



MANDATED REPORTING

ANNUAL ETHICS
TRAINING

PRESBYTERY ASSEMBLY

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WHAT IS MANDATED REPORTING?

A mandate is simply a legal requirement. Individuals are called Mandated Reporters because they are legally required to report child abuse and neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Hotline. All 50 states have similar requirements.

WHO IS A MANDATED REPORTER?

Mandated reporters are individuals who frequently work with children and are often the first adults to see signs of child abuse or neglect. The nature of their friendly professions makes them uniquely qualified to protect children from abuse and neglect.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

- ▶ DCFS has the primary responsibility of protecting children through the investigation of suspected abuse or neglect by parents and other caregivers in a position of trust or authority over the child.
- ▶ Call the 24 Hour Child Abuse Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800) 252-2873 or TTY (800) 358-5117 if you suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by abuse or neglect. If you believe a child is in immediate danger of harm, call 911 first.

WHAT ARE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by:

- ▶ A parent or their romantic partner
- ▶ An immediate relative or someone living in their home
- ▶ A caretaker such as a babysitter or daycare worker; or
- ▶ Any person responsible for the child's welfare, such as a healthcare provider, educator, coach, or youth program volunteer

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

If you suspect abuse or neglect you have a social responsibility to report it to the hotline. In addition, state law requires that most professionals in education, health care, law enforcement, and social work report suspected neglect or abuse. These individuals are called Mandated Reporters. Mandated Reporters include:

- ▶ Medical Personnel
- ▶ Educators
- ▶ Child Care Workers
- ▶ Probation officers/Truant officers
- ▶ Animal Control officers
- ▶ Social Workers
- ▶ Clergy

A complete list of Mandated Reporters can be found at
<http://www.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- ▶ DCFS administers an online training course entitled “Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters,” available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The course can be found at <http://www.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>
- ▶ For more information about the guidelines for mandated reporters in Illinois, read the **Mandated Reporter Manual** at the above website.
- ▶ State law protects the confidentiality of all reporters, and your name is never disclosed. You may still choose to make a report anonymously, but the inability of investigators to follow up with you to obtain information may impede the investigation of DCFS as well as the child’s safety. The law protects you from civil liability for any call made in good faith.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

What if you are not absolutely sure abuse is occurring?

- ▶ As much as 70% of child abuse goes unreported
- ▶ A child tells an average of seven adults that they are being abused or neglected before a report is made
- ▶ Every delay in reporting suspected abuse or neglect increases the likelihood that abuse will become more serious, or even deadly, and that the perpetrator will abuse additional children.
- ▶ Trust your own senses, common sense and instincts
- ▶ More than one million hotline calls have been received over the past four years – only one in four resulted in a formal report and investigation
- ▶ DCFS is able to provide services to families that allow the child to remain in the home safely, provided the abuse or neglect is reported soon enough for DCFS to intervene

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

ORGANIZE THE INFORMATION FOR YOUR REPORT

- ▶ Gather only the information you need to make the report to the hotline. Remember – it is **NOT** your role to interview the child about the abuse. You only need a brief description of the incident. Try to have the following information available:

Name, address and age of victim

Name and address of parents/caretakers and siblings

Relationship of caretaker to victim

Your observations

Any explanation provided by the child

Any other relevant information that would expedite the investigation

- ▶ Later you will be asked to submit a written confirmation (within 48 hours)

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT



More information about reporting abuse or neglect can be found at website:
<http://www.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>



TIPS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

- ▶ On July 1, 1986, a law was passed requiring all Mandated Reporters to sign a statement on a DCFS form certifying that they understand their mandated reporter requirements.
- ▶ You will fulfill your legal obligation as a Mandated Reporter when you call the DCFS Hotline. If the report is a criminal matter and it is outside DCFS's jurisdiction, the Hotline will ask you to notify the police.
- ▶ For DCFS purposes, a perpetrator is anyone who is responsible for the child's welfare, or anyone who came to know the child through a position of trust, such as mother, father, teacher, counselor, coach, or pastor to name a few.
- ▶ Sometimes a child will seek out a trusted adult to tell about the abuse or neglect. When a child tells you about abuse or neglect, call the Hotline.

TIPS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

As a Mandated Reporter, you have specific rights to:

- ▶ The Hotline worker's full name
- ▶ To speak to the Hotline worker's supervisor if you do not agree with the Hotline worker's decision
- ▶ To request a review of the investigation that has been unfounded if there are concerns regarding the adequacy of the investigation
- ▶ To receive information about the findings and actions taken by the Department during the investigation, including actions taken to ensure a child's safety.

As a Mandated Reporter, if you make a good faith report to the Hotline, you are entitled to immunity from legal liability.

<http://www.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx>

Information available at this website:

All information from this presentation

On-line training available, along with certificate of completion

Manual for Mandated Reporters

Pertinent laws and statutes

Helpful information for Mandated Reporters

