

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Introduction

State law requires school personnel who have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen is suffering serious physical or emotional injury to report this situation to the Department of Public Welfare.

School personnel need to be aware of the causes of child abuse and neglect which are essential to accurate reporting. The material presented here should be of help to all staff members in meeting the requirements of the child abuse law.

Educators are involved in child abuse/child neglect identification because:

1. State law requires educators to be involved in the reporting of suspected child abuse/child neglect cases.
2. School age children, in contact with teachers every day, account for a large percentage of abused children. Approximately 50% of all cases are physical abuse alone.
3. Schools routinely appraise children for defective vision, impaired hearing, and other problems.
4. School personnel can deal with many pre-crisis situations without threat or stigma to parent/guardians.
5. Schools supplement the work of other agencies and professions. Schools should not compete with other agencies or assume responsibilities that are better left to medicine, social work, or law.

Persons required to report child abuse or neglect

Persons required to report abuse or neglect or circumstances or conditions include:

Physicians
Medical interns
Medical examiners
Dentists

Educational administrators
School counselors
Family counselors
Probation officers

Nurses, public and private
School teachers
School psychologists

Social workers
Police officers
Educational Support Personnel