

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

Because child abuse and neglect are both a violation of children's human rights and an obstacle to their educational development, all district personnel shall be alert for any evidence of such abuse or neglect.

For purposes of this policy, *child abuse* or *neglect* shall mean the injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child or dependent adult by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's or dependent adult's health, welfare, and safety is harmed or is placed in clear and present danger thereby.

Personnel need not verify that a child has in fact been abused or neglected. Any conditions or information that may reasonably be related to abuse or neglect should be reported. Legal authorities have the responsibility for investigating each case and taking action that is appropriate under the circumstances.

When feasible, the district will provide community education programs for prospective parents, foster parents and adoptive parents on parenting skills; on the problems of child abuse; and methods to avoid child abuse situations. The district shall also encourage staff members to participate in in-service programs that deal with child abuse issues.

All cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported by school personnel (classified and certificated staff) in accordance with RCW 26.44.040.. The law frees staff members from liability for reporting, in good faith, instances of abuse or neglect and holds staff members criminally liable for failure to properly report. The superintendent shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all school personnel. The purpose is to identify and report as soon as reasonably possible to the proper authorities all evidence of child abuse or neglect.

Cross References:

Policy	4411	Relations with the Law Enforcement and Child Protective Agencies
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Legal References:

RCW	13.34.300	Failure to cause juvenile to attend school as evidence under neglect petition
	26.44.020	Child abuse—Definitions
	26.44.030	Reports—Duty and authority to make—Duty of receiving agency
	28A.320.160	Alleged sexual misconduct by school employee—Parental notification—Information on public records act
	28A.400.317	Physical abuse or sexual misconduct by school employees—Duty to Report—Training
	28A.620.010	Community education provisions—Purposes
	28A.620.020	Community education provisions—Restrictions
	43.43.830(6)	Background checks—Access to children or vulnerable persons
WAC	388-15-009	What is child abuse or neglect?