

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

The following procedures are to be used in reporting instances of suspected abuse or neglect:

- A. When school personnel (classified and certificated staff) has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect, he/she shall report such incident, or cause a report to be made, to the proper law enforcement agency or the department as provided in RCW 26.44.040. This report must be made at the first opportunity, but in no case longer than forty-eight (48) hours after there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has suffered abuse or neglect. The report must include the identity of the accused if known.
- B. When possible, the report should be made in the presence of the principal. The principal shall, in all cases, be immediately informed of reports to law enforcement or the department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)/Children's Protective Services (CPS).
- C. A certificated or classified school employee who has knowledge or reasonable cause to believe that a student has been a victim of physical abuse or sexual misconduct by another school employee will report such abuse or misconduct to the appropriate school administrator and District Administration. The administrator will report to the proper law enforcement agency if he or she has reasonable cause to believe that the abuse or misconduct has occurred, as required under RCW 26.44.030. Such report must be made within forty-eight (48) hours. During the process of making a reasonable cause determination, the administrator will contact all parties involved in the complaint. Within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving a report, the administrator must also notify the parents of a student alleged to be the victim, target, or recipient of the abuse and/or misconduct.
- D. Any doubt about the condition of the child or dependent adult shall be resolved in favor of making the report. The legal authority to whom the report is made has the responsibility of determining the fact of abuse or neglect. At times, a staff person may wish to discuss the circumstances with an employee of CPS for assistance in determining whether a report should be made and is encouraged to do so.
- E. When a report is made, the reporting staff member shall secure from the principal and complete the Child Abuse/Neglect Report to Children's Protective Services (3421 F), retaining one copy, sending one copy promptly to the agency to which the phone report was made, submitting one copy to the principal and one copy to the designated central administrator. This form shall include the following:
 1. The name, address, and age of the child or dependent adult;
 2. The name and address of the parent or person having custody of the child or dependent adult;
 3. The nature and extent of the injury, abuse or neglect; and
 4. Any information about previous injuries, neglect, abuse or information relating to the cause or extent of the injury, abuse, neglect and/or the identity of the perpetrator(s).

The copy of the report retained in the building shall be filed separately from the student's standard and supplementary records.

F. Information/records may be disclosed without parental consent to Children's Protective Services who request such information in their investigation, pursuant to RCW 26.44.030(12)(b).

G. Sample Indicators of Abuse

1. Information given by the child or dependent adult;
2. Bilateral bruises, extensive bruises, bruises of different ages, patterns of bruises caused by a particular instrument (belt buckle, wire, straight edge, coat hanger, etc.);
3. Burn patterns consistent with forced immersion in a hot liquid (a distinct boundary line where the burn stops), burn patterns consistent with a spattering by hot liquids, patterns caused by a particular kind of implement (electric iron, etc.) or instrument (circular cigarette burns, etc.);
4. Lacerations, welts, abrasions;
5. Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child or dependent adult; and/or
6. Injuries inconsistent with the child's age.
7. Sexual abuse, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, is any act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation, including but not limited to incest, rape, carnal knowledge, sodomy or unnatural or perverted sexual practices. Indicators include the following:
 1. child having difficulty sitting down or other evidence of physical trauma to the oral, genital or anal areas;
 2. child refusing to change into gym clothes (when s/he has been willing to change clothes in the past);
 3. child running away from home and not giving any specific complaint about what is wrong at home; and/or
 4. child "dropping" lots of questions to the nurse about how pregnancy occurs.

H. Sample Indicators of Neglect

1. Information given by the child or dependent adult;
2. Lack of basic needs (food, clothing, shelter);
3. Inadequate supervision (unattended);
4. Lack of essential health care and high incidence of illness;
5. Poor hygiene on a regular basis;
6. Irregular school attendance;
7. Long working hours; and/or
8. Continuous friction in the home, marital discord, mentally ill parents.

NOTE: The above examples do not prove that injury, abuse or neglect has actually occurred, but they provide evidence for further investigation.

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