

Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Instructions

Federal/State Mandated Abuse Reporters: School Teachers (including Child Care Workers) are mandated abuse reporters. Any teacher who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused must report this immediately to the proper authority (DFCS).

Consequences for Failure to Report Suspected Abuse: Any person or official required by law to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

- A. When information is received by a staff member either by observation or verbally, a ***Report of Suspected Abuse*** will be written by the person who is directly involved. Example:
1. A child comes to school with bruises on his arm.
 2. The Assistant Teacher talks with him/her regarding the bruises. He/She says “Momma hit me with a belt”.
 3. The ***Report of Suspected Abuse*** is written by the staff member hearing or seeing the problem stating what the staff member has observed and what the child has said. That staff member keeps a copy of the report stored in a locked file cabinet in a separate file labeled “Suspected Child Abuse” and gives the original to the Center Manager. This is done **immediately**.

NOTE: It is NOT the responsibility of the reporting persons to determine whether the information is accurate; it is only their responsibility to report that they observed/heard something which causes them to SUSPECT that an abuse/neglect situation may exist. DFCS will determine legitimacy of the claim.

- B. Complete Sections 1 - 3 of the form as follows:
1. Enter the Center Name and circle HS or EHS, date and time of the incident
 2. Enter the Child Name, date of birth, Social Security Number, Parent/Guardian name, address and telephone number.
 3. Describe the incident with as much detail as possible, i.e, what you said, the child said, etc. DO NOT attempt to query the child for more details – this will be done by DFCS. Simple questions as indicated above tend to draw out the information necessary to in a non-threatening manner.
 4. Sign the Report, listing date and time you reported this incident to the Center Manager.
 5. Remove the pink copy of the Report and give it to the Center Manager, or call the Center Manager **immediately** if not on site at the time. **This must be done the day of the incident.**
 6. If you cannot contact the Center Manager **immediately**, call the appropriate Admin Manager or Assistant Director to make the report.
- C. Center Manager will call DFCS **immediately** to report the incident **and fax report to DFCS**, then will complete Section 4 of the form as follows:
1. Date and time of call to DFCS; document EACH time you call if you have to leave a message
 2. Case Worker name and telephone number
 3. If the incident is not being reported to DFCS, a full explanation must be indicated here.
 4. Sign the form.
 - *** 5. **Give or Fax a copy to the Admin Office Administrator immediately using the Suspected Abuse fax form (this report MUST be received in Admin the day the incident occurs).**

- 6. If DFCS needs additional information, they need to speak directly with the staff member who initiated the Report.

- D. Center Manager will follow-up with DFCS within one week. Information as to whether the abuse was confirmed or unconfirmed and whether the investigation is closed or ongoing will be written in section 5 of the Report. **Send original to Admin Office Administrator immediately.**

- E. Remember that the date of the incident, date Suspected Child Abuse Report is completed, date staff reported to CM and date reported to DFCS must be the same because this must all happen immediately.

- Distribution:
- 1. Pink - Staff initiating Report - retained in a red file labeled "Suspected Abuse" in a locked file cabinet in the Center. **FAX copy immediately to Admin**
 - 2. Yellow - Center Manager Office - retained in a file labeled "Suspected Abuse" in a locked file cabinet.
 - 3. Original - Director- for review and filing in a red file labeled "Suspected Abuse" in a locked file cabinet.
 - 4. Director will make monthly report to Regional Office at the end of each month.