

**2016-2017**  
**Child Abuse:**  
**Recognition and Reporting**

# Training Objectives

- To remind teachers, principals, administrators and other school employees of their statutory responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect.
- To provide some information about the statutory definition of child abuse and neglect.
- To review how teachers, principals, administrators and other school employees can report child abuse.
- To provide teachers, principals, administrators and other employees some tools to use in carrying out their statutory responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

# Why Report Child Abuse

It's the law in Oklahoma.

10A O.S. §§ 1-2-101, B1

“Every person having reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is a victim of abuse or neglect shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Human Services (DHS).”

# Who Must Report Child Abuse

Mandatory reporting of child abuse is required of every person, private citizen and professional including:

- Certified teachers
- Certified principals
- Certified administrators
- Classified teacher assistants
- Other school employees

who has reason to believe a child has been abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused.

# Who Must Report Child Abuse

- Making a child abuse report is an **INDIVIDUAL** responsibility.
- A person making a report, in good faith, is immune from civil or criminal liability.
- The name of the reporter is kept confidential by DHS.
- Failure to report promptly is a misdemeanor.

# Who Must Report Child Abuse

- Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to an administrator, principal, director or supervisor **BEFORE** you file a suspected child abuse report with DHS is a violation of the law and may be a misdemeanor.
- Dewey Public Schools **DOES NOT** require any employee to tell their supervisor that a report of suspected child abuse has been filed with DHS.

# When to Report Child Abuse

A report should be made **EACH TIME** there is **REASONABLE CAUSE** to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused or neglected.



# How to Report Suspected Abuse

**CALL**

24-Hour Statewide Child Abuse Hotline

**1-800-522-3511**

**CALL or VISIT**

Bartlesville Field Operations Office  
Oklahoma Department of Human Services

5205 Jacquelyn Lane, 74006 Office

Hours - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

918-338-5700 or 1-800-734-7512

# What to Report

- Name of the student
- Gender of the student
- Age of the student
- Address of the student, if known
- Current location of student, if known
- Name(s), address, place(s) of employment, and phone number(s) of the adult(s) responsible for the student's safety, health and welfare
- Factual description of student's injuries

# What to Report

- Personal opinions and inferences **SHOULD NOT** be included in the report.
- When you make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect to DHS, your responsibility is **FINISHED**.
- It is the responsibility of individual teachers, principals, administrators and other school employees to **REPORT** suspected child abuse.
- It is the responsibility of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) to **ASSESS, INVESTIGATE, CONFIRM and ACT UPON** the report.

# Child Abuse

- Child abuse is typically a pattern of behavior that is repeated over time but can also be a single incident.
- Child abuse occurs when a parent, legal guardian, foster parent or other caregiver:
  - Injures or causes a child to be injured, tortured or maimed
  - Uses unreasonable force on a child
  - Uses unnecessary harsh discipline
  - Uses punishment that is too severe
  - Engages in or allows a third party to engage in sexual exploitation of a child under the age of 18 years.

# Categories of Child Abuse

There are five categories of reportable child abuse:

- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse



# Neglect

Neglect occurs when a

- parent
- legal guardian
- foster parent, or
- other caregiver

fails to provide

- adequate food,
- appropriate clothing,
- safe shelter,
- adequate medical care,
- protection, and
- supervision or
- special physical or mental needs care when indicated

to a child, birth to 18 years of age.



# Neglect

- Indicators that may be observed in the school setting:
  - Student consistently arrives at school hungry; asks to take food home or digs through food disposal containers.
  - Student has poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin or bad body odor.
  - Student has untreated or frequent reoccurrence of head lice
  - Student is frequently tardy or absent.
  - Student frequently falls asleep in class, exhibits chronic fatigue, or is listless and unfocused during instruction time.
  - Student has frequent colds and other medical needs that are not addressed by a health care provider.
  - Student is often dropped off early at school and left without supervision or picked up late.

# Neglect

- Caregiver behaviors that may indicate child neglect and may be observed in the school setting:
  - Caregiver (parent, legal guardian, foster parent, child care provider) consistently fails to keep appointments with teachers or principal.
  - Caregiver seems to be unengaged in and unsupportive of student's learning activities.
  - Caregiver appears to have a health issue, developmental disability or drug problems that interfere with the ability to provide basic needs for the student.

# Abandonment

Abandonment may occur when a parent, guardian or caregiver

- gives a child away
- leaves a child and does not return
- leaves a child unattended for long periods of time
- forces a child to leave the home

Indicators that may be observed in the school setting:

- Student wears the same clothing for many days.
- Older student may miss several days or drop out of school to care for younger siblings.
- Student may tell someone they are being left alone for extended periods of time.
- Student may appear extremely anxious toward the end of the school day.
- Student is evasive when asked about caregiver.

# Physical Abuse



Physical abuse is nonaccidental, intentional physical injury to a child under the age of 18 by a parent, legal guardian, foster parent or other caregiver.

# Physical Abuse

## May Include:

Beatings

Shaking

Burns

Human bites

Strangulation

Immersion in  
scalding water

## Resulting In:

Bruises, welts and broken bones

Internal Injuries

Blisters and scars

Broken skin and bruises

Broken skin and bruises

Unconsciousness and  
marks on neck

# Physical Abuse

- Physical Indicators that may be observed in the school setting:
  - Unexplained bruises and welts on the face torso, back or thighs.
  - Bruises, welts, burns and lacerations in various stages of healing.
  - Unexplained burns on the palms of hands, soles of feet and back.
- Behavioral indicators that may be observed in the school setting:
  - Student may back away or duck when approached by an adult.
  - Student becomes anxious near the end of the school day.
  - Student asks to stay at school.
  - Student is overly shy.
  - Student avoids contact with adults.

# Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse means any sexual activity or propositioning between an adult and a child for purpose of sexually stimulating the adult, the child or others.



Sexual abuse may be committed by a parent, step-parent, grandparent, sibling, cousin, other family member or friend.

# Sexual Abuse

- **Indicators that may be observed in the school setting:**
  - Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond that expected for the child's developmental level.
  - Fearful of or anxious around adults
  - Frequent headaches, backaches and stomach aches.
  - Avoidance of dressing for gym class or wearing extra layers of clothing.
  - Decline in school performance and participation in school activities.
- **Caregiver behaviors that may indicate sexual abuse of a child and may be observed in the school setting:**
  - Caregiver is extremely protective of student especially during physical activities.
  - Caregiver limits time student is at school, picking them up early and dropping them off late.

# Emotional Abuse



Emotional abuse is injury to a child's psychological growth and development that diminishes the sense of identity, dignity and self-worth.

## Emotional Abuse May Include:

- Confinement
- Isolation
- Verbal assault
- Humiliation
- Intimidation
- Rejection
- Criticism
- Exploitation and corruption
- Denial of emotional responsiveness



# Emotional Abuse

- **Indicators that may be observed in the school setting:**
  - Student lags in physical, social and emotional development.
  - Older students may exhibit sucking, biting and rocking behaviors not related to a mental or physical development disorder.
  - Student may exhibit behavioral extremes: compliant, passive, demanding, antisocial, destructive, overly needy.
  - Student may be self-destructive, cutting, attempting suicide.
- **Caregiver behaviors that may indicate emotional abuse of a child and may be observed in the school setting:**
  - Caregiver has impossible expectations or makes unreasonable demands of student.
  - Caregiver seems unconcerned about student's problems.
  - Caregiver treats student with disrespect.
  - Caregiver blames student for caregiver's mistakes.

# When an Abused Student Tells

- There may be times when an abused student may tell you directly or indirectly about abuse in their family.
- It is difficult for students to talk about their abuse, especially when they think it will get them or their family into trouble.
- It is important for school employees to handle their disclosure with sensitivity.
  - Provide a private time and place to listen to the student.
  - Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by telling you.
  - Inform the student that you are required by law to report the abuse.
  - Do not express shock or criticize the family.
  - Use the student's vocabulary to discuss the abuse.

## When an Abused Student Tells

- Reassure the student that the abuse is not their fault; they are not bad or to blame.
- Determine their immediate need for safety.

# Fact

In SFY-2013 Oklahoma DHS received over 70,000 reports of suspected child abuse and neglect involving 128,024 children.



# Fact



In SFY-2013 Oklahoma DHS substantiated more than 6,000 reports of child abuse and neglect involving 11,419 children.

# Resources

**24-Hour Statewide Child Abuse Hotline**

**1-800-522-3511**

**Oklahoma State Department of Human Services**

**<http://okdhs.org/>**

**Bartlesville Field Operations Office**

**Oklahoma Department of Human Services**

**5205 Jacquelyn Lane, 74006 Office**

**Hours - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**918-338-5700 or 1-800-734-7512**

**It is mandatory that you now complete a short monkey survey from the PD on Child Abuse and Recognition. Please click on the appropriate link that corresponds with your site.**

**Elementary Staff:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YFQ32RY>**

**Middle School Staff:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YGMYJ87>**

**High School Staff:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YHR3W6V>**