

Child Abuse & Maltreatment Reporting

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What is the law?

Suspected child abuse and maltreatment **MUST** be reported by all persons mandated by law to do so and should be reported by any other person who has reason to believe a child is being abused or maltreated.

Who is Mandated?

School officials, including (but not limited to):

- Teachers
- Guidance counselor
- Psychologists/Social Workers
- Nurses
- Administrators

Who is Voluntary?

- Aides
- Assistants
- Cafeteria workers
- Bus drivers and aides
- Custodial staff
- Maintenance workers

Am I at risk?

When a report is made with earnest concern for the welfare of the child (a 'good faith' report), the reporter is immune from legal liability.

The law does **NOT** require certainty before reporting child abuse or maltreatment.

Penalties for Failure to Report

Anyone who is mandated to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment—and fails to do so—could be charged with a Class A misdemeanor, subject to criminal penalties and can be sued in a civil court for monetary damages for any harm caused by failure to make a report to the SCR.

What are Child Abuse and Maltreatment?

The abuse or maltreatment of children is against the law. Victims need an effective child protective service to prevent them from suffering further injury and impairment.

- **Abuse** encompasses the most serious injuries and risk—physical and sexual.
- **Maltreatment** includes neglect of any type (for example: failing to provide proper supervision and care, not providing basic needs or medical care, excessive corporal punishment, etc.)

YOU can make a difference



Nationally over six million children come to the attention of child protective services each year according to a Children's Bureau 2014 report.

Four children die every day in the U.S. because of abuse.

www.safehorizon.org

What do I do if I witness or suspect abuse or maltreatment?

MANDATED Reporters-It is YOUR responsibility to call the hotline (1-800-635-1522). Please feel free to seek the support of administration or counseling staff to do this, but please be aware that informing other staff does not constitute making a report.

VOLUNTARY Reporters-PLEASE speak to and share your concerns with the counseling support or administrative staff in your building in a TIMELY MANNER. The counselors, social workers, nurses, and administrators are all mandated reporters who can help you make a report if needed. These staff can also offer valuable support to the child and the family.

- Please show respect to the child and the family by not discussing the situation with additional staff / individuals.
- You can call the **hotline (1-800-342-3720)** yourself at any time—Social Services must protect your confidentiality.
- Any time that you have **reasonable cause** to suspect that a child is being abused or maltreated, **based on your rational observations or training and experience**, additional support should be sought and a report should be made—even though you may not be a mandated reporter. We ALL need to work together to keep our children safe.

Information from NYSOCFS Pub-1159 (Rev. 02/2016)

