

Child Maltreatment



Arkansas Commission on Child
Abuse, Rape and Domestic
Violence



Act 1236 of 2011

- Requires schools to provide training to licensed personnel including:
 - Recognizing signs of maltreatment
 - Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act
 - Duties of mandated reporters
 - Methods for managing disclosures
 - Connecting victims to services



Recognizing Signs of Physical Abuse

- **PHYSICAL:**
 - Bruises or welts in unusual places or in patterns
 - Bruises in various stages of healing
 - Explanation of injury differs from parent explanation
- **BEHAVIORAL:**
 - Becomes frightened when other children cry
 - Says the parents deserve to be hurt
 - Is afraid of certain people



Recognizing Indicators of Neglect

- PHYSICAL:

- Underweight
- Always hungry
- Not clean
- Inappropriately dressed
- Denied medical or dental care

- BEHAVIORAL:

- Beggars or steals food
- Arrives early & leaves late
- Frequent, unexplained absences
- Overtired or listless



Recognizing Signs of Sexual Abuse

- PHYSICAL:

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Wearing torn, stained or bloody underwear
- Injury to or discharge from genitals
- Pain during urination

- BEHAVIORAL

- Acts withdrawn or younger than age.
- Displays sexual behavior
- Tells you that she has secrets that she cannot tell.
- Tries to hurt himself



Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act

- When making a report you must have:
 - An allegation that if true would meet a legal definition of child abuse.
 - Enough information to locate the family (where the child attends school is enough information to locate the family).
- By Phone: 1.800.482.5964
- By Fax*: 1.501.618.8952

* Must use Arkansas State Police official “Mandated Reporter’s Form”
May only be reported by fax if it is non-emergency.



Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act

No school, Head Start Program, or day care facility shall prohibit, require permission, or require notification of any person before any employee or volunteer directly reports child maltreatment to the Hotline.



Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act

Investigators have the right to enter school campus to interview students for child maltreatment investigations.



Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act

Investigators have the right to prohibit schools from notifying parents if a student is interviewed at school as part of an investigation if the parent or guardian is listed as an alleged offender.



Requirements of the Child Maltreatment Act

- The Child Maltreatment Act lists the professions of those legally required to report suspected abuse.
- Each school has many individuals who are mandated by law to report directly to the Hotline.

Mandated Reporters in Schools

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- Counselors
 - Nurses
 - Teachers
 - School Officials
 - School Resource Officers



Duties of Mandated Reporters

- Mandated Reporters shall “immediately report” suspected child maltreatment to the Hotline when they have “reasonable cause to suspect” that a child has been abused.
- Telling the counselor, principal or other professional **DOES NOT** meet your legal requirement.



Child Maltreatment Act

- Protects Mandated Reporters who report in good faith from criminal and civil liabilities.
- The Act establishes criminal penalties for Mandated Reporters who fail to report, including jail time and fines.
- The Act also establishes civil penalties including & loss of professional licensure, and monetary judgments.



Managing Disclosures

- Develop trust
- Allow the child to be heard
- Meet with the child separately
- Remember that you may be the only adult who has the chance to understand the child



Managing Disclosures

- **DO** consider your response before you are in a real situation.
- **DO** pay attention to your body language.
- **DO** know the reporting law.



Managing Disclosures

- **DO** let the child know that it was brave to share something (no matter how minimal) about a difficult subject.
- **DO** document the actual words.
- **DO** call the Child Abuse Hotline or submit the fax form if it is not an emergency.



Managing Disclosures

- **DON'T** try to conduct the investigation yourself.
- **DON'T** act shocked, horrified, scared, etc.
- **DON'T** share this information with others.
- **DON'T** try to talk a child out of what he/she is saying.



Managing Disclosures

- **DON'T** suggest to a child the he/she may have been abused.
- **DON'T** attempt to find out the details from the parent.
- **DON'T** stand over the child while he/she talks to you.

Questions?

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