

The image shows the cover of a spiral-bound notebook. The cover is a light beige or tan color with a fine, woven fabric texture. A silver metal spiral binding is visible along the left edge. The text is centered on the cover in a black serif font. The main title is 'The CHEM-L Protocol'. Below it, the subtitle is 'A Best Practice Protocol for Children Exposed to Methamphetamine Laboratories', with the words 'Children', 'Methamphetamine', and 'Laboratories' highlighted in a purple color.

The CHEM-L Protocol

A Best Practice Protocol for
Children **E**xposed to
Methamphetamine **L**aboratories

The CHEM-L Protocol

- These slides cover four questions:
 - Why was CHEM-L developed?
 - How was CHEM-L developed?
 - What does CHEM-L include?
 - How will CHEM-L be improved?

Why was CHEM-L developed?

- Illegal methamphetamine manufacture is **a significant and increasing problem** in Nebraska . . .
- . . .exposing innocent children to **a wide variety of risks.**
- Cooperation by all involved can **reduce these risks to children . . .**
- . . . and improve our ability to **hold the perpetrators accountable.**

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- . . .exposing innocent children to **a wide variety of risks.**
- Cooperation by all involved can **reduce these risks to children . . .**
- . . . and improve our ability to **hold the perpetrators accountable.**

Why was CHEM-L developed?

- **a significant and increasing problem**
 - Last year over 300 laboratories were discovered and dismantled
 - For the past several years this number has been increasing dramatically.
 - We do not know how many children are exposed but we know that many are.

Why was CHEM-L developed?

- **a wide variety of risks.**
 - A many toxic and caustic chemicals are used in the process.
 - Additional toxic chemicals are generated in the process.



Why was CHEM-L developed?

- a wide variety of risks.
 - Adults focused on making (and often using) methamphetamine are **NOT** focused on caring for their children.



Why was CHEM-L developed?

- a wide variety of risks.

– This child's "sippy cup" was used to generate toxic HCl gas!



Why was CHEM-L developed?

- **a wide variety of risks.**

- As many as 20% of labs are discovered because they blow up!



Why was CHEM-L developed?

- **reduce these risks to children . . .**
 - Children should be seen by a physician quickly after they are discovered.
 - Information from the scene can greatly help the physician evaluate the child.
 - Information can also help find a permanent and safe placement for the child.

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Why was CHEM-L developed?

- **hold the perpetrators accountable.**
 - Documenting the risks to children and the effects of exposure can help in the prosecution of the adults who are responsible.

How was CHEM-L developed?

- Nebraska participates in the federal HIDTA program (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) coordinated by the U.S. Attorney's office.
- A Drug-endangered Children committee became aware of the risks to children.
- A Medical Working Group reviewed other states' experience and the medical literature and developed a "best practice" recommendation

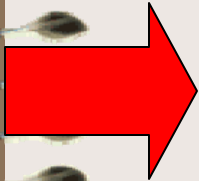
How was CHEM-L developed?

- In February, 2004, Governor Mike Johanns endorsed the CHEM-L protocol as part of a program to protect Nebraska children.



What does CHEM-L include?

- CHEM-L guides in six areas:



- Pre-planning
- Procedures at the scene
- Timely medical evaluation
- Forms filed in the medical record
- Information to the Foster Care provider
- A forensic interview

What does CHEM-L include?



Pre-planning

- When children are suspected to be involved, Law Enforcement should include HHSS personnel in a pre-action briefing.
 - The children may already be known to Protection and Safety.
 - This will help plan for the child's safety and permanency.

What does CHEM-L include?



Pre-planning

- At the scene, one person should be charged with managing the children.
 - Preferably, this will be an HHSS Protection and Safety person.
 - If not, it should be a law enforcement person skilled in working with children.

What does CHEM-L include?



Pre-planning

- Age-appropriate clothing should be available and on-hand at the scene in case child's clothing is contaminated.

What does CHEM-L include?

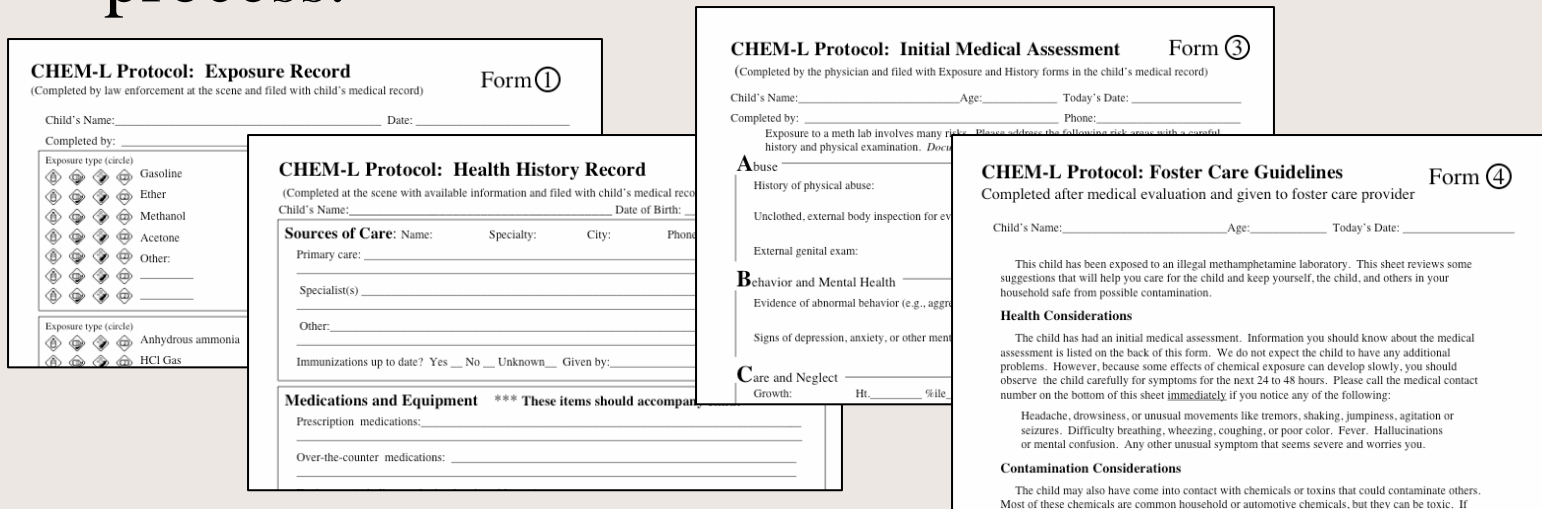
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What does CHEM-L include?



Procedures at the scene

- Law enforcement is in charge of all aspects of the scene.
- CHEM-L provides four forms to guide the process.



CHEM-L Protocol: Exposure Record Form ①
(Completed by law enforcement at the scene and filed with child's medical record)

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____
Completed by: _____

Exposure type (circle)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gasoline
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ether
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Methanol
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Acetone
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

Exposure type (circle)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anhydrous ammonia
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HCl Gas

CHEM-L Protocol: Health History Record
(Completed at the scene with available information and filed with child's medical record)

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Sources of Care: Name: _____ Specialty: _____ City: _____ Phone: _____

Primary care: _____

Specialist(s): _____

Other: _____

Immunizations up to date? Yes ___ No ___ Unknown ___ Given by: _____

Medications and Equipment *** These items should accompany the child ***

Prescription medications: _____

Over-the-counter medications: _____

CHEM-L Protocol: Initial Medical Assessment Form ③
(Completed by the physician and filed with Exposure and History forms in the child's medical record)

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ Today's Date: _____
Completed by: _____ Phone: _____

Exposure to a meth lab involves many risks. Please address the following six areas with a careful history and physical examination. Document findings.

A **Abuse**

History of physical abuse: _____

Unclothed, external body inspection for evidence of abuse: _____

External genital exam: _____

B **Behavior and Mental Health**

Evidence of abnormal behavior (e.g., aggression, depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns): _____

Signs of depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns: _____

C **Care and Neglect**

Growth: _____ Ht. _____ %ile _____

CHEM-L Protocol: Foster Care Guidelines Form ④
Completed after medical evaluation and given to foster care provider

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ Today's Date: _____

This child has been exposed to an illegal methamphetamine laboratory. This sheet reviews some suggestions that will help you care for the child and keep yourself, the child, and others in your household safe from possible contamination.

Health Considerations

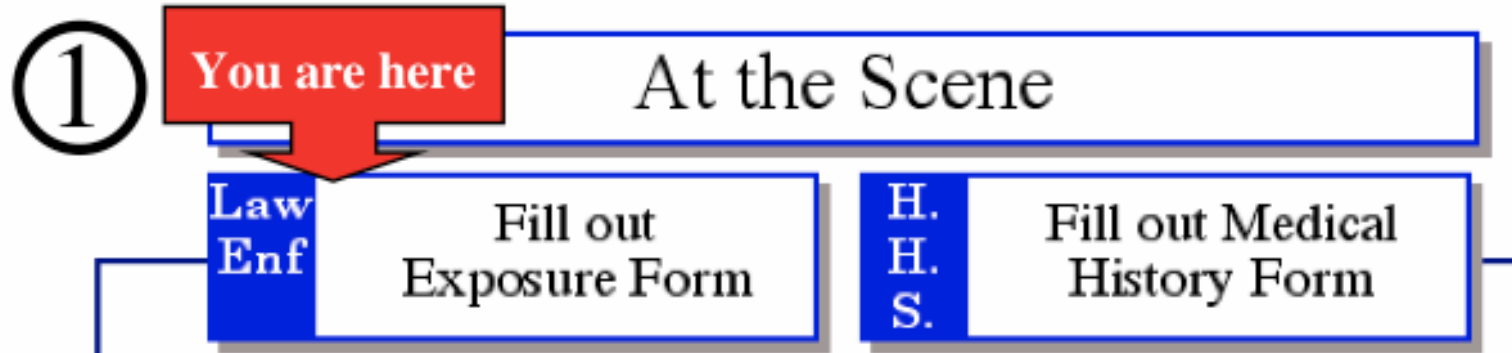
The child has had an initial medical assessment. Information you should know about the medical assessment is listed on the back of this form. We do not expect the child to have any additional problems. However, because some effects of chemical exposure can develop slowly, you should observe the child carefully for symptoms for the next 24 to 48 hours. Please call the medical contact number on the bottom of this sheet immediately if you notice any of the following:

Headache, drowsiness, or unusual movements like tremors, shaking, jumpiness, agitation or seizures. Difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing, or poor color. Fever. Hallucinations or mental confusion. Any other unusual symptom that seems severe and worries you.

Contamination Considerations

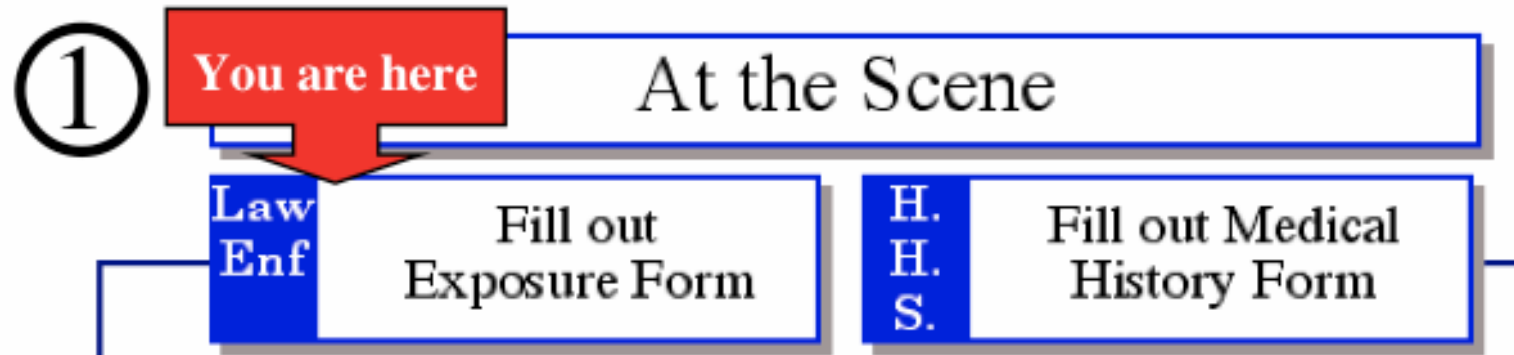
The child may also have come into contact with chemicals or toxins that could contaminate others. Most of these chemicals are common household or automotive chemicals, but they can be toxic. If

What does CHEM-L include?



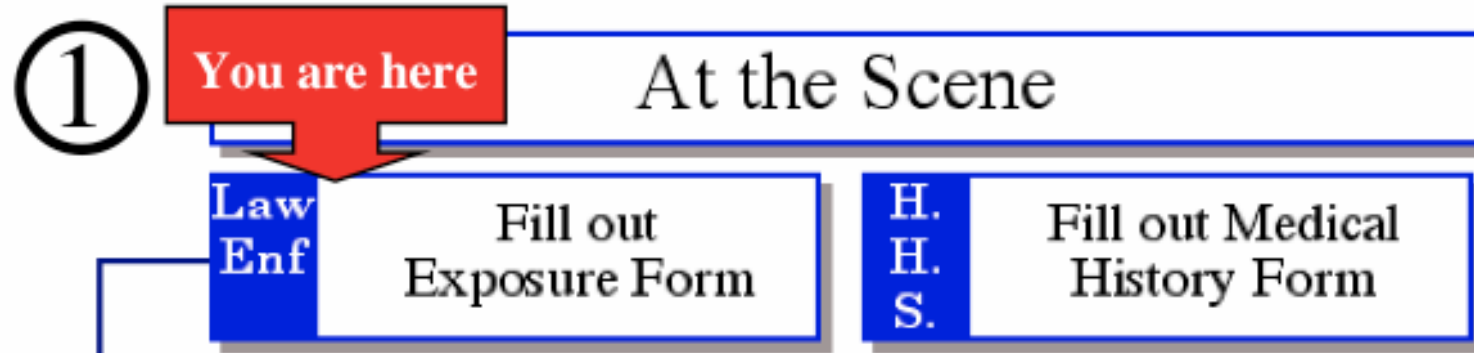
- On **Form 1**, law enforcement documents the exposure to the child. This is very important to the physician who will see the child.

What does CHEM-L include?



- **Form 1** includes space for
 - volatile organic compounds,
 - pulmonary irritants,
 - skin irritants, and
 - other hazards.

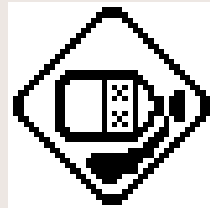
What does CHEM-L include?



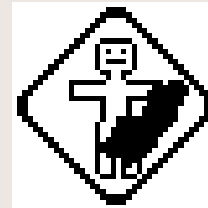
- Icons on **Form 1** show if the chemical is



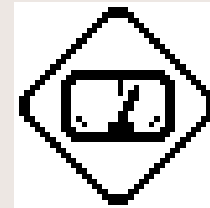
In a
bottle



Spilled

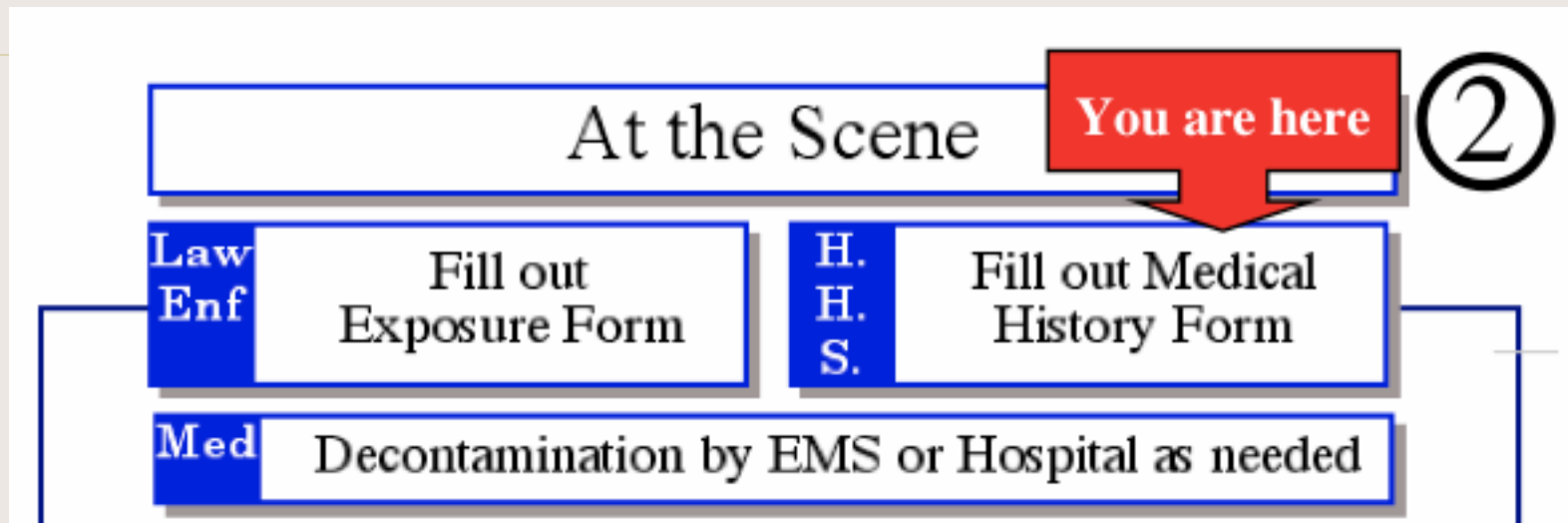


On the
child



Detected
with monitor

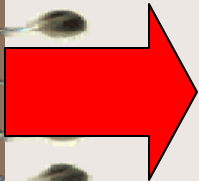
What does CHEM-L include?



- **Form 2** provides space for someone at the scene to collect any medical history available including medical equipment the child may have.

What does CHEM-L include?

- CHEM-L guides in six areas:
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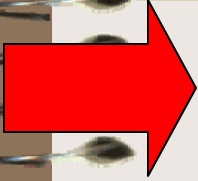
What does CHEM-L include?



Timely Medical Evaluation

- EMS Role
 - If there are **urgent health concerns**,
 - Or **evident contamination**,
- EMS should be called to decontaminate and transport the child to the hospital.

What does CHEM-L include?

- 
- Timely Medical Evaluation
 - **Urgent health concerns** include:
 - Breathing difficulty or wheezing
 - Burning or itching eyes
 - Burning on skin
 - Unusual behavior including sleepiness or hyper stimulation

What does CHEM-L include?



Timely Medical Evaluation


- Health care within 4 hours
 - After completing **Form 1 and 2** at the scene, the child should be taken to a children's health care facility within 4 hours.



What does CHEM-L include?



Timely Medical Evaluation



To Medical Evaluation \leq 4 Hours

You
are
Here



Med

- 1) Review forms
- 2) Complete Medical Assessment Form
- 3) Lab work when indicated
- 4) Refer to source of ongoing care
- 5) Place forms in medical record

③

- **Form 3** guides the physician's evaluation.

What does CHEM-L include?



Timely Medical Evaluation

- In addition to chemical exposure, **E** the physician should evaluate

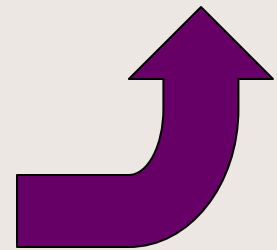
A– Abuse

B– Behavior and mental health

C– Care and neglect,

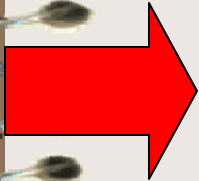
D– Development.

and



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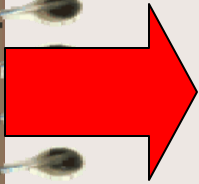


Forms Filed In The Medical Record

- Forms 1, 2, and 3 all are filed by the physician in the medical record .
- They can be subpoenaed if needed to support appropriate placement and hold adults accountable.

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 - Pre-planning
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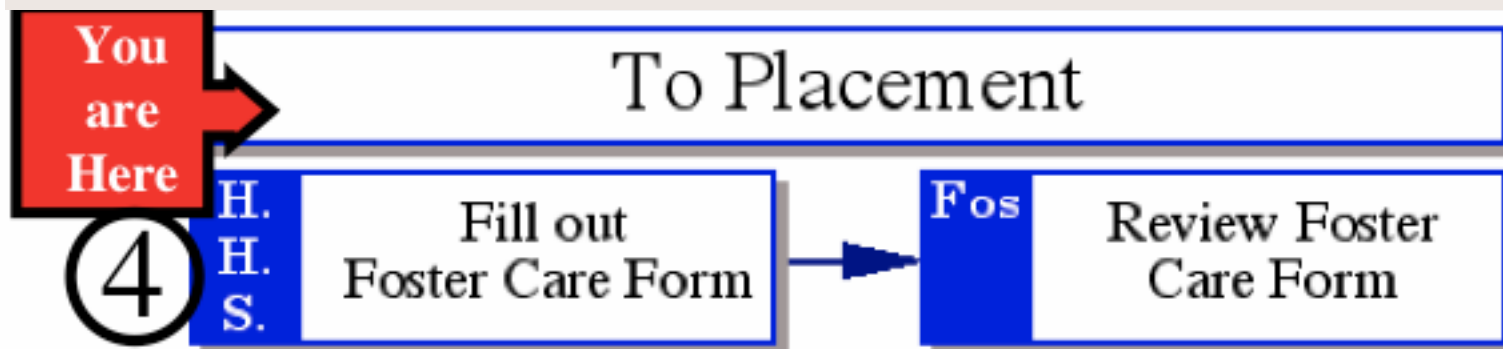


What does CHEM-L include?



Information to the Foster Care Provider

- **Form 4** provides guidance to the foster care provider about the needs of the child.

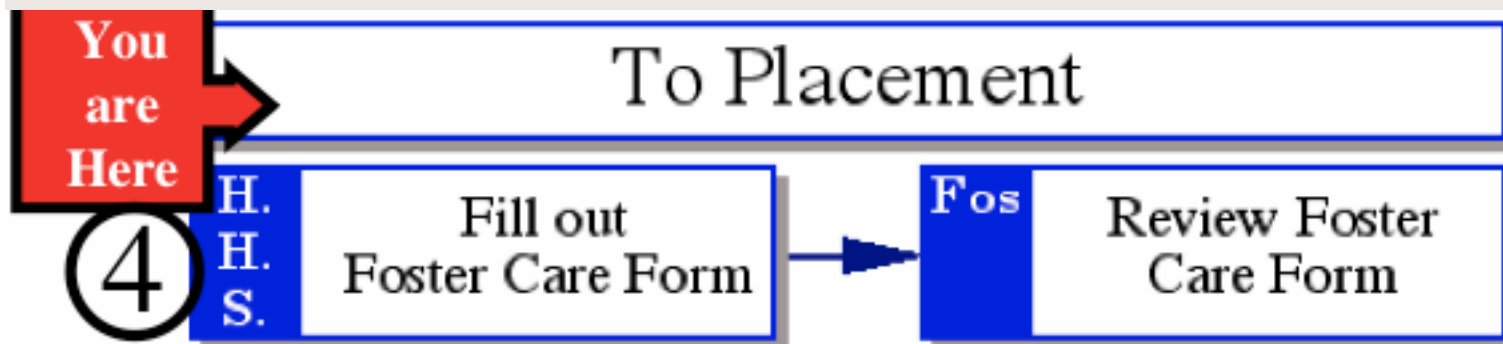


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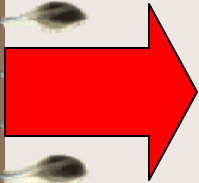
Information to the Foster Care Provider

- **Form 4** instructs the Foster Care Provider how to prevent contamination and keep the child safe.



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What does CHEM-L include?



Finally, A Good Forensic Interview is Essential

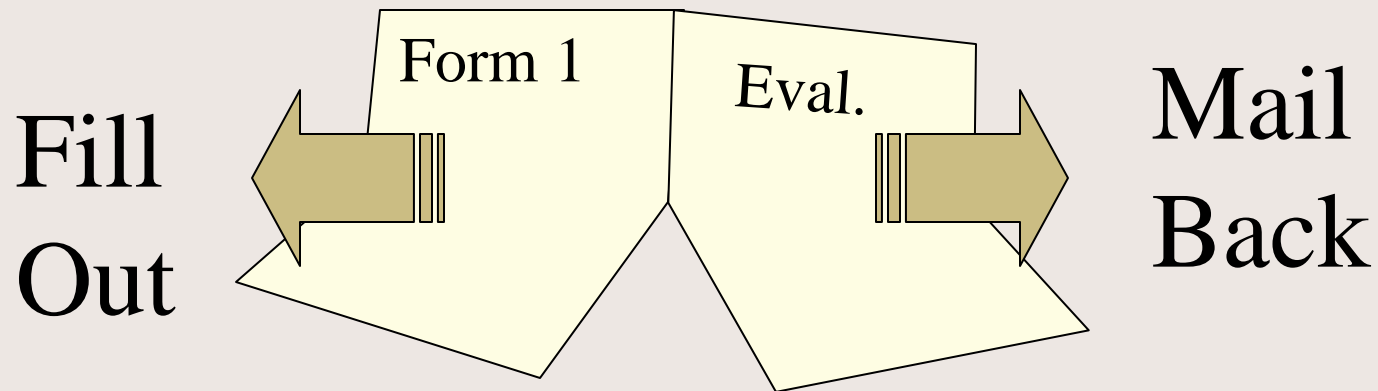
- Within 48 hours, the child should be interviewed at a Child Advocacy Center whenever possible.
- A well done, well documented interview can document important evidence for court.

How will CHEM-L improve?

- The CHEM-L Protocol is a
 - Starting Point
- Only good feedback from the field will help it develop into the “best practice” we all want for these high risk children.

How will CHEM-L improve?

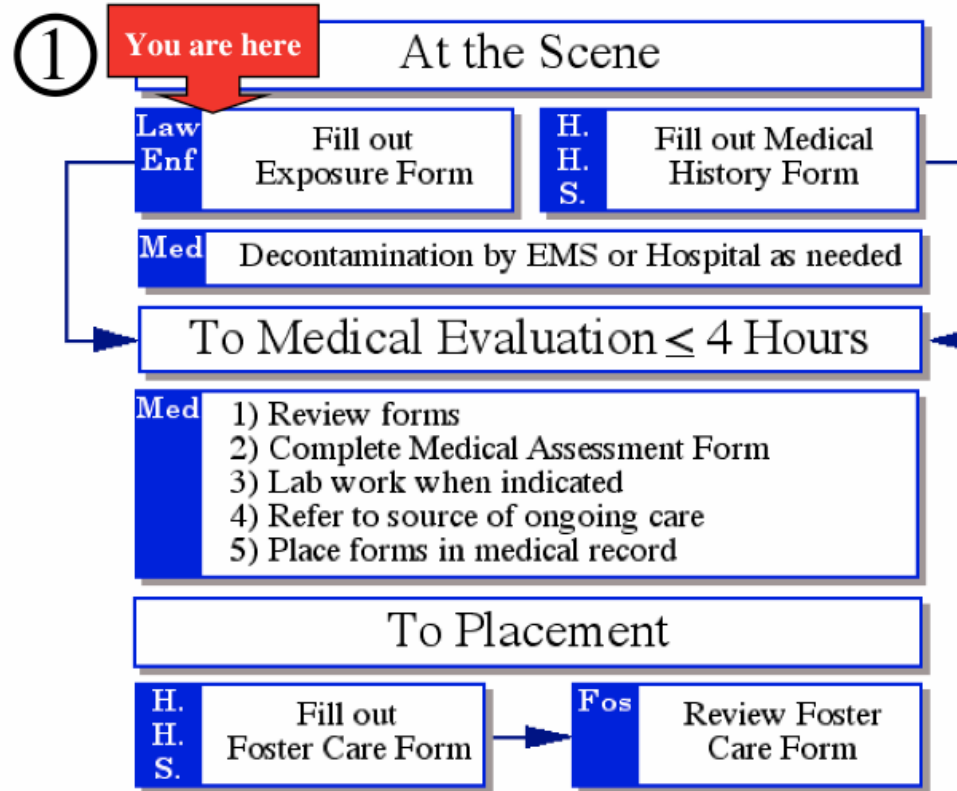
- Each form in the CHEM-L packet has an evaluation form attached. This form should be separated and mailed back to the CHEM-L Working Team.



How will CHEM-L improve?

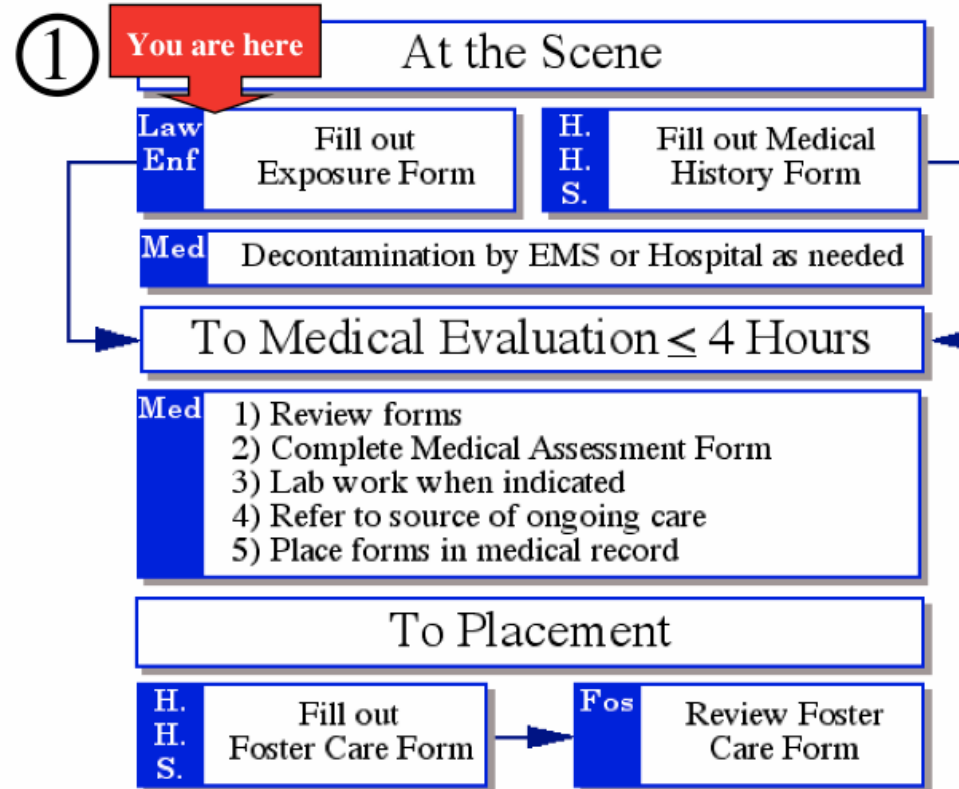
- 1184 Team Review
 - The protocol calls for the County 1184 Child Abuse and Neglect Teams to review each use of the protocol within 2 months and develop suggestions on improving the process.

How will CHEM-L improve?



With Everyone's Help!

Send Comments and Questions To the Medical Working Group



gwright1@unl.edu

The background of the slide is a spiral-bound notebook with a light beige, textured cover and a dark brown spine on the left side. The spiral binding is visible on the left edge.

The End

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