

STUDENTS

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

For purposes of this procedure, the term “child” means anyone under the age of 18 and/or any current student of the district, including any other person classified as a student in the district’s database. “Child abuse, neglect, or exploitation” shall mean:

- A. Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing death, disfigurement, skin bruising, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
- B. Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child’s bodily functioning;
- C. Attempting, committing, or allowing any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code. This definition also includes any communications with a child for immoral purposes or viewing, possessing, or distributing any sexually explicit images of a child. It also includes intentionally contacting, directly or through the clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child unless the contact is necessary for the child’s hygiene or health care. This also includes a child’s intentional or coerced contact with anyone’s genitals, anus, or breasts;
- D. Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. These acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child’s pain or mental suffering;
- E. Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by the criminal code;
- F. Failing to provide food, shelter, clothing, supervision, or health care necessary to a child’s health or safety;
- G. Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child; or
- H. Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of the preceding actions.

Reporting Responsibilities

Staff are expected to report every instance of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Since protection of children is the paramount concern, staff should discuss any suspected evidence with the principal or nurse regardless of whether the condition is listed among the indicators of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Staff are reminded of their obligation as district employees to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Professional staff are reminded of their legal obligation to make such reports. Staff are also reminded of their immunity from potential liability for doing so. The following procedures are to be used in reporting instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation:

- A. When there is reasonable cause to believe that a student has suffered abuse, neglect or exploitation, staff shall immediately contact the nearest office of the Child Protective Services (CPS) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). If this agency cannot be reached or if directed to call the police, the report shall be submitted to the local law enforcement agency. Such contact must be made within forty-eight (48) hours. Staff shall also advise the principal regarding instances of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation and reports of suspected abuse that have been made to state authorities or law enforcement. In the principal’s absence the report shall be made to the nurse or counselor.

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Reporting Responsibilities (continued)

A staff member may wish to discuss the circumstances with an employee of CPS for assistance in determining if a report should be made. The CPS has the responsibility of determining the fact of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, but any doubt about the child's condition shall be resolved in favor of making the report.

The report shall include:

- 1) The name, address and age of the child;
 - 2) The name and address of the parent or person having custody of the child;
 - 3) The nature and extent of the suspected abuse or neglect;
 - 4) Any evidence of previous abuse or any other information that may relate to the cause or extent of the abuse or neglect; and
 - 5) The identity, if known, of the person accused of inflicting the abuse.
- B. Within twenty-four (24) hours of becoming aware of sexual misconduct by a school employee, the school employee must report such abuse to their principal or supervisor. The principal or supervisor shall immediately report such information to the Title IX Officer.
- C. Within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving a report alleging sexual misconduct by a school employee, the Title IX Officer shall notify:
- 1) Law enforcement;
 - 2) The parents of a student alleged to be the victim, target or recipient of the misconduct;
 - 3) The Superintendent, and
 - 4) The District's Risk Management carrier

Abuse Indicators

Physical Abuse Indicators:

- A. Bilateral bruises, extensive bruises, bruises of different ages, patterns of bruises caused by a particular instrument (belt buckle, wire, straight edge, coat hanger, etc.).
- B. 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.).
- C. Lacerations, welts, abrasions.
- D. Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child.
- E. Injuries inconsistent with child's age.
- F. Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation.

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Emotional Abuse Indicators:

- A. Lags in physical development.
- B. Extreme behavior disorder.
- C. Fearfulness of adults or authority figures.
- D. Revelations of highly inappropriate adult behavior, i.e., being enclosed in a dark closet, forced to drink or eat inedible items.

Sexual Abuse Indicators

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:

- A. Child having difficulty sitting down.
- B. Child refusing to change into gym clothes (when they have been willing to change in the past).
- C. Venereal disease in a child of any age.
- D. Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital or anal areas.
- E. Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaint about what is wrong at home.
- F. Pregnancy at 11 or 12 with no history of peer socialization.

Physical Neglect Indicators:

- A. Lack of basic needs (food, clothing, shelter).
- B. Inadequate supervision (unattended).
- C. Lack of essential health care and high incidence of illness.
- D. Poor hygiene on a regular basis.
- E. Inappropriate clothing in inclement weather.
- F. Abandonment.

NOTE: Indicators in and of themselves do not necessarily prove that abuse, neglect, or exploitation has occurred. However, they still may warrant a referral to CPS or law enforcement. When in doubt, staff should consult with CPS about making a report.

Prevention and Teaching

The Teaching and Learning Department shall develop/maintain a child abuse, neglect and exploitation education and prevention program, or implement OSPI's coordinated program for the prevention of sexual abuse of students, child abuse, neglect and exploitation discussed at RCW 28A.300.160.

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