

UC Riverside

UCR Honors Capstones 2023-2024

Title

INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED EXTREME STRESS AND TRAUMA

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3211b7sf>

Author

Clark, Kassidy A

Publication Date

2024-07-24

INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED EXTREME STRESS AND
TRAUMA

By

Kassidy Anne Clark

A capstone project submitted for Graduation with University Honors

February 15, 2024

University Honors

University of California, Riverside

APPROVED

Dr. Rebekah Richert
Department of Psychology

Dr. Richard Cardullo, Howard H Hays Jr. Chair
University Honors

Abstract

Each year in the United States there are more than 600,000 reports of suspected child maltreatment (*National Child Abuse*). Child abuse can take many forms including physical abuse, neglect, and even emotional abuse. Emotional abuse of a child can be described as an instance when an adult uses intimidation tactics to control a child. This type of influence can be defined as “suggestibility”, or the degree to which a child’s “encoding, storage, retrieval, and report of events” are influenced by social and psychological factors (Ceci, 1993, p. 404). While it may not be intrinsically obvious that intimidation can be considered a form of child abuse, suggestibility is just as damaging and threatening to a child’s self-confidence and psychological state.

Emotional abuse of a child occurs because of the vulnerable position children are in during the stages of their cognitive development. Because a child’s cognitive abilities are still forming in their early years, children are naturally set behind adults in terms of maturity and intelligence. As a result, children are easily influenced by adult figures and can be subject to mistreatment. Theories of cognitive development provide the conclusion that “children do not think and reason like adults”; thus, until they reach adulthood, children are continually looking up to adults to take in information and mimic what they see and hear daily (Spielman, 2020, ch. 9.2).

In society today, widespread movies and television occasionally display scenes that depict parents, teachers, and other influential adults questioning children in confrontational and uncomfortable manners. Popular entertainment sometimes also shows scenes where children are wrongly intimidated and mistreated by adults who take advantage of their lesser intelligence and lack of real-world experience. Not only are these films inaccurate, but they could be dangerous,

especially for viewers who frequently engage with children. One of the risks that come with fictional television is the possibility for its viewers to be misled into thinking that everything they see on their screens is proper and accurate. To protect children against child abuse, adults should be educated on the most effective and appropriate ways to interact with children.

Acknowledgments

I would first and foremost like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Rebekah Richert for her incredible mentorship and unwavering support throughout this entire process. I would not have made this project possible without her continual guidance and encouragement over the past year.

I would also like to thank the Honors team who have been a great source of encouragement throughout the entirety of my undergraduate career. I would especially like to thank Ms. Latoya Ambrose, who helped assist me and guided me on the path of success during the last four years I have been involved in the University Honors Program.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother, father, and sister who encouraged me and kept me motivated during one of the hardest seasons of my life. I would also like to thank my friends and other family members who have prayed for me and told me to never give up.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	2
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
PRIOR RESEARCH.....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	7
TAKE CARE OF MAYA	8
Documentary Introduction	8
Documentary Individual #1	9
Documentary Individual #2	11
Comparing Documentary Individual #1 and #2.....	13
Documentary Individual #3	14
SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO GUIDE CONVERSATIONS WITH CHILDREN	17
CONCLUSION	18
INFOGRAPHIC.....	20
REFERENCES.....	21

Prior Research

To prepare for this capstone project, I chose to study the work of Dr. Stephen Ceci, a psychologist and expert in the field of cognitive development. Dr. Ceci is well known for his research on the development of intelligence and memory in adolescents, as well as his extensive studies on the accuracy of trial testimony given by child witnesses.

For this capstone project, I analyzed the 2023 Netflix documentary *Take Care of Maya*, a film about a mother who committed suicide after she was falsely accused of child abuse after bringing her ten-year-old daughter into the emergency room with strange symptoms. Using Dr. Ceci's work, I analyzed the Netflix documentary and examined three individuals in the film to conclude whether their actions were compliant with Dr. Stephen Ceci's theories on how adults should lead conversations with children who have experienced trauma. While watching the documentary, I observed the different approaches the three adult individuals used to question the child and determined whether the adults interacted with the child in a way that Dr. Ceci's research would suggest is the best method for engaging in conversation with a child who is under extreme stress.

Introduction

First, I will introduce the work of Dr. Stephen Ceci and summarize his theories from one of his publications titled “Suggestibility of the Child Witness: A Historical Review and Synthesis”. Dr. Stephen Ceci is a large proponent of effective communication between adults and children; thus, his work focuses on various experiments that test how children respond to questions asked by adult figures, as well as how the cognitive development in children’s brains affects their tendency to form false memories. Dr. Stephen Ceci, in his publication, examines the suggestibility of children when they are under extreme stress, such as when in a courtroom setting, to determine their credibility when being questioned. Moreover, this publication also explores the various factors and other causes that lead children to become easily susceptible to adult influence.

While it can be beneficial for children to look up to adults who traditionally have more life experience and general knowledge than them, some dangers come with suggestibility and its inclination toward child abuse when it involves interacting with children who have experienced trauma. Ultimately, Dr. Ceci believes a child’s ability to provide accurate reports is jeopardized when the child is in a highly stressful environment. Throughout his years of research, Dr. Ceci has conducted and evaluated a plethora of experiments to test the reliability of children and their ability to be resistant to influence when interviewed in varying environments (Ceci, 1993, p. 428).

Take Care of Maya

Documentary Summary

The Netflix documentary, *Take Care of Maya*, tells a story about a young girl named Maya Kowalski who one day began experiencing unusual and painful symptoms. After being diagnosed with a rare illness, Maya's family searched for a remedy and discovered a life-saving ketamine treatment that was administered to Maya in Mexico. The procedure went well, and Maya was on the road to recovery; however, less than a year later she relapsed and was rushed to the hospital. While there, Maya's mother, Beata Kowalski, was interrogated and falsely accused of having Munchausen syndrome by proxy, a medical term used to describe child abuse through medication because of a mental disorder in the caretaker which leads them to believe the child is ill. Although Beata proved to not have the mental illness as accused by the hospital staff after being given a court-ordered psychological evaluation, Maya was immediately taken away from her parents and put into temporary custody of the state after formal accusations against the mother were made by Dr. Sally Smith. This custody would last more than three months.

After watching the documentary through the lens of Dr. Stephen Ceci's studies and theories about the proper way to question children who are under extreme stress, numerous scenes demonstrate the proper and improper ways to interact with children. According to Dr. Ceci's research, this Netflix documentary can be both criticized and highlighted for its ability to display the various ways in which adults engage with children in everyday life. For this project, I examined three individuals in the documentary- one whom Dr. Ceci would approve of, one whom he would semi-disapprove of, and one whom he would completely disapprove of. The individuals are listed respectively. I will first begin with the individual who correctly

demonstrated what Dr. Ceci believes is the proper way to work with children who are in stressful situations.

Documentary Individual #1

Dr. Anthony Kirkpatrick, an anesthesiologist and pharmacologist, is introduced at the beginning of the documentary as Maya's original doctor who diagnosed her with advanced complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS). CRPS is a severely disabling condition that causes a range of symptoms from swelling to a loss of range of motion in the limbs (*Complex Regional Pain Syndrome*). After diagnosing Maya, Dr. Kirkpatrick encouraged the young girl to seek treatment in Mexico where she would receive life-saving ketamine injections and would be put under a five-day medically induced ketamine coma which would essentially force her nervous system to "reset". The documentary production team filmed many conversations between Maya and her doctor that demonstrate Dr. Kirkpatrick's success in earning the trust of the young Maya, who at the time, was just ten years old.

In the documentary, Dr. Kirkpatrick demonstrated positive conversation skills that Dr. Ceci has proven beneficial in facilitating open and honest communication between children and adults. At the beginning of the film, Dr. Kirkpatrick gives Maya a step-by-step breakdown of what her procedure is going to look like. By explaining to Maya what she could expect to happen during her treatment, he was properly influencing Maya to believe that she had full control over the situation. Though this was not entirely the case, as it was ultimately up to Maya's parents to make the decisions regarding her health, by allowing Maya to feel as though she was the one making decisions for herself and her health, Dr. Kirkpatrick was able to encourage Maya to follow his expert opinion and agree to receive the treatment.

According to Dr. Ceci's research, children typically perceive their adult conversational partners as being "cooperative, truthful, and not deceptive"; thus, they often desire to "comply with a respected authority figure" (Ceci, 1993, p. 418). In this example, Dr. Kirkpatrick did not abuse his power as a doctor to intimidate Maya into agreeing to undergo the procedure. Rather, Dr. Kirkpatrick effectively took control of Maya's health situation by appropriately encouraging her to find comfort in the procedure she was about to endure. Dr. Ceci finds that children's testimonies often "reflect their desire to protect themselves"; thus, by guiding her through the treatment process, Dr. Kirkpatrick allowed Maya to feel as though she was safe and protected, thus encouraging honest and open communication between the patient and the doctor (Ceci, 1993, 405).

Moreover, Dr. Kirkpatrick is recognized for the calm and friendly voice he used toward Maya, being mindful to use simplified language to help her better understand the situation. Dr. Kirkpatrick also strategically asked Maya for her consent before conducting various tests on her, applauding Maya for her hard work and reiterating to her that she was doing a "great job" (Keating, 2023). At this point in the film, it quickly becomes apparent to the viewers that Dr. Kirkpatrick is skilled not only as a doctor who was able to recognize Maya's symptoms and give her a diagnosis but also as a high-authority professional who has experience in effectively and appropriately working with children who are under extreme stress.

In Dr. Ceci's studies, he notes that younger children who are interviewed by "nice" adults typically respond better and as a result, tend to give fewer false reports (Ceci, 1993, p. 420-421). Because children are less likely to make false claims when they feel comfortable with their interviewer, according to Dr. Ceci's studies, Dr. Kirkpatrick's ability to earn the trust of his patient would likely influence Maya to be honest with him about her symptoms and concerns

(Ceci, 1993, p. 421). After studying this doctor's methods for working with Maya through the lens of Dr. Stephen Ceci's work, I concluded that Dr. Kirkpatrick's methods were appropriate and helped Maya to feel calm, comfortable, and safe in his presence. If Dr. Ceci were to watch this documentary, he would likely approve of the methods and mannerisms that Dr. Kirkpatrick used to facilitate tests and experiments on the young girl.

Documentary Individual #2

Another individual from the documentary that I evaluated using Dr. Ceci's research is Beata Kowalski, Maya's mother. Although Beata's accusations of child abuse are up for debate, most of the documentary's viewers would agree that Maya's mother was innocent and should not have been accused of Munchausen syndrome by proxy. While I support the actions and choices that Beata made to heal and protect her daughter, in an attempt to play devil's advocate and evaluate Beata's actions through the lens of Dr. Ceci's theories, I have described the few instances in the documentary where Beata could have acted more appropriately, perhaps in a way that would have prevented the false accusations made against her from being created in the first place.

In the documentary, there was a conversation that occurred between Beata and Maya just moments before Maya was put to sleep from the medically induced coma. In one scene, Maya is filmed asking her mother, "Will I wake up?" (Keating, 2023). It is obvious that at this moment, Maya was under intense stress and feared that she may not survive the procedure. From Maya's comment, it is also clear that she had not been thoroughly guided through the process of the procedure. Had Maya been given this explanation before the time of her procedure, she may have been able to understand that her life was not as significantly at risk as she feared it was.

Beata's response to Maya's question was simply, "Yes you will" (Keating, 2023). In this scene, Beata was seen speaking to Maya with a serious tone, as she failed to comfort Maya and lessen her fears by providing her with informative details regarding the ketamine coma.

Although Beata gave Maya a correct and honest response, Dr. Ceci finds that children learn by example; thus, parents and other adult figures should be reminded that "young children perceive their adults as being highly credible and competent sources of information" as they tend to place "more faith in the credibility of adults' statements" than in those of individuals their age (Ceci, 1993, p. 418). According to Dr. Ceci's research, it would have been more effective and would have promoted better communication between the two if Beata had reiterated to Maya that the procedure was safe and that she had nothing to fear.

Moreover, Beata appears to make the situation more hostile by raising her voice at Maya, claiming, "No no no no no, keep that [the medical device] on, don't lift that [the medical device]", as Maya is shown visibly scared and uncomfortable as she sits in the procedure room, still questioning the likelihood of her survival (Keating, 2023). While it cannot be denied that Maya could have experienced life-threatening complications because of the procedure, the documentary depicts that this likelihood, though still very possible, was not significant enough to be stressed to the viewers. Thus, after Maya expressed that she feared she wouldn't wake up, her mother should have been the one to calm her down and diminish her worries, as it is a parent's job to calm their child down and help them to not have such irrational fears.

In Dr. Ceci's research, it is found that children's suggestibility can be ascribed to social factors, such as a child's "eagerness to comply with adult suggestions rather than to memorial factors" (Ceci, 1993, p. 406). Right before she began her procedure, Maya was filmed reaching out for her mother and looking over at her to discern what her thoughts were to mimic her

mother's reaction. Dr. Ceci suggests that children are often quicker to agree with statements made by adults than they are to think for themselves and reflect on their own feelings, thoughts, and memories; thus, Maya's reasoning for instinctively turning to her mother for guidance on how to feel going into her procedure is likely from her nature to mimic her mother. Because Beata was showing signs of stress and fear, Maya began to express similar emotions, likely as a result of copying and being influenced by her mother. After reviewing the scenes where Beata interacts with Maya from the perspective of Dr. Ceci's research, I concluded that Beata Kowalski's actions toward Maya could have been improved to provide Maya with the emotional support she needed to feel at ease during her procedure. If Dr. Ceci were to analyze this documentary, he would likely disapprove of most of the comments and actions Beata made toward her daughter in an attempt to calm her down.

Comparing Documentary Individual #1 and #2

When the documentary again focused on Dr. Kirkpatrick after Maya woke up from the coma, it was interesting to watch how differently the two individuals, Dr. Kirkpatrick and Beata Kowalski, spoke toward Maya during a time when her nerves and anxiety levels were significantly, and reasonably, high. Dr. Ceci would agree that children tend to feel comforted when they are spoken to in a friendly and simplistic manner, as well as when they are given step-by-step details of what situation they are going through or may soon be going through in the near future. Similarly, numerous studies have shown how the emotional tone of the interviewer plays a key role in the interview process between a child and an adult- negative emotional tones can promote children's false reports (Ceci, 1993, p. 422). Dr. Kirkpatrick's calm tone and friendly persona made Maya appear to be visibly more comfortable, as he reiterated to Maya what would

happen to her next, walking her through the recovery stage step-by-step. In contrast, Beata Kowalski, though fortunate to see her daughter, appeared to be stressed and reserved toward Maya, who seemed to pick up her mother's negative emotions.

Furthermore, according to Dr. Ceci, children are more likely to make accurate disclosures when the child is questioned by their parent(s); thus, when Dr. Kirkpatrick made the professional decision to allow Maya's mother to ask her daughter the health-related questions herself, it is likely that Dr. Ceci would approve of this tactic (Ceci, 1993, p. 422). By expressing to Maya, "Remember I said we were going to ask you some questions?" and then proclaiming, "Mom is going to ask them to you", Dr. Kirkpatrick demonstrates his knowledge and education on the proper way to approach children who have experienced trauma (Keating, 2023). Although Beata was given the opportunity to ask Maya the procedure questions herself, this did not reflect maturity and intelligence on Beata's behalf. Rather, this scene depicted that if it were not for Dr. Kirkpatrick's strategic actions, Beata would likely not have been able to comfort Maya on her own, independently.

Documentary Individual #3

In October 2015, Maya was taken to the emergency room at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital after relapsing. More issues in the documentary arose when Beata Kowalski became controlling toward the doctors and demanded that the new doctors did not understand the medical diagnosis that her daughter had. Soon after expressing this, Beata threatened to leave the hospital which posed concerns for some of the hospital staff who began to suspect that child abuse might be of concern for this family and Maya. A woman by the name of Dr. Sally Smith, a child abuse pediatrician who works with Child Protective Services (CPS) started questioning

Maya, though she kept her intentions for questioning the young girl concealed from the Kowalski family. As the film progressed, viewers were introduced to a new individual in the film: Cathi Bedy, a Suncoast social worker. Using Dr. Stephen Ceci's research, I evaluated the actions of Cathi Bedy in the second half of the documentary to criticize how her actions conflicted with the proposed methods of Dr. Ceci.

After the decision to hold Maya under the custody of the state was made by CPS, Maya reflected years later on how she felt "confused" and "asked so many questions" to Cathi Bedy that were never answered during her time in the hospital (Keating, 2023). Maya expressed in the documentary that she remembered feeling "medically kidnapped" by Cathi Bedy and other hospital staff, revealing that she "tried being hopeful" but feared that she would "never get out of this place" (Keating, 2023). Not long after Maya was taken into custody by the state, Cathi Bedy demanded that Maya be prevented from speaking to her parents, forcing Maya to comply with her decisions. In the documentary, Cathi Bedy was filmed telling the young Maya, who was just ten years old at the time, that it was "all in her head", making the false claim that the problem with Maya was "psychological and imagined" (Keating, 2023).

When evaluating the actions of Maya's social worker, Dr. Ceci's research would suggest that Cathi Bedy, either intentionally or unintentionally, created suggestibility for Maya. Dr. Ceci has studied the desire in children to comply with adults, especially respected authority figures. Cathi Bedy attempted to use her title and age to intimidate Maya into responding to CPS with answers that were consistent with what she believed was the intent of Cathi Bedy, rather than being consistent with Maya's own knowledge and perception of her illness and her relationship with her mother. According to Dr. Ceci's research, children strive to be effective communication partners by "complying with what they perceive to be the belief of their questioner" (Ceci, 1993,

p. 425). Cathi Bedy wrongly took advantage of Maya's young age and low intelligence levels in an attempt to trick her into believing her symptoms were made up. Ultimately, Dr. Ceci finds that children are capable of fabricating details of events they have witnessed, believing that it will make them better conversational partners (Ceci, 1993, p. 419-420).

Furthermore, Cathi Bedy was filmed telling the young, vulnerable, and scared Maya that she was "going to go into a foster home", leading her to believe that she would never see her parents again (Keating, 2023). Cathi Bedy was then exposed for making an inappropriate comment to Maya that she was "going to adopt Maya" (Keating, 2023). Not only did the statement produce many psychological concerns in Maya, but it made Maya extremely suggestible and vulnerable under the control of a complete stranger.

In Dr. Stephen Ceci's studies, he finds that children who engaged in the "most rapport-building events" before being questioned produced the fewest errors as a result (Ceci, 1993, p. 421). Because Maya expressed years later in the documentary that she felt as though she was "held captive" by Cathi Bedy, Dr. Ceci would note that because Maya did not feel a sense of safety in the presence of Cathi Bedy, her willingness to comply and answer Bedy's questions honestly was negatively affected (Keating, 2023). After analyzing the various actions and statements made by Cathi Bedy through the lens of Dr. Ceci's research, I concluded that Cathi Bedy's actions were immoral and inappropriate, as she forced Maya to feel unsafe and threatened by Bedy and the hospital staff. If Dr. Ceci were to watch the documentary, he would likely criticize Bedy's actions for her abuse toward the child and for provoking fear and discomfort in Maya.

Suggestions on How to Guide Conversations with Children

Parents, teachers, and other adult figures should develop an awareness of children who display symptoms of stress or trauma. When speaking to a child, according to Dr. Ceci's research, an adult must be mindful of how they approach, communicate, and treat a child. Education regarding the proper way to engage with children includes a multitude of elements ranging from the demeanor of the adult to their language.

Children should be spoken to in a simplified way to accommodate their lack of intelligence and limited vocabulary during the stages of their cognitive development. Experts such as Catherine Stephenson, chief of the district attorney's family protection division in California, argue that adults need to accommodate the needs of children by asking age-appropriate questions and avoiding using intimidation tactics that could affect a child's testimony (Gorman, 1991). For particularly young children, adults should ask the child if they know the difference between a truth and a lie. It is crucial to explain to the child why it is important to understand the difference between the two when the child is being questioned. If needed, an adult can give the child an example of a truth and a lie to guarantee that the child is aware of the difference.

Conclusion

In the United States, child abuse is of significant concern. In the year 1989 alone, there were 2.4 million cases of suspected child abuse reported in the country; however, of these cases, only 900,000 were substantiated (Ceci, 1993, p. 408). To lessen these numbers, parents, teachers, and other influential adults who frequently engage with children must be educated on the proper way to interact with children who are under stress.

After watching the documentary, *Take Care of Maya*, there were three individuals that I chose to evaluate based on their interactions with Maya throughout the film. According to Dr. Stephen Ceci's research, the first individual I evaluated, *Dr. Anthony Kirkpatrick*, correctly interacted with Maya. As seen in the documentary, Dr. Anthony Kirkpatrick did an effective job of gaining Maya's trust and encouraging her throughout the challenges of the procedure. His kind personality and friendly communication appropriately influenced Maya to be honest with him. Adults can learn from Dr. Kirkpatrick's example when educating themselves on the best way to work with children. The second individual I evaluated, *Beata Kowalski*, interacted with Maya incorrectly, for the most part, according to Dr. Ceci's research. Beata's inability to conceal her negative emotions within her created suggestibility in Maya who instinctively mimicked her mother. The third, and last, individual I evaluated according to Dr. Ceci's research, *Cathi Bedy*, incorrectly interacted with Maya as seen in the documentary. Bedy's inappropriate comments and fabricated statements toward Maya led the child to believe she would never return home to her family again.

In conclusion, reviewing this documentary allowed me to provide three extreme examples of the best and worst cases of children-adult interactions. These evaluations then

allowed me to provide evidence of how child abuse, especially through wrongful suggestibility, can be prevented by utilizing kind language and establishing trust in the relationship.

SUGGESTIBILITY CAN BE CONSIDERED A FORM OF

CHILD ABUSE

Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) heal over 200,000 kids and provide 1.5 million people with abuse prevention education each year in the United States. Guidance on how parents, teachers, and other adult figures should communicate with children is crucial for a child's survival, self-confidence, and wellness.



HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH CHILDREN UNDER EXTREME STRESS

DO

- Use a calm, quiet voice
- Use simplified language
- Earn the child's trust
- Praise & compliment the child on their strength

DO NOT

- Use a serious, strict tone
- Use intimidation tactics
- Accuse the child of lying
- Purposefully confuse or lie to the child

WHAT IS SUGGESTIBILITY OF A CHILD?

A CHILD'S EAGERNESS TO COMPLY WITH ADULT SUGGESTIONS BASED ON SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS RATHER THAN BASED ON MEMORY

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND SUGGESTIBILITY

Damaging to a child's SELF-CONFIDENCE, WELLNESS, SURVIVAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF MIND, ABILITY TO TRUST OTHERS, SENSE OF SAFETY

HOW TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

ENCOURAGE HONESTY, FORM A STRONG RELATIONSHIP, SPEAK CLEARLY AND KINDLY, REITERATE THE CHILD'S COURAGE AND HARD WORK

WHAT DOES WRONGFUL SUGGESTIBILITY LOOK LIKE?

- Accusing a child of **LYING**
- Using size, power, or authority to **DOMINATE**
- Lying to a child to **INFLUENCE** their answers
- WITHHOLDING** information from a child



Speak up and offer help to any child you think may be in an abusive environment.

Sources: <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/media-room/national-statistics-on-child-abuse/#:~:text=More%20than%20600%2C000%20children%20are%20abused%20in%20the%20U.S%20each%20year>
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.113.3.403>

References

- Ceci, S., & Bruck, M. (1993). Suggestibility of the Child Witness: A Historical Review and Synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *113*, 403–439.
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maggie-Bruck/publication/14881909_Suggestibility_of_the_Child_Witness_A_Historical_Review_and_Synthesis/links/02e7e5334c4f407f40000000/Suggestibility-of-the-Child-Witness-A-Historical-Review-and-Synthesis.pdf
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)*. Division of Pain Medicine.
<https://med.stanford.edu/pain/about/chronic-pain/crps.html>
- Gorman, T. (1991, November 8). *Murder Trial Raises Issue of Child Witnesses : Courts: Defense seeks to block prosecution's plans to subpoena two children, ages 3 and 5, to testify in case against their mother, accused of murdering her husband and burying his body in the front yard*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1991-11-08-me-992-story.html>
- Keating, C. (Producer), & Roosevelt, H. (Director). (2023). *Take Care of Maya* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.netflix.com>.
- National Child Abuse Statistics from NCA*. National Children's Alliance.
<https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/media-room/national-statistics-on-child-abuse/>
- Spielman, R. M., Jenkins, W. J., & Lovett, M. D. (2020, April 22). *9.2 Lifespan Theories - Psychology 2e | OpenStax*. <https://openstax.org/books/psychology-2e/pages/9-2-lifespan-theories>