

Lancaster Community School District

Students

**CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Referrals

Mandated reporters in the District need only suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred to report the incident. It is the responsibility of the Grant County department of social services and law enforcement personnel to investigate possible child abuse and neglect. Therefore, school personnel should not talk to the child to gain information regarding an injury or other information surrounding the abuse or neglect. (Try to avoid asking children a leading question – one that suggests the answer. For example, if a child says that dad hit her and bruises are visible on her legs, don't ask "Did he also kick you?" A better question would be, "How did you get the bruises on your legs?")

A specific referral procedure is outlined below to insure an accurate and complete report of the abuse or neglect incident and to support the completion of the referral process.

1. Any mandated reporter who has reason to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected or that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect will occur, shall immediately notify the county department of social services in which the child lives (Grant County - 723-2136).

State to the receptionist, "I am reporting a suspected child abuse/neglect case." Your call will be transferred to an intake worker who will take the information and assign it to a worker. The oral report should include the following information:

- a. Name and date of birth of child suspected of being abused
- b. Name of school and grade
- c. Name, address, and telephone number of child's caretaker
- d. Facts and circumstances forming the suspicion, including child's statements
- e. Present whereabouts of child
- f. Any factors contributing to high risk
- g. Other children in the family and others living in the home
- h. Parent's/guardian's place of employment
- i. Emergency phone number

If the department of social services is closed, contact the local law enforcement agency or the Grant County Sheriffs Office at 723-2157.

2. The reporter shall, as soon as possible, notify the building principal of the referral.

3. The mandatory reporter shall, within 24 hours, complete and forward to the department of social services the child abuse report with a copy to the contact person and/or building principal and school nurse.
4. The reporter/school should not notify the parents/guardians that a referral for neglect and abuse has been made. Notification to the family could interfere with an investigation. The department of social services will contact the family. Any questions as to who should be notified shall be discussed with the department of social services.
5. When possible, reports should be made early in the workday, so as to allow time for a determination to be made if it is safe for the child to return home.
6. Neglect/abuse referrals shall be kept in a separate, confidential file to be the responsibility of the contact person and/or building principal.
7. The school nurse will have a confidential referral file on all District neglect/abuse referrals.
8. Confidentiality should be respected, but in the case where a child may have several teachers, one may share referral information to the student's other teachers on a need-to-know basis. If more information is acquired, this information should be referred to the department of social services.
9. The department of social services is required to inform the mandated reporter of the status of the case within 60 days after receipt of the initial report. The department of social services will report to the mandated reporter with a written report. This action does not preclude either the school or the department from contacting the other for an informal updating of the case status.
10. If the report is unfounded, the reporter should continue to report further suspicions of abuse or neglect. They would follow the same procedure, and may become part of an ongoing case record.

#### Responsibility of School Contact Person for Abuse and Neglect Investigations

The school contact person for abuse and neglect investigations shall:

1. act as primary contact for all contacts between the District and the department of social services;
2. provide information to District staff regarding District procedures for dealing with abuse/neglect referrals and investigations;
3. provide child abuse report forms and department of social services right to

investigation forms to each District building;

4. be notified of referral by District staff person making referral prior to or as soon as possible;
5. receive original child abuse report form and maintain District file of forms;
6. be contacted by social worker prior to investigative visit (both original and any subsequent visits);
7. notify referring person of date and time of investigative visit and arrange meeting place for visit;
8. receive original department of social services right to investigate form, record date and location of visit on form, and attach child abuse report form to department of social services form; and
9. notify other school personnel of contact with department of social services as deemed necessary (i.e. school counselor, school psychologist, school nurse).

If the social worker is unable to reach school contact, the backup person should be notified. It is the responsibility of the backup person to inform the school contact.

APPROVED: April 13, 2005