

Notice from Steven Drizin and Laura Nirider Regarding Use of the Reid Technique on Juveniles

As we have recently discovered, misinformation is spreading that we consider the Reid Technique of Interrogations the “gold standard on proper procedures” and that we “regularly review reid.com and our materials to establish best practices.”

These statements are not accurate. We do not endorse the Reid Technique, nor do we consider it a model for proper procedures or best practices.

We have worked for many years to persuade John E. Reid & Associates that some of the tactics Reid endorses for use on adult suspects are not appropriate on children. The changes in Reid’s 2013 edition of *Criminal Interrogations and Confessions* (5th ed.) reflect some progress in this regard. When we train defenders on how to handle false confession cases, accordingly, we tell them that this information about the vulnerabilities of youth in the interrogation room constitutes so-called “gold” that can be used to advocate for children in motions to suppress. By “gold”, we mean tactics that even Reid & Associates have agreed should be not be used -- or should only be used as a last resort -- on youthful suspects. This is a far cry, however, from endorsing the Reid Technique as a whole as a model for best practices.

One important reason that we do not endorse the Reid Technique is because the cautionary language about juvenile interrogations that is included in the manual does not appear to be actually taught during the trainings. Most police officers attend the trainings, rather than purchase the expensive Reid manual. But in our experience, Reid’s trainings do not draw sharp distinctions between interrogation techniques that are appropriate for adults and techniques that are appropriate for children/teenagers. Much of the information included in the manual about kids' vulnerabilities is not emphasized or even included in the live trainings. Those who attend these trainings are thus left with the impression that it is appropriate to use the full panoply of Reid techniques on youthful suspects. In our opinion, this is a recipe for false and/or coerced confessions.

For more information on a juvenile interrogation protocol that we do consider to be a model for best practices, please visit the [International Association of Chiefs of Police’s website](#) (pdf).

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