



A VISIT TO THE OUR KIDS CENTER

Information for Parents

Our Kids[®]



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For children, as well as their parents, a trip to the doctor can be a stressful event, particularly when the concerns are related to sexual abuse. At the OUR KIDS Center, our team of medical providers and social workers is committed to making your child's visit as easy as possible.

The following are answers to those questions which parents often ask when they come to OUR KIDS. Sharing this information with your child will help prepare you and your youngster for your visit.

1 Why do children come to the OUR KIDS Center?

The OUR KIDS Center, a clinic affiliated with Nashville General Hospital, provides medical evaluations for children when there are concerns about sexual abuse. Children may be referred for examination by the Department of Children's Services, police department, doctors, hospitals, or other concerned adults.

2 Where do I take my child for the evaluation?

OUR KIDS provides services at several locations. The main **OUR KIDS Center is located at 1804 Hayes Street** in Nashville. OUR KIDS also provides services at three satellite clinics located in Cookeville, Lawrenceburg, and Clarksville. If you have questions regarding your child's appointment at one of our clinics, please call our main number at **615-341-4911**. Clinic locations and phone numbers can be found on page 7 of this booklet.

OUR KIDS also provides services as needed after hours at the Emergency Department of Nashville General Hospital. Location and phone number can be found on page 7 of this booklet.

3 Why is the medical exam important?

The medical evaluation is done to see if your child has an injury, infection, or other physical problem. Most children have no problems and can be reassured that their bodies are healthy. However, if there are signs of injury or infection, these can be documented and treated.

On occasion, a child may be examined at the OUR KIDS Center for reasons not related to concerns of abuse. A pediatrician or other health care provider may request a second medical opinion from the OUR KIDS staff, due to gynecological concerns or questions.

4 What happens when I come to OUR KIDS?

First, you will register at the front desk and complete a questionnaire concerning your child's behavior and medical history. Next, you will meet with a social worker who will ask you questions about your child, particularly regarding the statements, behaviors, and/or other signs that have raised concerns that your child may have been sexually abused. A nurse practitioner will talk with you further to learn about any medical problems or illnesses your child has had.

A member of our professional staff will talk privately with your child to answer questions about the check-up and to prepare the child for the examination. School-aged children may also be asked about worries or

concerns they have about their bodies and about types of sexual contact they have had. This information helps our medical team know what to look for and what tests may be needed during the examination to make sure your child is healthy.

Following the exam, the results will be shared with you if you are the child's legal guardian. Any questions or concerns you have will be discussed.

5 Who will examine my child?

All examinations are conducted by a nurse practitioner who has received extensive training in the medical evaluation of sexual abuse.

6 What happens during the medical exam?

Your child will receive a thorough check-up that may include looking at his or her eyes, ears and mouth, listening to the heart and lungs, feeling the abdomen, and checking reflexes. Examination of the child's genital and anal areas involves looking at them to make sure they appear healthy. A special instrument called a colposcope is often used during examination. A colposcope is a light attached to a pair of binoculars, which allows the nurse practitioner to see a child's genital and anal areas more closely. The colposcope never touches the child's body and is never felt by the child. While the colposcope does not touch your child, the examiner will touch your child's genital and anal areas. The colposcope has a camera attached to it and photographs may be taken during the exam to provide an accurate record of what the child's body looks like. The pictures may also be used for teaching nurses and doctors.

Teenage girls sometimes require a pelvic examination involving insertion of an instrument called a speculum into the vagina. Older girls also may need to provide a urine sample to check for pregnancy. Younger girls do not receive speculum exams at our center.

Your child may also be tested for sexually transmitted infections. This is done by touching your child's throat, genitals, and/or anus with small cotton swabs. A blood test may also be needed. No blood is drawn at the OUR KIDS Center, but we will assist you in getting any necessary blood tests done through Nashville General Hospital or your local physician or health department.

7 Does the exam hurt?

For most children, the check-up is not painful. No shots are given and no blood is drawn at our center. Nevertheless, children may feel worried or embarrassed about their check-up, and some children report mild discomfort when the nurse practitioner touches their genital or anal areas.

8 Will the exam cause additional trauma to my child?

It is normal for children to feel anxious about their examination. Consequently, our staff takes as much time as necessary to help children through the medical evaluation by explaining each step of the check-up and finding ways to put the child at ease. These efforts reduce children's distress during the evaluation.

9 May I stay with my child during the examination?

Many children want a parent or supportive adult in the exam room with them for comfort and reassurance. Other children prefer to do the exam on their own, with no parent in the room. We will ask your child whom, if anyone, he or she would like to have in the exam room and, whenever possible, respect your child's preference in this regard.

10 Will the exam show whether or not my child has been sexually abused?

Not necessarily. Most children have no physical injuries to their genital or anal areas. This does not mean that no sexual abuse has occurred. It is possible that children have been involved in sexual activity and that it has not injured their bodies in a way that leaves lasting signs. The medical professional who examines your child will sit down with you after your child's check-up to explain the results of the child's exam.

11 Who will be given information about the examination?

In cases where there is an ongoing investigation into a report of possible sexual abuse, a written report of a child's medical evaluation can be provided to investigators only. After an investigation, the child's legal guardian may obtain a copy of the medical report from the records department at Nashville General Hospital.

12 What should I tell my child about coming to OUR KIDS?

Many parents worry that telling children about the check-up before coming to OUR KIDS will cause them to become upset and worried. However, it is important that children have accurate information about their visit to OUR KIDS so they will know what to expect, can prepare themselves, and have time to ask questions and express their feelings. Children are often less worried and more cooperative with medical procedures when they have been prepared in advance for what they will be experiencing.

A few days before your appointment, explain to your child that he/she will be coming to our center for a check-up. Children should be told that they will talk with a person who will ask questions about their body and their health, and that a nurse will look at their body, including their private parts, to make sure they are healthy. Reassure your child that there will be no painful procedures such as shots, and that the staff at OUR KIDS will help them every step of the way. Children should be encouraged to bring along a stuffed animal, blanket, or other comforting object when they come for the check-up if it will help them feel more at ease.

Similarly, if you are bringing your child to Nashville General Hospital, explain that a nurse or doctor will look at their body to make sure it is healthy. However, at General Hospital it is possible that blood will be drawn or that a shot will be given to your child.

13 What should I bring to the appointment?

If your child has received a genital or rectal examination in the past, medical reports or information about previous exams would be useful to our staff. We will also need your child's social security number. **In the state of Tennessee, there is no charge for medical exams associated with alleged sexual assault or abuse.**

Many parents find it helpful to bring an adult friend or relative. These individuals can provide support as well as keep children company while parents talk privately with our professional staff.

14 How long will my appointment last?

The medical evaluation, which includes your child's check-up as well as talking with you before and after the exam, usually lasts 2-3 hours.

15 Whom should I call if I have questions about my appointment?

You may call the OUR KIDS Center at 615 -341-4911 and a medical provider or social worker will be happy to talk with you during office hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Please let us know about any special needs your child has or if there is information you feel would be helpful to us before you come for your appointment.

If your child was seen at the Emergency Department at Nashville General Hospital and you have follow-up questions, you may also call the OUR KIDS Center during office hours.

16 Where are the OUR KIDS Center and satellite clinics located?

The main OUR KIDS Center is located at 1804 Hayes Street in Nashville between 18th and 19th Avenues North. Hayes Street is in the West End area between Church Street and West End Avenue. Our office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 4:30pm. The main number is 615-341-4911. Free parking is available on the right side of the building.

SATELLITE CLINIC HOURS/DAYS VARY.

For questions regarding your child's appointment, please call 615-341-4911.

OUR KIDS satellite clinic in Cookeville is located inside the Upper Cumberland Child Advocacy Center at 30 East 1st Street, Cookeville 38501. For help with directions call 931-525-1080.

OUR KIDS satellite clinic in Lawrenceburg is located inside the Lawrenceburg Child Advocacy Center: A Kid's Place at 202 Deller Street, Lawrenceburg 38464. For help with directions call 931-766-2213.

OUR KIDS satellite clinic in Clarksville is located inside the Montgomery Child Advocacy Center at 227-A Dunbar Cave Road, Clarksville 37043. For help with directions call 931-533-5140.

Nashville General Hospital is located at 1818 Albion Street in Nashville. Free parking is available in the parking garage across from the main entrance to the hospital. The phone number is 615-341-4000.

IMPORTANT! Please be on time for your appointment so that we can give all our patients the best possible care. If you need directions or if you get lost on the way, please call 615-341-4911. If you cannot make your appointment or if you are running late, please call so that we can reschedule your visit, if necessary.

DIRECTIONS:

Please visit our website for directions
www.ourkidscenter.com/directions



OUR KIDS Center

1804 Hayes Street
Nashville, TN 37203
615-341-4911
Fax: 615-341-4919
www.ourkidscenter.com

Nashville General Hospital

1818 Albion Street
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