

C.A.R.T.

CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE TEAM



**Office of the Tulare County District Attorney
Child Abuse Response Team
221 S. Mooney Blvd, Room 224
Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 733-6411**

Phillip J. Cline Tulare County District Attorney



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District Attorney**
221 S. Mooney Boulevard
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What is CART?

CART is a multi-disciplinary interview team that responds to child abuse investigations. Operated through the District Attorney's Office, this team was organized to create the least traumatic, best coordinated, and most effective system for interviewing young victims of abuse.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A CART INTERVIEW?

The child will be interviewed in a soft interview room that is specially equipped with video and audio recording devices. The interview will be observed by professionals directly involved in the case, including a Deputy District Attorney, law enforcement, and social services. While the child is being interviewed the parent or guardian will wait with a victim counselor who can explain various services which may be available to the victim and his/her family.

WHO CONDUCTS THE INTERVIEW?

A specially trained Child Interview Specialist (who has extensive training and experience in child development and interviewing techniques) will conduct the interview and consult with the law enforcement, the Deputy District Attorney and social worker involved in the case. The Specialist is aware of the child's emotional needs and recognizes when the child needs to take a break or end the interview.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INTERVIEW?

The investigator or social worker will be available afterwards to discuss the interview with the child's parents or guardian. If necessary, a physical exam by a specially trained local doctor will be arranged. Further investigation may be conducted by law enforcement, and then the case will be submitted to the District Attorney's Office to decide if charges will be filed.

WILL ALL INTERVIEWS BE RECORDED? WHY?

All CART interviews are videotaped. The tape is evidence in the investigation and will be reviewed by the professionals officially involved in the case. The only other access to the tape is by court order. Family members of the victim are not given access to the tape. There are numerous reasons to videotape the interviews with child victims or witnesses:

- 1) The tape may be used as evidence in the preliminary hearing so the child does not have to testify in person. The child may be required to testify later in the actual trial.
- 2) Videotaping reduces the number of interviews and interviewers resulting in less trauma to victims and less chance of creating inconsistencies.
- 3) Videotaping preserves evidence of abuse using the victim's exact words, emotion and body language.

