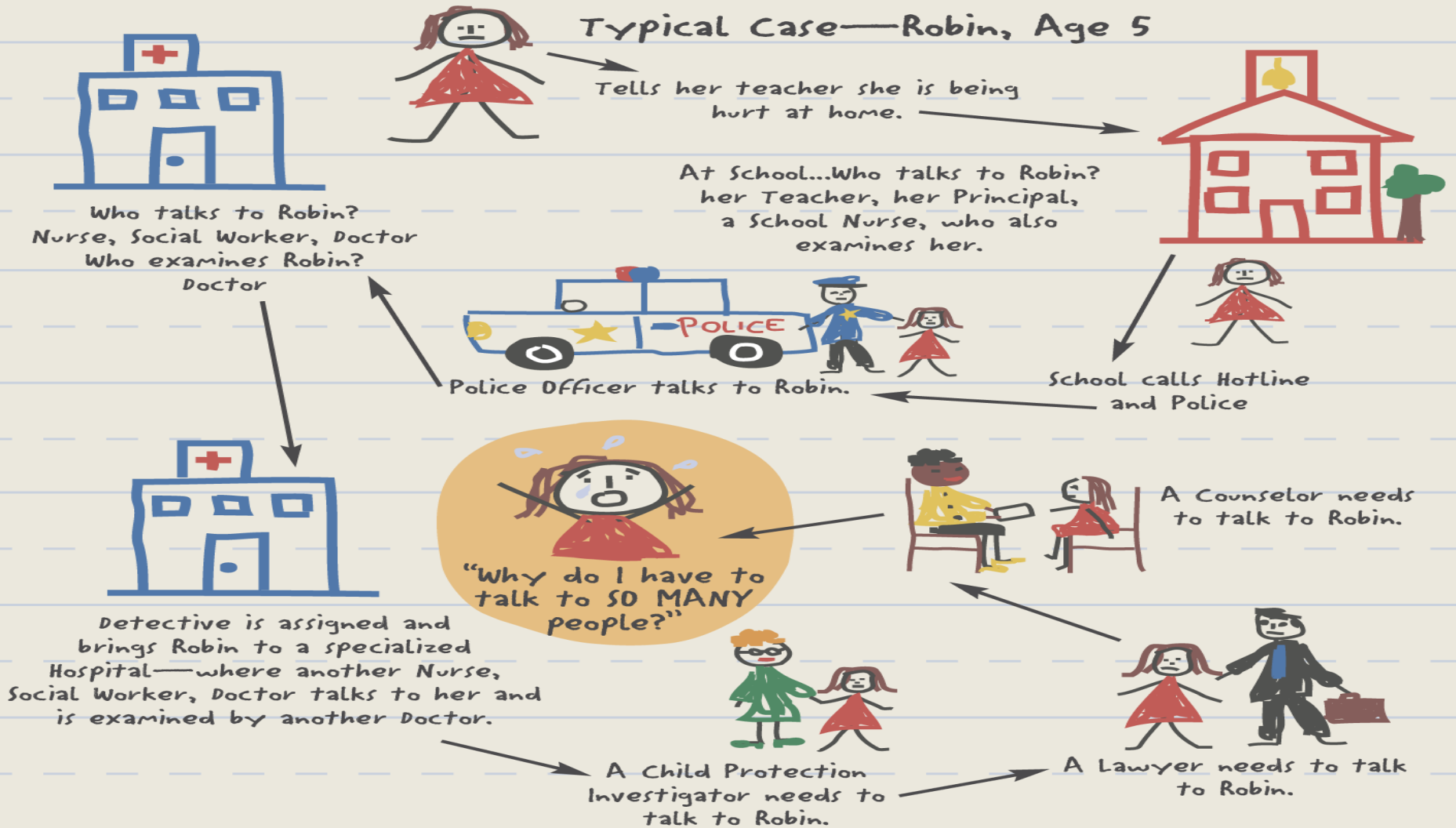


Comprehensive services of the Barnahús

Ólöf Ásta Farestveit
Director of Barnahús
31. May 2012

Changing the Child Abuse System

WHAT USED TO HAPPEN WHEN KIDS NEEDED HELP FOR ABUSE



Robin had to talk to 15 people, but now . . .
(turn over)

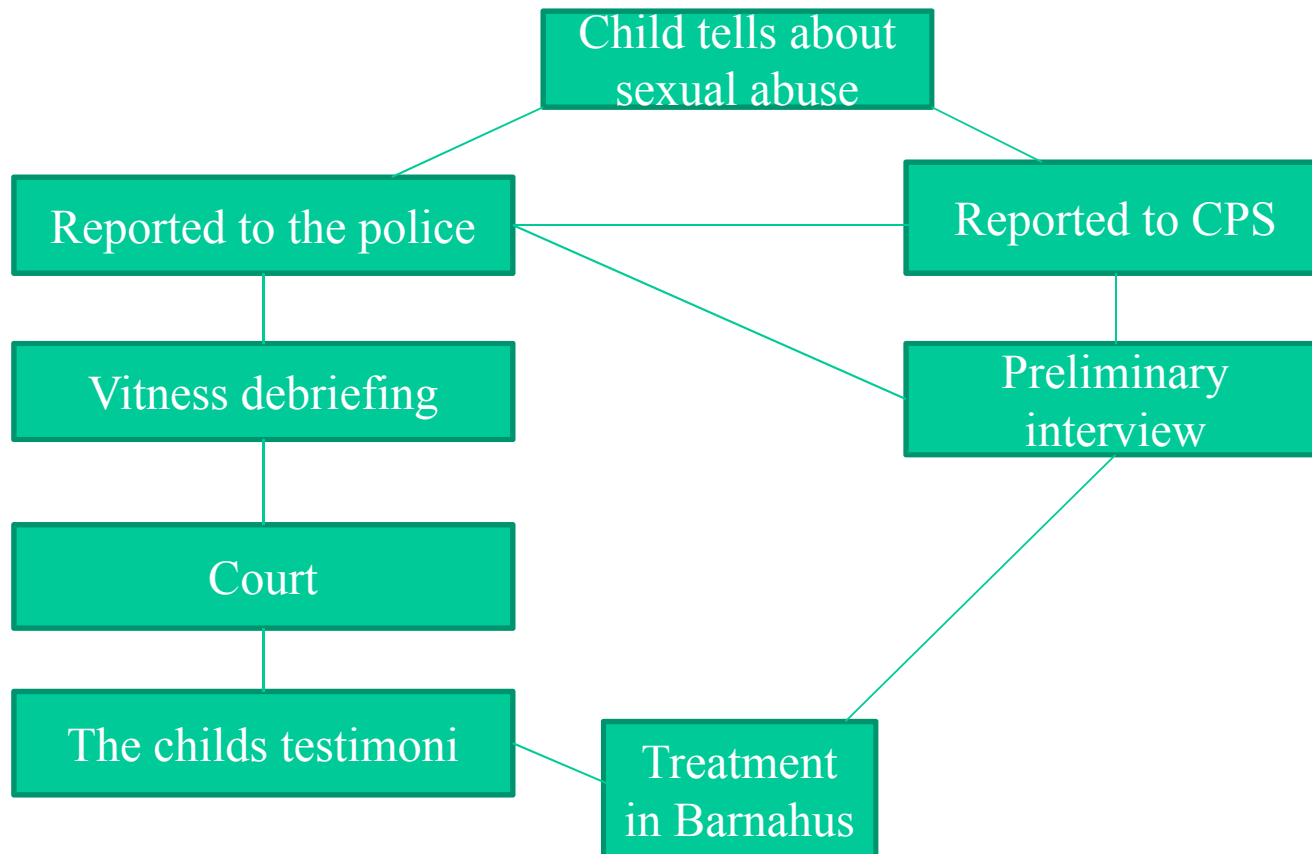
Mission of the Barnahús

- To facilitate collaboration and coordination of the CPS, Police, Prosecution and the Medical profession in the investigation of child sexual abuse
- To provide a child friendly settings for joint investigative interviews and medical examination
- To ensure professional implementation of investigative interviews

Mission of the Barnahús

- To ensure that the child victim and his/her family receives appropriate assessment, treatment and support
- To establish professional work practices and guidelines by interdisciplinary cooperation
- To enhance specialized knowledge on child sexual abuse and to mediate that knowledges as appropriate to professionals and the public alike
- Not to harm the child

Referral to Barnahús



Basic functions

- ▶ Child sexual abuse from ages 3 ½ - 18 years.
- ▶ Joint forensic interviews
- ▶ CPS preliminary forensic interviews
- ▶ Medical examination
- ▶ Victim therapy and family counselling and support



Investigative interviews

- The court judge is in charge of the procedure
- The forensic interview is copied on DVD
- The questioner is educated in childrens development



Investigative interviews

- The court judge
- The prosecution
- The police
- The CPS representative
- The child's legal advocate
- The defence
- The alleged offender



The CPS preliminary interview

- At the request of the CPS
- Disclosure is absent or very weak/ambiguous
- Offender has not been identified
- Offender is below the age of criminal responsibility(15 years)



The interview room

- Specially designet interview room
- Safety – child friendly setting
- camera
- Information about all present
- Everyone can ask questions through the questioner
- IT- link to the courthouse



Ólöf Ásta Farestveit - Barnahús

Medical examination

- Request of the police/CPS
- Experienced pediatrician, nurse and gynaecologist
- A child friendly examination room
- Using video-colposcope



Victim Therapy and family counselling



- The child and the non-offending parent(s) receive (legal) counselling immediately after the investigative interview
- Victim therapy can start soon after
- TF-CBT (Trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy) <http://tfcbt.musc.edu/>
- The DVD recorded child's disclosure is used for initial assessment and treatment plan
- Therapy is practiced in the child's hometown
- The therapist is most often important witness in court proceedings

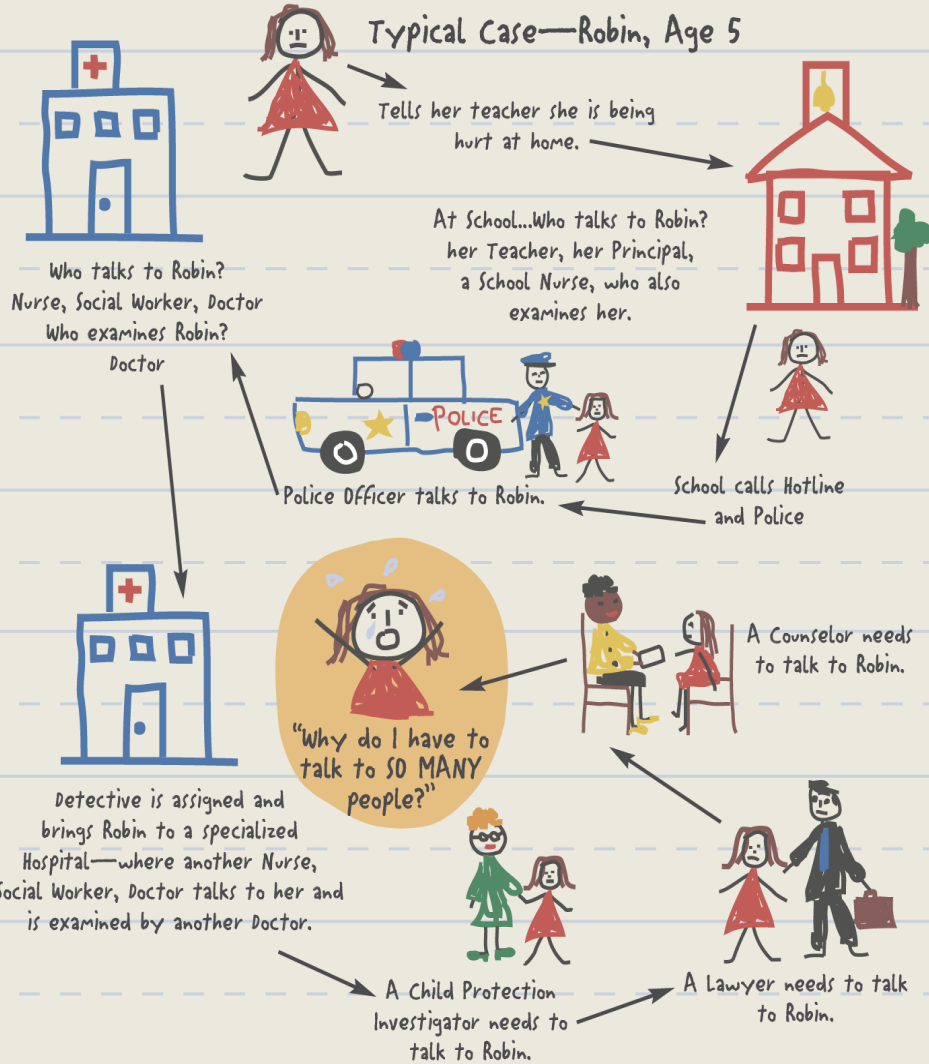
Iceland – one Barnahús



Changing the Child Abuse System

WHAT USED TO HAPPEN WHEN KIDS NEEDED HELP FOR ABUSE

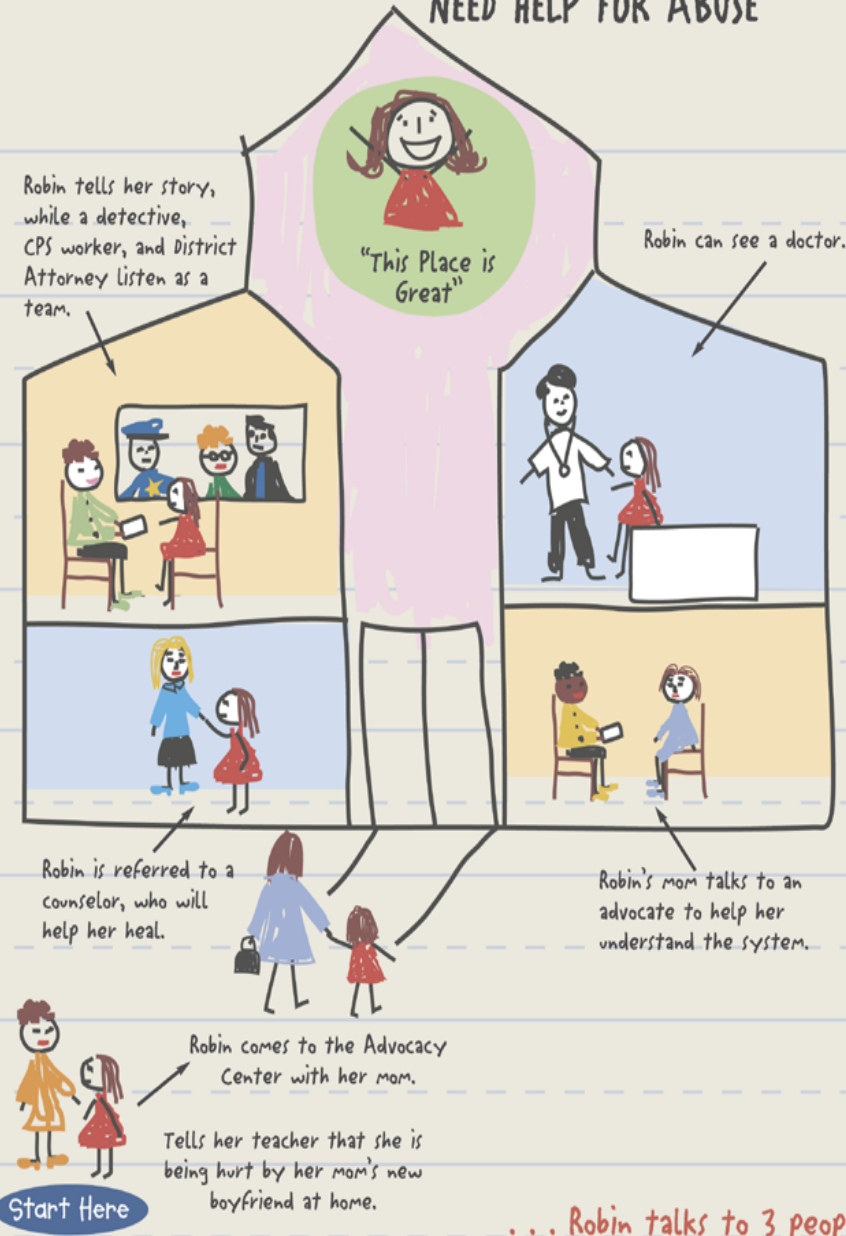
Typical Case—Robin, Age 5



Robin had to talk to 15 people, but now . . .
(turn over)

Changing the Child Abuse System

WHAT HAPPENS TODAY WHEN KIDS NEED HELP FOR ABUSE



. . . Robin talks to 3 people

After 13 years of experience

- Efficient, professional and child-friendly work procedures and case management
- re-victimization of the child victim minimized
- Appropriate therapeutic services secured
- Mutual professional trust among the different agencies
- Assimilation of knowledge and experience
- Increased public awareness and confidence in the authorities
- Increased „rate of discovery“

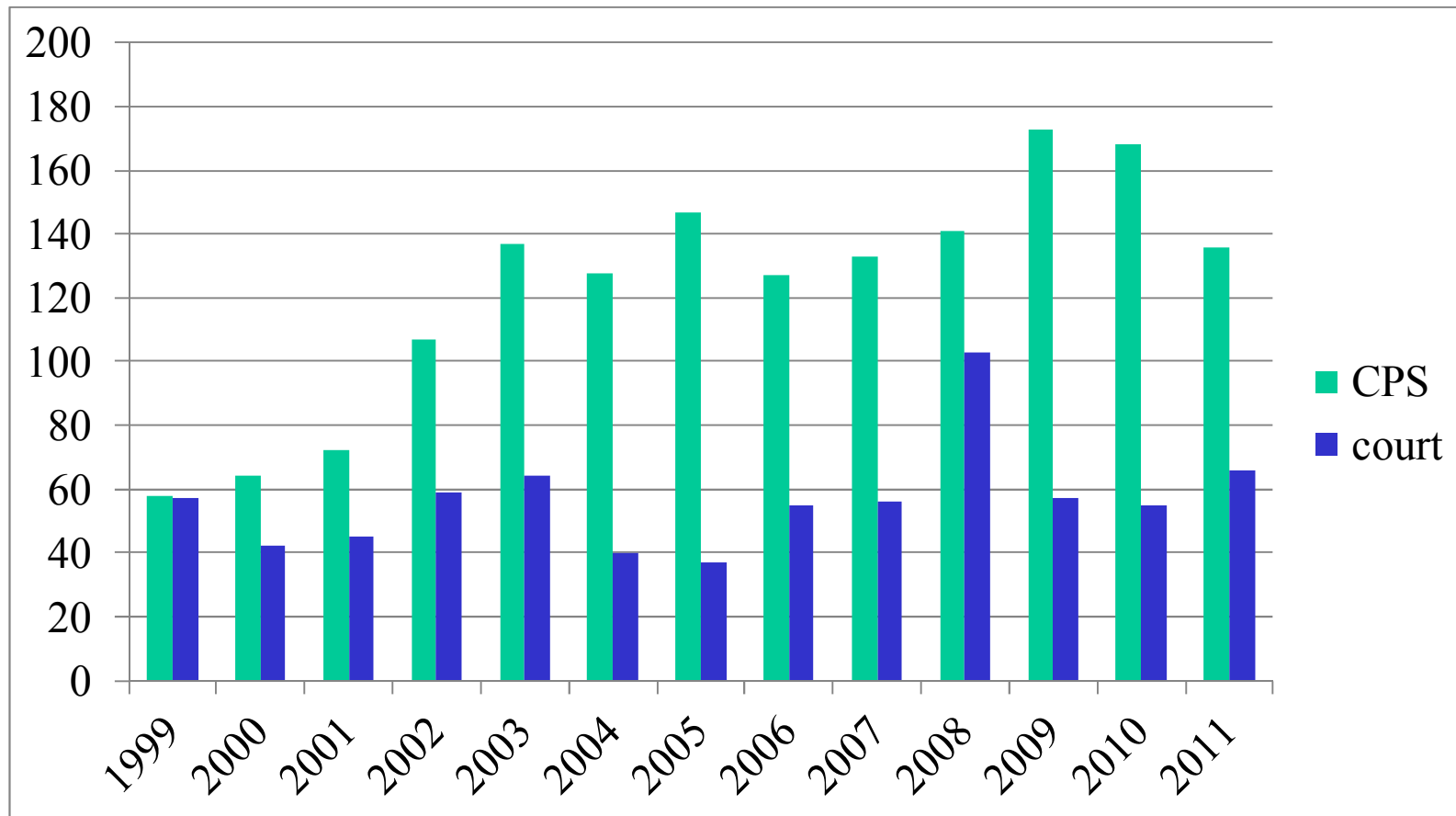
Barnahús in 13 years

1. nov. 1998-31.dec 2011

	Number of children	Average
"Forensic interviews"	2367	182
Treatment	1320	101,5
Medical examination	300	23

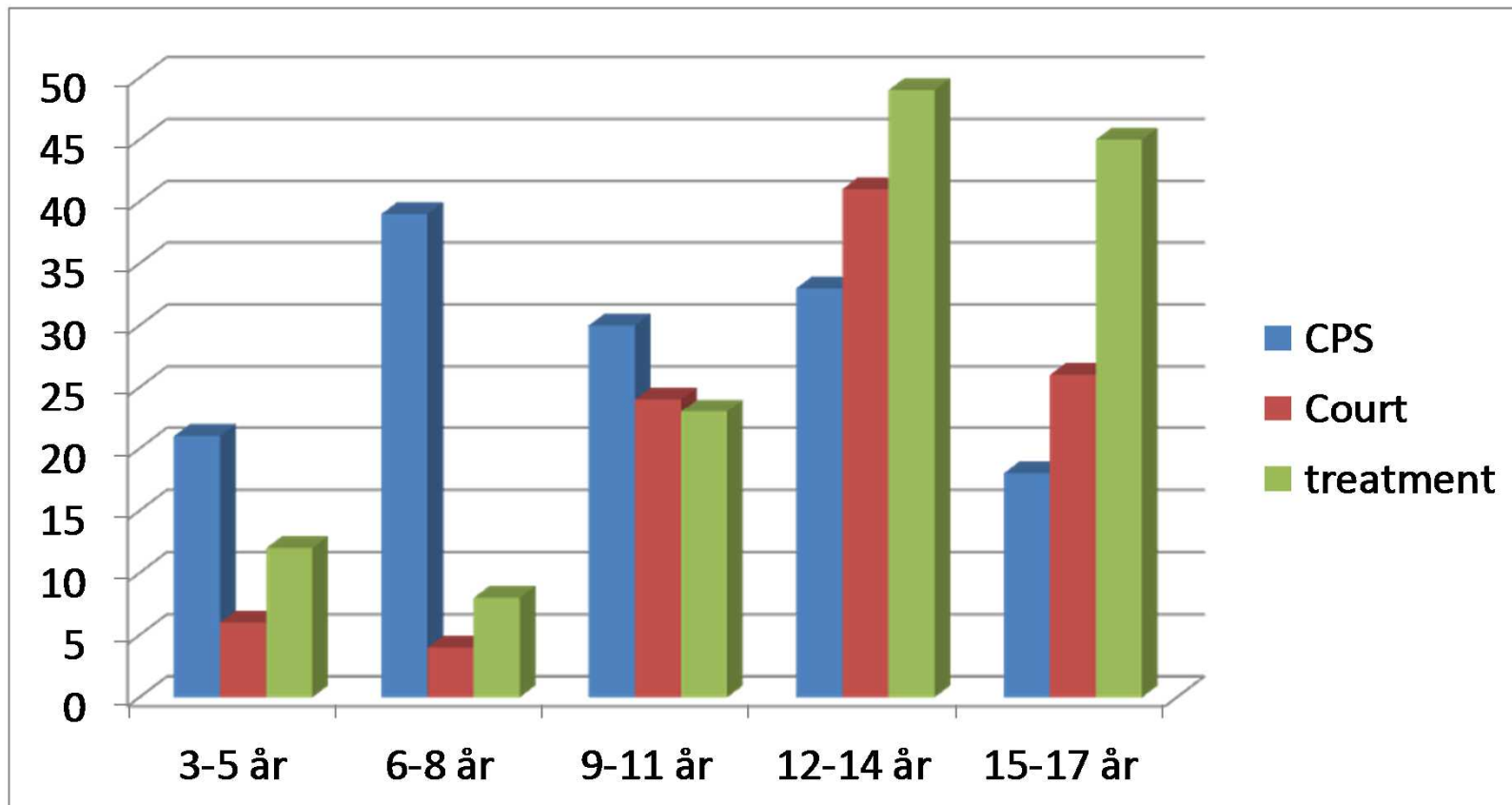
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Total forensic interview



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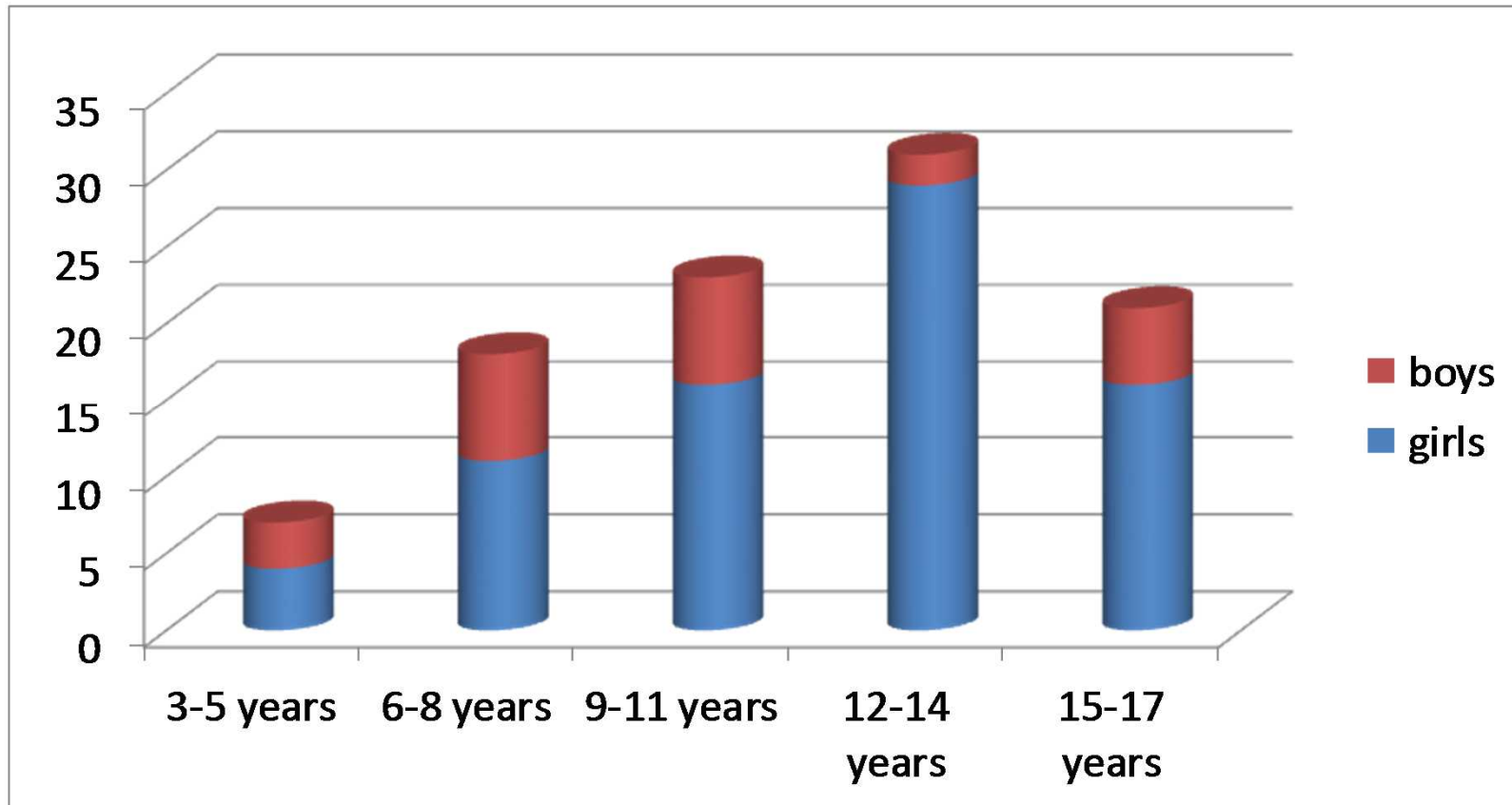
Number of children 2008



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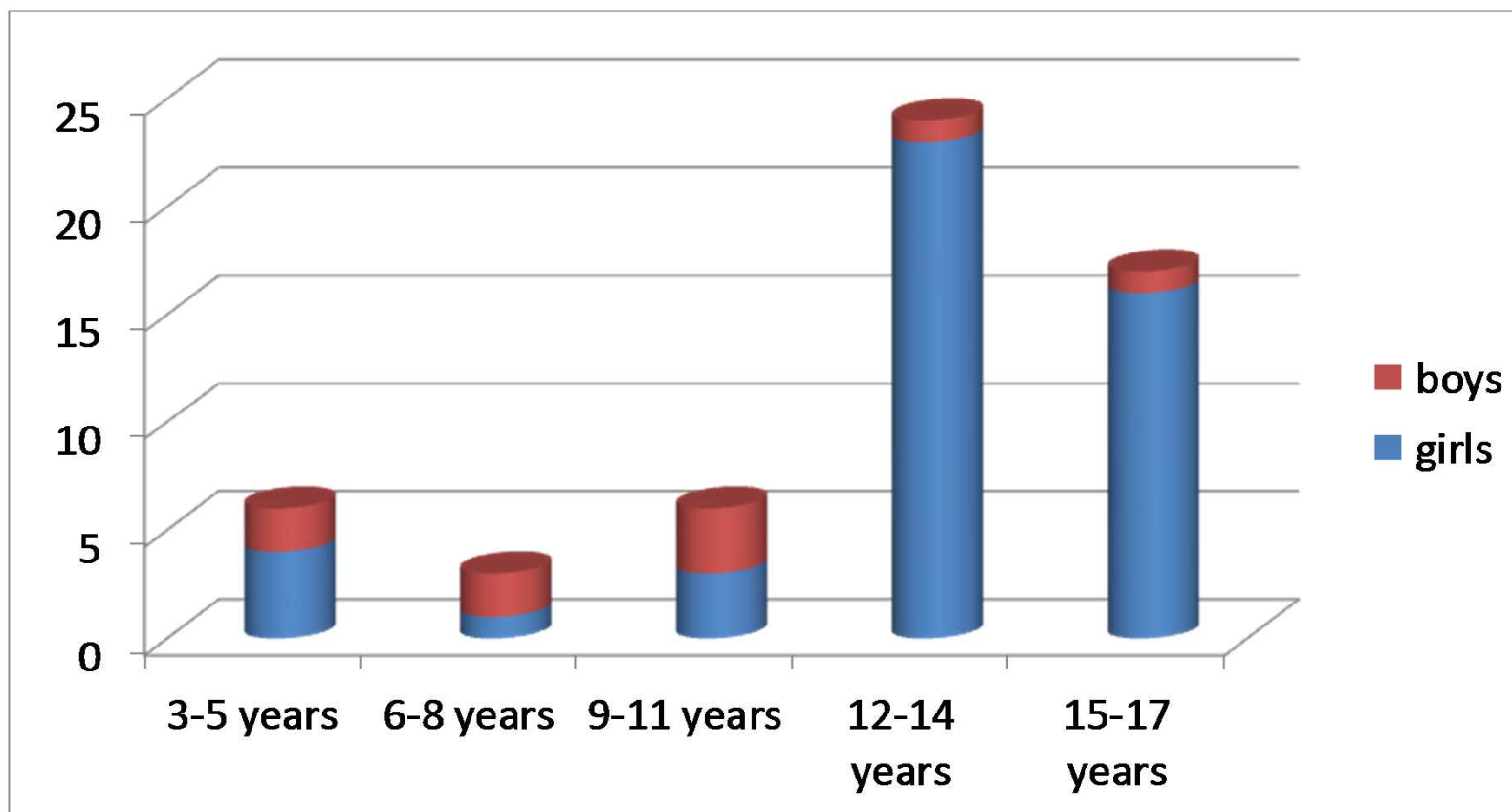
Difference between the sexes

2008- in interviews



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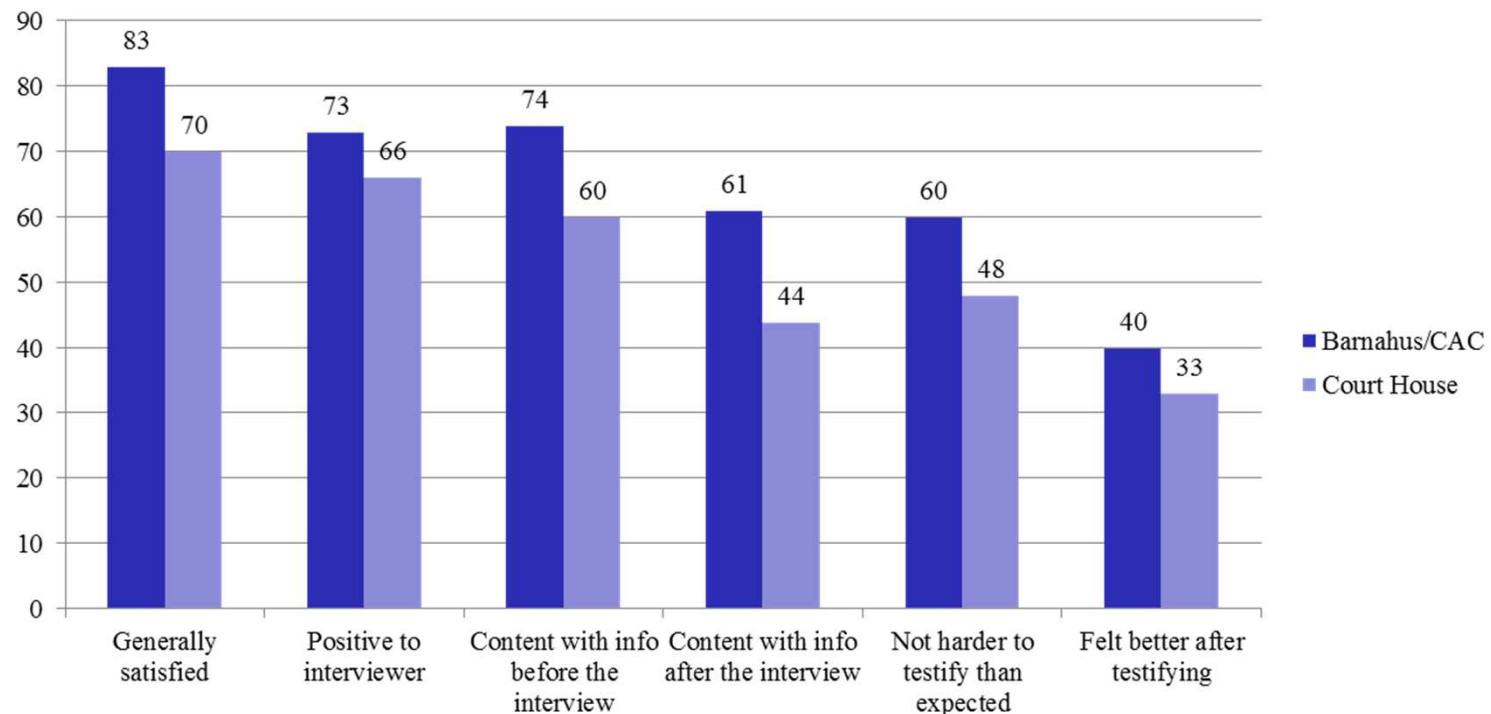
Treatment 2008



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Child-friendly testimony

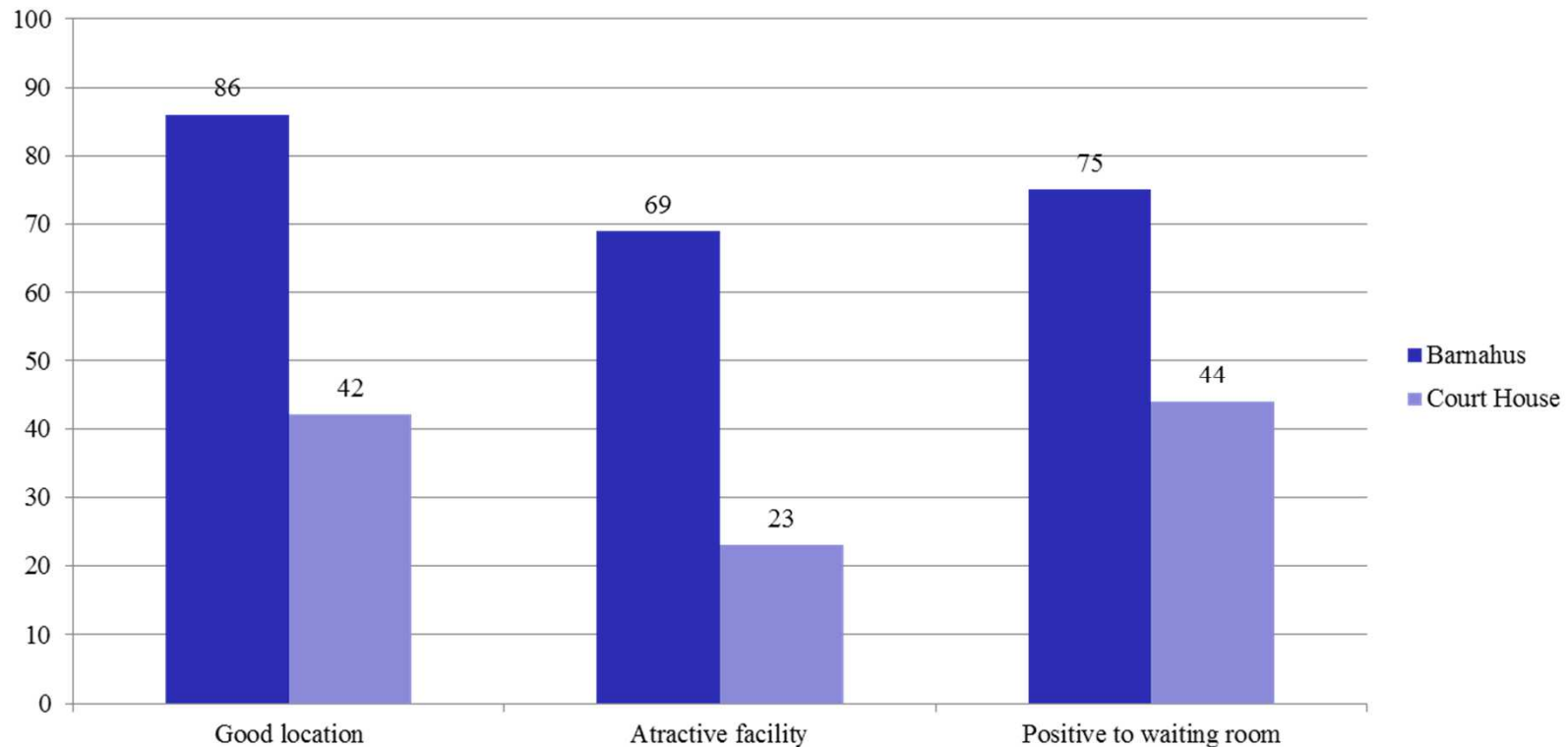
Giving testimony (%)



Child-friendly environment



Environment for testifying (%)



A Court case date 21. Oct. 2009



- A father was sentenced by the High Court to 5 years imprisonment for sexually abusing his daughter who was 3,5 years of age at the time of the hearing in spite of:
 - No medical evidence
 - No witness other than the child
 - Very limited verbal disclosure due to her age
 - Strong denial of the accused

We must think of
The child's best interest !