

# Children's testimony as evidence



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Children's Testimony as Evidence Occasionally life creates situations when one witness, one moment or even one word can be crucial for the final judgment. Moral principles teach and call us for true and reliable information, especially when it is a matter of someone's life. Adequate grown-up person, being familiar with ethical norms and rules of conduct, chooses a pattern of behavior consciously. In contrast to that, being not able to realize all the importance and consequences of testimony, children behave intuitively just by the call of their hearts. In this respect the query about reliability of child's words can be rather controversial. As a rule child's vision of the surroundings differs from the view of adult person. Children have peculiar perception of the world. Combining their plain and rather naive comprehension with rich imagination, children are prone to exaggerate or even concoct some facts. Judicial practice shows that sometimes children are able to add false details to the description of the case or, on the contrary, pass over in silence crucial information. This happens because of the several reasons. First explanation is child's personal feelings of fear or embarrassment. Second one is emotional surge that overcomes a child in a moment of analyzable event, after which he or she may have obstacles to remember everything that has occurred. However, when children deal with private insult, their testimonies may really help to achieve closure. History knows a lot of cases when hearing child's testimony about sexual abuse, representatives of courts have not doubted the truth of stated words. In such particular cases all emotions, anxiety, offence and pain that is impossible to counterfeit can be seen on the face of the child. A doctor from the University of Gothenburg, Roos af Hjelmsater (2010) stated, " When children report about central aspects of a personally experienced event, their reports can indeed be quite reliable"

(University of Gothenburg, 2010, n. p.). Therefore, it is urgent to find a right approach to childish attitude during interrogation. Afterwards, feeling confidence and trust, a child will manage to benefit the investigation and help to attain justice. References Edwards, L. (2010). Relative placement in child protection cases: A judicial perspective. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 61(2), 1-44. Goldberg, S. C. (2008). Testimonial knowledge in early childhood. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 76(1), 1-36. University of Gothenburg (2010, June 10). Children's testimony may be influenced by co-witnesses. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved April 17, 2011, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/06/100610093505.htm>