

Child Abuse/Mandated Reporting

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Presentation Outline

- Legal foundation
- Types and indicators of abuse
- Detecting abuse
- Required mandated reporters
- What is required to be reported
- How to make a report
- Consequences for failure to report

Legal Foundation: Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting

- California Penal Code 11165.7: defines mandated reporters and required, annual training (CANRA: California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act)
- Education Code 44691: requires annual training for school employees in identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect
- AB 1913: further details training requirements
- Training must take place within first 6 weeks of school year
- Your report is confidential
- You are protected from civil/criminal liability if you report in good faith

Your Duty as a Mandated Reporter

- All school personnel in California are legally required to report suspected child abuse
- This includes anyone working at a school:
 - Teachers
 - Administrators
 - Paraeducators
 - Custodians
 - Office Staff
 - Substitutes
 - Etc.....
- Reporting does not mean simply reporting the abuse to a supervisor. A formal report must be made

Possible Types and Indicators of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse**
 - unexplained bruises, burnes, fractures
 - Fearful or withdrawn behavior
 - Fear of going home
 - Implausible explanations for injuries
- **Sexual Abuse**
 - Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior
 - Reports from the child. Sexualized play
 - Pain, itching or infection in genital areas
 - Drawing sexually explicit images
 - Child Sexual Abuse-Sexual Exploitation
- **Emotional Abuse**
 - Excessive need for approval or affection from unrelated adults
 - Developmental Delays, low self-esteem
 - Overly compliant, passive or fearful of making mistakes
 - Self-harming behaviors
- **Neglect**
 - Malnutrition, poor hygiene, unattended medical needs; failure to thrive
 - Frequent absences, fatigue
 - Absence of adult supervision appropriate for age

Detecting Abuse

Key Points

***Detecting child abuse or neglect is tricky. There are a great deal of potential indicators and very few of them conclusive. Additionally children try to cover up any indication that their home life is abusive.**

***Looking for patterns and unexplained changes in a child's behavior is one of the most effective ways to identify children who may be at risk. You may also notice red flags for abuse in adult behavior**

***You do not need to know for sure that abuse or neglect has happened. As a mandated reporter, your responsibility is to report reasonable suspicions, Someone else will determine what is actually happening after you make the report.**

Spotting Sexual Abuse-Grooming

Grooming is a manipulative behavior an abuser uses to make it easier to sexually abuse a child. Abusers focus grooming behaviors on the child, family, and the larger community. It can be difficult to distinguish between grooming behavior and actions of a caring adult. These behaviors can include:

- Being overly likeable, kind, and supportive to a particular child
- Giving the child special attention, such as gifts, outings, and alone time together
- Creating a friend/peer relationship with the child instead of an adult/child relationship
- Engaging the child in increasingly sexualized interactions, including sharing stories about their own sexual life and asking about the child's sexual experiences
- Crossing boundaries and desensitizing the child to touch and sexual contact

Additional Red Flags of Abuse and Neglect by Adults

- Excessively blames the child for problems at school or home
- Requests teachers use harsh physical punishment or emotional shaming techniques to address misbehavior
- Does not ensure the child has appropriate transportation to or from school
- Consistently keeps the child out of school without explanation

Abuse and neglect of Special Needs Children-Signs:

- Developmental regression
- Behavioral outbursts, particularly those caused by triggers that suggest an abusive environment
- Social withdrawal
- Avoiding Certain places or people
- New fixations

What Are You Required to Report

Reasonable Suspicion of:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse (including grooming)
- Emotional Abuse
- General or Severe Neglect
- Willful harming or endangering a child
- Unlawful Corporal punishment

You do NOT need proof-Just a reasonable suspicion based on your observations or a disclosure. If appropriate, the matter will be investigated by the child welfare professional or law enforcement.

When and How to Report

- Inform Patrick, Jenn, or John and consult as needed
- Report the information immediately. Even if the information that you learn is old, you still would report
- Call Child Protective Services Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 650-802-7922 or (800)-632-4615
- Complete and submit a [Suspected Child Abuse Report](#) form within 36 hours of making the report (fax number 650-592-2289)
- Copy of the form should go to John. It will be kept confidentially in John's office

Failure to Report

- Misdemeanor under California law
- Up to 6 months in jail and/or a \$1000 fine
- Possible loss of credential
- When, how, and to whom to make a report