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ABSTRACT

Because of the large number of children being maltreated, Colorado law mandates that suspected cases of child abuse be reported. It is essential that professionals working with children understand how to recognize and report suspected abuse. This handbook was written to assist teachers, counselors, and social workers in defining child abuse and neglect. It attempts to assist them in developing training programs that best address abuse issues. It begins by describing what child abuse is and some of the reasons an adult may resort to child abuse. Charts are included that will help educators identify behavioral and physical signs of sexual or physical abuse and neglect. Information is provided on how to respond to a child's disclosure of abuse. A model school reporting policy is mapped out on how school districts should report abuse within the state of Colorado and excerpts are included from the Colorado Law-Child Protection Act on reporting procedures that teachers and counselors need to follow. Classroom strategies for assisting the child victim focus on security; structure; identity; consistency; sense of belonging; approval; enhancement of positive self-concept; and support for the family. (Contains 13 references.) (JDM)

The School's Role in the Prevention and Intervention of Child Abuse and Neglect



A MANUAL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Developed by Debra Sandau-Christopher



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1988, revised 2000

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INTRODUCTION

During the past two decades considerable attention has been given to the importance of recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. This attention has resulted in some positive strides toward prevention and intervention at the local, state and national levels. All 50 states have mandated that professionals (including educators) report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Training programs specific to certain professions have been developed and implemented. The media has done much to heighten public awareness, and coalitions and clearinghouses of information have been established. While these and a host of other accomplishments provide evidence that progress has been made, there is still much to do.

The number of children still being maltreated and not receiving help is sobering. Documented cases show that a large percentage of reported abuse cases are closed after an initial investigation, in some cases even when maltreatment has been determined. This, coupled with a common belief that the majority of abuse cases go unreported, demonstrates that many abused children are stranded, not receiving any legal or societal assistance.

Because of the large number of children still being maltreated and because Colorado law mandates reporting, it is essential that educators understand how to recognize and report suspected abuse. In addition, many prevention strategies exist which are ideal for a school setting.

This handbook was written to assist school personnel, including administrators, teachers, counselors, school nurses, and school social workers, in defining abuse and neglect and in developing policy and training programs that best address the abuse issue.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

UNDERSTANDING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is generally defined as non-accidental physical or mental injury caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parents or caretakers. This includes the four following types of abuse:

Physical Abuse:	Non-accidental physical injury to a child.
Physical Neglect:	Failure on the part of the child's caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or supervision
Emotional Maltreatment:	The constant belittling and rejecting of a child, failure to provide a positive emotional atmosphere.
Sexual Abuse	Sexual exploitation, molestation, or prostitution of a child

WHAT CAUSES CHILD ABUSE?

There is no one single cause of child abuse. Research has shown that there are certain factors that can be positively correlated with abuse. Listed below are some characteristics that may contribute to child abuse.

Adult Caretaker:

- has history of being abused and/or neglected as a child
- have unrealistic expectations of a child that are inconsistent with the child's developmental age
- has poor impulse control
- reacts to stress with violence
- have poor coping skills in stressful situations
- does not have a support system (family and friends) to help with the demands of parenting
- do not have models of successful family relationships
- uses physical punishment as a primary method of discipline
- may view child as unappealing, "different," difficult
- has history of alcohol and/or substance abuse
- suffers from physical or mental illness
- experiences feeling of rejection
- has a poor self-image

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Environmental Conditions:

- unemployment/change in financial situation
- death in the family
- changes in family structure (divorce, separations)
- inadequate housing
- another pregnancy or birth
- changes in place of residence

Societal Attitudes:

- acceptance of violence
- lack of willingness to become involved
- belief that parents (adults) have the right to treat children any way they please
- sex role stereotypes
- school/agency discipline policies which include corporal punishment
- media portrayal of sexual violence

HOW CAN WE PREVENT CHILD ABUSE?

Effective efforts to prevent abuse and neglect should address the factors listed above. Research shows that the earlier the intervention the greater the likelihood for success.

COMPONENTS OF PREVENTION PROGRAMMING

Primary Prevention: Aimed at positively influencing parents/caretakers before abuse or neglect occurs. The key aspects of primary prevention:

- offered to all members of a population
- voluntary
- promote positive family functioning rather than preventing abuse

Examples include:

Abuse prevention education
Social skill building for sex equity, impulse control, coping and stress reduction
Parenting education
Media promotion
After school programs
Parent/school/community partnerships
Family life, child development and sexuality education
New parent support/nurturing programs

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Secondary Prevention: Refers to services offered individuals considered to be “at-risk” for abuse or neglect. Abuse and/or neglect has either not yet taken place or has not been detected. The key aspects for secondary prevention:

- offered to a predefined group of vulnerable individuals
- voluntary
- focuses on particular stresses of identified individuals
- identifies appropriate and inappropriate boundaries

Examples include:

Student assistance programs
School based clinics
Community mental health services
Adolescent parenting/day care programs
Parent support groups
Agency/school partnerships

Tertiary Prevention: Refers to services provided to children who have been identified as abused/neglected or to individuals who have been identified as abusive or neglectful to children. The intent of these services is to prevent reoccurrence of abuse and/or neglect.

Examples include:

Legislation
Shelters
Foster care
Court ordered counseling, therapy, parent education
Hospitalization
Incarceration
Juvenile justice system
Crisis care

EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

The effects of abuse on the child cover a broad range from little or no effect to minor or major physical and emotional problems. Effects will differ depending on such things as the child's relationship to the perpetrator, the degree of force used, the duration of abuse, and the child's age. Children who have been abused may be delayed in physical and/or developmental growth and may find it difficult to trust others.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Effects you might notice in the school setting:

- learning disorders
- behavior problems (aggression or withdrawal)
- below grade-level performance
- delays in the ability to speak and to understand spoken language
- psychosomatic illnesses
- poor coordination, deficiencies in motor skills
- low self-esteem
- clinging behavior-child is overly solicitous
- severe emotional disturbance

Identification is a key factor in the prevention and intervention of abuse and neglect. Educators have the opportunity and can often identify a particular type of maltreatment by becoming aware of and recognizing certain physical and behavioral indicators.

On the following pages, physical and behavioral indicators of the four types of child abuse are listed. **Please note that not any single indicator proves that abuse is taking place, but the repeated presence of an indicator or a combination of indicators should alert educators to the possibility of abuse.**

The lists of physical and behavioral indicators on the next four pages are adapted from: *American Association for Protecting Children, Guidelines for Schools* American Humane Association, Denver, CO. and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Educator's Role in Prevention Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

PHYSICAL ABUSE*

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE		
Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators of Child	Behavioral Indicators of Parent(s)
<p>Unexplained bruises and welts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on face, lips. Mouth • on torso, back, buttocks, thighs • in various stages of healing • clustered, forming regular patterns • reflecting shape of article used to inflict (electric cord, belt buckle) • on several different surface areas • regularly appear after absence, weekend, or vacation <p>Unexplained burns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cigar, cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks • immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like) • doughnut-shaped on buttocks or genitalia • patterned like electric burner, iron, etc. • rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso <p><i>Unexplained fractures:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ to skull, nose, facial structure ♦ in various states of healing ♦ multiple or spiral fractures <p><i>Unexplained lacerations or abrasions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ to mouth, lips, gums, eyes ♦ to external genitalia ♦ human bite marks ♦ bald spots 	<p>Wary of adult contacts</p> <p>Apprehensive when other children cry</p> <p>Behavioral extremes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aggressiveness, or. withdrawal • overly compliant • Afraid to go home <p>Reports injury by parents Exhibits anxiety about normal activities, i.e., napping, toileting</p> <p>Complains of soreness and moves awkwardly</p> <p>Destructive to self and others</p> <p>Early to school or stays late as if afraid to go home</p> <p>Accident-prone</p> <p>Wears clothing that covers body when not appropriate</p> <p>Chronic runaway (especially adolescents)</p> <p>Cannot tolerate physical contact or touch</p> <p>Seems frightened of parents</p> <p>Shows little or no distress at being separated from parents</p> <p>Apt to seek affection from any adult</p>	<p>Seems unconcerned about child</p> <p>Sees child as bad. evil a monster, etc</p> <p>Alcohol/drug misuse.</p> <p>Attempts to conceal child's injury or to protect identity of person responsible</p> <p>History of abuse as a child Discipline not consistent with child's age, condition or behavior</p> <p>Explanation of child's injury not consistent with type of injury</p> <p>Offers no explanation for child's injury</p> <p>Excessive attention to toilet training</p> <p>History of domestic violence</p>

*Please note that not any single indicator proves that abuse is taking place, but the repeated presence of an indicator or a combination of indicators *should alert* educators to the possibility of abuse.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

NEGLECT*

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF NEGLECT		
Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators of Child	Behavioral Indicators of Parent(s)
Consistent hunger Inappropriate dress--clothing dirty or wrong for the weather Poor hygiene Often tired, no energy Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities or long periods. Unattended physical problems or medical needs Abandonment Lice Distended stomach, emaciated	Begging, stealing food Constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep States there is no caretaker at home Frequent school absence or tardiness Destructive, pugnacious School dropout (adolescents) Early emancipation from family (adolescents) Alcohol/drug misuse Sexual misconduct	Alcohol/drug misuse Disorganized, upset home life Isolated from friends, relatives, neighbors; lacks social skills Long-term chronic illnesses History of neglect as a child Lacks motivation, lethargic

*Please note that not any single indicator proves that abuse is taking place, but the repeated presence of an indicator or a combination of indicators *should alert* educators to the possibility of abuse.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

EMOTIONAL ABUSE*

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE*		
Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators of Child	Behavioral Indicators of Parent(s)
Speech disorders Lags in physical development Failure to thrive (especially in infants) Asthma, severe allergies, or ulcers Substance Abuse	Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.) Conduct disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.) Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play) Behavioral extremes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliant, passive • aggressive demanding Overly adaptive behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriately adult • inappropriately infantile Developmental lags (mental, emotional) Delinquent behavior (especially adolescents)	Treat children in the family unequally Blames or belittles child Cold and rejecting Withholds love Lacks nurturing skills Ignores children's problems

*Please note that not any single indicator proves that abuse is taking place, but the repeated presence of an indicator or a combination of indicators *should alert* educators to the possibility of abuse.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

SEXUAL ABUSE*↪

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE* ↪		
Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators of Child	Behavioral Indicators of Parent(s)
Difficulty in walking or sitting Torn, stained or bloody underclothing Pain or itching in genital area Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas Venereal disease Frequent urinary or yeast infection Frequent unexplained sore throat Red or swollen genital area Pregnancy	Inability to concentrate Arriving at school early – leaving late Frequent absences from school, many times justified by parent/caretaker Abrupt change in child's behavior/moodiness Depression – excessive crying Clinging behavior Lack of self-esteem Reluctance to undress for physical education/nurse Unwillingness to participate in physical/recreational activities Newly acquired bodily complaints (stomach aches, vaginal pain) Afraid to be alone with adults – especially male Severe drop in school performance Seductive, promiscuous behavior toward peers or adults Persistent and inappropriate sexual behavior Repeated attempts to run away from home Low self-image Poor peer relationships Threatened by physical contact, closeness Role reversal, overly concerned for siblings Self-destructive behaviors	Jealous or overly protective of child Isolation/alienation of child and family members within the community Frequent absences from home by one of the caretakers/parents of the child Blurring of generational boundaries Rigid, restrictive home environment Alcohol/drug misuse Parental/child role reversal

*Please note that not any single indicator proves that abuse is taking place, but the repeated presence of an indicator or a combination of indicators should alert educators to the possibility of abuse.

↪ Often there are no visible indicators.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

HOW TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO A CHILD'S DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Children disclose abuse in a variety of ways. They may disclose through very direct and specific communication but unfortunately, that is not usually the case. More often the child will disclose through indirect means such as: "Our neighbor wears funny underwear," or "My brother bothers me at night," or by asking that you promise not to tell if a secret is disclosed.

It is important to listen, encourage and assure the child. Ask questions if the child's comments seem to be covering up an underlying problem. Let the child know you cannot promise not to tell if the secret is something that is hurting him/her.

Occasionally a child will disclose during a class session. It is important for the educator to acknowledge the disclosure but not discuss it in front of the other students. After the class session, the educator should talk with the child in a quiet, private place.

Below are some suggestions for responding to disclosure.

DO:

- Believe the child.
- Find a quiet, private place to talk to the child.
- Take a positive approach to the problem-reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling someone.
- Listen to the child without *interruption*; let him/her talk openly about the situation.
- Rephrase important thoughts for clarification-use the child's vocabulary.
- Ask only for *information that* will clarify your suspicion. The proper authorities will gather the detailed information.
- Tell the child that there is help available.
- Reassure the child that you will do your best to protect. and support him/her.
- Let the child know you must report the abuse to someone who has helped other children like him/her and their families.
- Report the incident to the proper authorities.
- Let the child know what will happen when the report is made (if you have appropriate information).
- Seek out your own support person(s) to help you work through your feelings about the disclosure (if needed).

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

DON'T:

- Promise confidentiality.
- Express panic or shock.
- Convey anger or impatience if the child is not ready to discuss the abuse.
- Make negative comments about the perpetrator or launch into a moral lecture about the incident.
- Disclose the information indiscriminately. Tell only those adults who need the information to protect and support the child.

School personnel have a legal* and moral obligation to make a report if child abuse or neglect is suspected.

School personnel should NOT investigate the situation. Investigation is the job of child protective services.

The report, *verbal* and *written*, should be made to your local child protection agency as specified by school policies and legal statutes.

School Boards of Education are required to provide in-service training which will train teachers to recognize and report child abuse and neglect. ↪

REMEMBER:

- The report should be made *as soon* as there is reason to suspect abuse (review indicators lists).
- An **IMMEDIATE** oral report and **PROMPT** written follow-up (see page 18-19) are mandatory.
- The report is NOT an accusation against a parent or child, but merely a report of a suspicion. The report should be handled in a sensitive, nonjudgmental manner.
- If a person fails to report, the child (or other children) is left potentially at risk for future abuse.
- The person who reports "in good faith" is "immune from liability, both civil and criminal."*
- If you report suspected abuse to someone in your school and expect them to report to social services, it is important to follow-up to make certain the report was made. You, as the person who "knows or suspects" the abuse, are liable.

*See CHILD PROTECTION ACT p. 11-15

↪See COLORADO SCHOOL LAW, p. 25-26

REPORTING PROCEDURES COLORADO LAW-CHILD PROTECTION ACT

TITLE 19 - THE CHILDREN'S CODE *EXCERPTS CONCERNING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT* Article 3, Part 3

19-3-301 SHORT TITLE

This part 3 shall be known and may be cited as the "Child Protection Act of 1987".

19-3-302 LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION

The general assembly hereby declares that the complete reporting of child abuse is a matter of public concern and that, in enacting this part 3, it is the intent of the general assembly to protect the best interests of children of this state and to offer protective services in order to prevent any further harm to a child suffering from abuse. It is also the intent of the general assembly that child protection teams publicly discuss public agencies' responses to child abuse and neglect reports so that the public and the general assembly may be better informed concerning the operation and administration of this part 3.

19-3-303 DEFINITIONS

- (1) (A) "Abuse" or "Child Abuse or Neglect" means an act or omission in one of the following categories, which threatens the health or welfare of a child:
- (I) Any case in which a child exhibits evidence of skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling or death, and such condition or death is not justifiably explained, or where the history given concerning such condition or death is at variance with the degree or type of such condition or death, or circumstances indicate that such condition or death may not be the product of an accidental occurrence.
 - (11) Any case in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation, or prostitution.
 - (III) Any case in which the child's parents, legal guardians, or custodians fail to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or supervision that a prudent parent would take.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

- (III b.) In all cases, those investigating reports of child abuse shall take into account accepted child-rearing practices of the cultures in which the child participates. Nothing in this subsection (1) shall refer to acts which could be construed to be a reasonable exercise of parental discipline or to acts reasonably necessary to subdue a child being taken into custody pursuant to section 19-2-201 which are performed by a peace officer, level 1, as defined in section 18-1-901 (3) (1), C.R.S., acting in the good faith performance of his duties.
- (2.5) "Confirmed" means any report made pursuant to this article that is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.
- (4.7) "Intrafamilial abuse" means any case of abuse, as defined in subsection (1) of this section, that occurs within a family context by a child's parent, stepparent, guardian, legal custodian, or relative, by a spousal equivalent, as defined in section 19-1-103 (25), or by any other person who resides in the child's home or who is regularly in the child's home for the purpose of exercising authority over or care for the child; except that "Intrafamilial abuse" shall not include abuse by a person who is regularly in the child's home for the purpose of rendering care for the child if such person is paid for rendering care and is not related to the child.
- (9.5) "Third-party abuse" means a case in which a child is subjected to abuse, as defined in subsection (1) of this section, by any person who is not a parent, step-parent, guardian, legal custodian, spousal equivalent, as defined in section 19-1-103 (25), or any other person included in the definition of intrafamilial abuse, as defined in subsection (4.7) of this section.
- (10) "Unfounded report" means any report made pursuant to this article which is not supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

19-3-304 PERSONS REQUIRED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

- (1) Any person specified in subsection (2) of this section who has reasonable cause to **know or suspect** that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, **shall immediately report or cause a report to be made** of such facts to the county department or local law enforcement agency.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

- (2) Persons required to report such abuse or neglect or circumstances or conditions shall include any:
- (A) Physician or surgeon, including a physician in training;
 - (B) Child health associate;
 - (C) Medical examiner or coroner;
 - (D) Dentist;
 - (E) Osteopath;
 - (F) Optometrist;
 - (G) Chiropractor;
 - (H) Chiropodist or Podiatrist;
 - (I) Registered nurse or licensed practical nurse;
 - (J) Hospital personnel engaged in the admission, care, or treatment of patients;
 - (K) Christian science practitioner;
 - (L) **Public or private school official or employee;**
 - (M) Social worker or worker in a family care home or child care center as defined in section 26-6-102, C.R.S.;
 - (N) Mental health professional;
 - (O) Dental hygienist;
 - (P) Psychologist;
 - (Q) Physical therapist;
 - (R) Veterinarian;
 - (S) Peace officer as defined in section 18-1-901 (3) (1), C.R.S.;
 - (T) Pharmacist;
 - (U) Commercial film and photographic print processor as provided in subsection (2.5) of this section.
- (3) In addition to those persons specifically required by this section to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect and circumstances or conditions which might reasonably result in abuse or neglect, **any other person may report** known or suspected child abuse or neglect and circumstances or conditions which might reasonably result in child abuse or neglect to the local law enforcement agency or the county department.
- (3.5) No person, including a person specified in subsection (1) of this section, shall knowingly make a false report of abuse or neglect to a county department or local law enforcement agency.

19-3-307 REPORTING PROCEDURES

- (1) Reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect made pursuant to this article shall be made **immediately** to the county department or the local law enforcement agency and shall be followed promptly by a written report prepared by those persons required to report.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

19-3-308 ACTION UPON REPORT OF INTRAFAMMLAL, INSTITUTIONAL, OR THIRD-PARTY ABUSE -CHILD PROTECTION TEAM.

- (5.3c) When the investigation involves a suspected perpetrator who was acting in his official capacity as an employee of a school district, the local law enforcement agency shall coordinate such investigation with any concurrent abuse investigation being conducted by the department of education or the school district to the extent such coordination is possible and deemed appropriate.
- (5.7) Upon initial investigation of a report alleging abuse or neglect in which the suspected perpetrator was acting in his official capacity as an employee of a school district, if the county department or the local law enforcement agency reasonably believes that an incident of abuse or neglect has occurred, it shall immediately notify the superintendent of the school district who shall consider such report to be confidential information; except that the superintendent shall notify the department of education of such investigation.

19-3-309 IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY - PERSONS REPORTING

Any person, other than the perpetrator, complicitor, co-conspirator, or accessory, participating in good faith in the making of a report or in a judicial proceeding held pursuant to this title, the taking of photographs or X rays, or the placing in temporary custody of a child pursuant to section 19-3-204, or otherwise performing his duties or acting pursuant to this part 3 **shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, or termination of employment that otherwise might result by reason of such reporting.** For the purpose of any proceedings, civil or criminal, the good faith of any such person reporting child abuse, any such person taking photographs or X rays, and any such person who has legal authority to place a child in protective custody shall be presumed.

The above excerpts are but a small portion of the Colorado Children's Code. For more detailed information, locate your local library's copy of Colorado Revised Statutes.

IMPORTANT

You, as an individual who suspects abuse, are responsible for making certain that the report is made to either your local department of social services or your local law enforcement agency. **This legal responsibility is not satisfied by reporting your suspicion to other school personnel.**

REPORTING PROCEDURES

AFTER A REPORT IS MADE

Depending on the evidence, a member of the local department of social services and/or local law enforcement will determine if an investigation is to occur. Appropriate staff from these agencies will then investigate the case, notify the family that a report has been filed, and check the child's condition.

If necessary, the court will determine whether temporary or permanent separation from the family will occur.

Treatment for the child and/or family may be recommended or mandated.

A mandated reporter (see Child Protection Act, 19-3-304, pp.11) may obtain information on case status provided that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Policies and procedures vary from county to county. For more information on reporting and follow-up procedures, contact your county department of social services.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

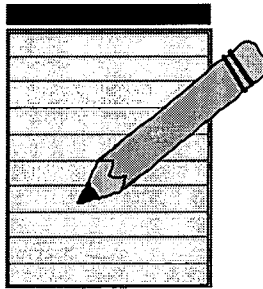
SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORTING

It is essential that every school district have a written district policy for reporting child abuse and neglect. The policy should be based on Colorado law with input from the local department of social services and local law enforcement agencies. All school district employees should be aware of the existence and content of such policy. The policy should be reviewed and updated annually.

MODEL SCHOOL REPORTING POLICY*

Important elements that should be cited in a school district reporting policy regarding child abuse and neglect are:

1. A brief rationale for involving school personnel in reporting.
2. The name and appropriate section numbers of the state reporting statute.
3. Who specifically is mandated to report.



4. Reportable conditions as defined by state law.
5. The person or agency to receive reports.
6. The information required of the reporter (include a sample of the district reporting form).
7. Expected professional conduct by school employees
8. The exact language of the law to define “abuse” and “neglect.” If necessary, explanation, clarification or expansion of the definition.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

9. The method by which school personnel are to report and the time within which to report. A telephone number of the local social services agency should be listed.
10. The statement from the law regarding immunity from civil and criminal liability or termination of employment for those who, in good faith, report or participate in an investigation or judicial proceeding.
11. The penalty for failure to report, established by state law.
12. Action which will be taken by the school board for failure to report.
13. Any provisions of the law regarding the confidentiality records pertaining to reports of suspected abuse or neglect.

Adapted from *Education Policies and Practices Regarding Child Abuse and Neglect and Recommendation for Policy Development*, Education Commission of the States, 1976

REPORTING PROCEDURES

WRITTEN REPORT (Part 1 of 2 parts)

(Sample Reporting Form)

Name of Child: _____ Birthdate: _____ Sex: _____
Address: _____ Grade: _____
Parent(s) or Guardian: _____
Parent's Address (if different): _____ Home Phone: _____
Parent's Place of Employment: _____ Work Phone: _____
Family Composition: _____

1. *Check items that apply:*

<input type="checkbox"/> Dislocation/Sprains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Neglect
<input type="checkbox"/> Twisting/Shaking	<input type="checkbox"/> Abandonment	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Neglect
<input type="checkbox"/> Malnutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Burns, Scalds	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Neglect
<input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to Elements	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Abuse

Description: _____

2. Briefly describe the reporter's concern for the child: _____

3. Describe the child's account of how the incident occurred and name possible witnesses: _____

4. Describe any previously known or suspected abuse or neglect to child or siblings: _____

5. Provide name(s), address(es), and relationship to child of person(s) responsible for suspected abuse or neglect (if known): _____

6. Call to social services: _____

Date	Time	Person Taking Report
------	------	----------------------

_____	_____	_____
Name of Person Reporting to DSS	Position	School

Recommendation: Print reporting forms in triplicate. Send original to your local social service agency and use the other copies for school district files.

ASSISTING THE CHILD VICTIM AND FAMILY WORKING WITH THE ABUSED CHILD IN THE CLASSROOM

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES*

School staff are often uncomfortable and uncertain about interacting with an abused child when he/she returns to or enters school. The classroom teacher can play a significant role in the rehabilitation of an abused child by acknowledging, but not dwelling on, the situation and then creating a supportive and safe environment for the child. This can be accomplished by providing the child with the following:

1) SECURITY

The child needs to feel safe. He/she needs to know that you can be trusted; that you will not touch without asking if it is okay; that you will not tell others about the abuse; that you will not embarrass him/her in front of others. Let the child know how you would respond if another abuse incident occurred. The child needs to know that you look forward to seeing him/her each day and that he/she BELONGS in the group.

2) STRUCTURE

Initially, structure will be the child's security. The child may need very clear instructions. It may mean you will have to say, "Pick up your pencil and begin with this work." Abused children will borrow from you strength and direction until they can mobilize on their own.

3) IDENTITY

Give the child information about him/herself. "You are someone who makes friends easily," or "You are someone who really tries hard on difficult problems." Let the child express feelings, whether they are of grief, fear, loss or relief, without offering advice.

4) CONSISTENCY AND PREDICTABILITY

The abused child may have experienced a great deal of upheaval in his/her family life, and possibly much family dysfunction. The child needs to be able to predict your behavior, and to be clear about your expectations. It is important to share information about new situations before they arise. In addition, it is important that the classroom teacher not tolerate inappropriate behavior. If the child exhibits violent or sexually aggressive behavior, the teacher should respond immediately as with any inappropriate behavior.

5) SENSE OF BELONGING

Be sure the child's work is displayed; that he/she has belongings in the room and a place to store them. The child should be seated where a feeling of inclusion can be gained. Reinforce the child's association with other children.

ASSISTING THE CHILD VICTIM AND FAMILY

6) INTIMACY IN APPROPRIATE WAYS

Talk to the child, one on one, share something about yourself, and use eye contact. It is best not to touch an abuse victim because a touch may cause a chain of flashbacks. When you have established a good relationship, ask the child if he/she minds a hand on his/her shoulder, and only with permission, touch the child occasionally.

7) APPROVAL

Be certain to acknowledge the child with a nod, a wink, warmth in your voice, a note on his/her paper- however you feel most comfortable.

8) ENHANCEMENT OF POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT

The child needs to know he/she is valued, accepted and capable.

9) SUPPORT FOR FAMILY

The abused child still cares about and needs to believe in family. Respect and support the child's family. Family members may feel embarrassed, fearful and isolated. Their feelings and privacy should be respected.

Adapted from the Jefferson County Public School Child Abuse Prevention Training Package, Lakewood, Colorado, 1984.

ASSISTING THE CHILD VICTIM AND FAMILY WORKING WITH PARENTS OF ABUSED CHILDREN

If parents of an abused child have adequate support and information, they -are in a good position to help the child. Some steps in providing support for parents are listed below:

1. **Provide accurate information as needed, such as:**
 - a. the school district has a legal responsibility to report all incidents of abuse,
 - b. children rarely lie about sexual abuse, and
 - c. offenders are usually known to the victim.
2. **Express faith in the parents' ability to cope with the situation.**
 - a. clarify your role with the parents and the child.
 - b. recognize that all involved may be angry, in denial, and grieving.
3. **Point out the positive steps the family has already taken, such as:**
 - a. the child's ability to tell someone about the abuse, and
 - b. the parent(s) believing and supporting the child.
4. **Help the parent(s) to reassure the child by:**
 - a. believing the child,
 - b. supporting the disclosure,
 - c. empathizing with the child, and
 - d. protecting and supporting the child.
5. **Differentiate the parents concerns from the child's concerns.**
 - a. Parents worry about the social and legal repercussions of what happened. Many times they worry about the child being victimized again and may set strict limits that the child doesn't understand.
 - b. Children feel guilty and worry about hurting their parents and/or breaking up the family.
6. **Sham ideas about how to help children protect themselves, such as:**
 - a. teaching the child self-protection skills,
 - b. building self-esteem, and
 - c. providing the child with a sense of empowerment.
7. **Provide information on resources as needed (see the resource section of this manual).**
 - a. Agencies
 - b. Material resources

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

SOCIAL SERVICES

Responsibilities of Social Services:

The responsibilities of the department of social services in suspected cases of child abuse include:

- investigating cases of alleged child abuse; social services has primary responsibility for intrafamilial and institutional abuse investigations.
- providing services and treatment for the child and family where child abuse has occurred.

Suggestions for strengthening the working relationship between schools and local departments of social services (DSS):

- Request a copy of written policies and procedures on child abuse/neglect investigations. Review procedures, develop list of questions if clarification is needed.
- Get to know DSS child protection intake workers. If possible, set up a meeting with them so faces and names become familiar (having a breakfast or lunch meeting is an effective way to accomplish this).
- Share school personnel frustrations related to child abuse and neglect with DSS, ask for clarification and assistance with specific questions and concerns.
- Ask what frustration DSS workers have with the schools, and how those frustrations can be addressed.
- Educate school personnel on the procedures used by DSS, emphasize *what, why*, and how they investigate and the limitations that exist. Set realistic expectations for what DSS can and cannot do.
- If a school employee has a complaint about the handling of a case, it should be shared with the DSS worker and/or his/her supervisor.
- **Don't delay** reporting a suspected case. Cases reported at the end of the day or end of the week can create a new set of problems (child is leaving to go home, DSS workers are off duty, etc.). The delay may also result in further abuse of the child.
- Know what is an appropriate referral.
- If DSS has not followed up with results of an investigation, contact the intake worker and request information.
- Invite a DSS intake worker to present a staff in-service training.
- When developing or revising school policies and procedures on suspected child abuse cases, ask DSS for input.
- Remember that clear communication is the key to a successful intervention. Don't hesitate to call on social services for advice or clarification.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Responsibilities of Law Enforcement:

The responsibilities of law enforcement agencies in suspected cases of child abuse and neglect include:

- investigating cases of alleged child abuse; law enforcement has primary responsibility for third party abuse investigations,
- gathering and maintaining all evidence,
- immediately reporting incidents to the local department of social services, and
- taking the child into protective custody if determined necessary.

Suggestions for strengthening the working relationship between schools and local law enforcement agencies:

- Request a copy of written policies and procedures on child abuse/neglect investigations. Review procedures, and develop a list of questions if clarification is needed.
- Get to know the law enforcement officers involved in child protection. If possible, set up a meeting with them so faces and names become familiar (having a breakfast or lunch meeting together with staff from the department of social services is an effective way to accomplish this).
- Share school personnel frustrations with law enforcement related to child abuse and neglect, and ask for clarification and assistance with specific questions and concerns.
- Ask what frustrations law enforcement officers have with the schools, and how those frustrations can be addressed.
- If a school employee has a complaint about the handling of a case, it should be shared with the officer and/or his/her supervisor.
- Invite a law enforcement officer to present information at a staff in-service training.
- When developing or revising school policies and procedures on suspected child abuse cases, ask local law enforcement for input.
- Assist law enforcement in gathering information about the child and/or the child's family.
- When reporting a suspected case, request a plainclothes officer in an unmarked car (not available in every city/county).
- Remember that clear communication is the key to a successful intervention. Don't hesitate to call on your local law enforcement agency for advice or clarification.

STAFF TRAINING

COLORADO SCHOOL LAWS

TITLE 22 EDUCATION

EXCERPTS CONCERNING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

22-32-109 BOARD OF EDUCATION-SPECIFIC DUTIES

- (1) (z) To provide for a periodic in-service program for all district teachers which shall provide information about the "Child Protection Act of 1987", part 3 of article 3 of title 19, C.R.S. instruction designed to assist teachers in recognizing child abuse or neglect, and instruction designed to provide teachers with information on how to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect and how to assist the child-victim and his family.

22-32-110 BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIFIC POWERS

- (2) The board of education of each school district shall adopt a discipline code which shall include, but not be limited to, provisions to deal with disorderly students in a manner which allows other students to learn in an atmosphere which is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption, **including acts of reasonable and appropriate physical intervention or force; however, no board shall adopt a discipline code which includes provisions which are in conflict with the definition of child abuse in sections 18-6-401(l) and 19-3-303 (1), C.R.S.**
- (4) (a) A board of education or any person acting in good faith in accordance with the provisions of subsections (2) and (3) of this section in carrying out powers or duties authorized by said subsections shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal; except that a person acting willfully or wantonly shall not be immune from liability pursuant to these subsections.
- (b) **An act of a teacher or other employee of a school district shall not be considered child abuse pursuant to sections 18-6-401 (1) and 19-3-303 (1) C.R.S. if:**
- (I) **The act was performed in good faith and in compliance with the discipline code adopted by the board of education pursuant to subsection (2) of this section; or**
- (II) **The act was an appropriate expression of affection or emotional support.**

STAFF TRAINING

COLORADO SCHOOL LAWS

22-60-103 TEACHER CERTIFICATION-DEFINITIONS

- (2) (a) "Approved program of preparation" means a program of study for teacher preparation, including student teaching that meets the standard of the state board of education and that upon completion leads to a recommendation for certification by an accepted institution of higher education.
- (b) Included in such approved program of preparation, there shall be a course which includes information about the "Child Protection Act of 1987", part 3 of article 3 of Title 19, C.R.S., instruction designed to assist teachers in recognizing child abuse or neglect, and instruction designed to provide teachers with information on how to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect and how to assist the child-victim and his family.
- (c) An accepted out-of-state institution of higher education shall be deemed to have an approved program of teacher preparation if its program is equivalent to a similar program of studies which is offered by a Colorado accepted institution of higher education, excluding the provisions of paragraph (b) of this subsection (2).

STAFF TRAINING NEED FOR STAFF TRAINING

In 1984 the Colorado legislature, in response to the need for recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect, passed House Bill 1321 (effective January 1, 1985) which requires local Boards of Education to:

“provide district teachers with a periodic in-service program which shall provide.

- 1) *information about the Child Protection Act of 1985,*
- 2) *instruction designed to assist teachers in recognizing child abuse or neglect,*
- 3) *instruction designed to provide teachers with information on how to report suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, and*
- 4) *information on how to assist the child victim and his family.”*

In addition, the Child Protection Act requires any **“school official or employee”** who suspects abuse to make an immediate report to the county department of social services.

Staff training is essential in meeting the reporting law requirements and in fulfilling the requirements of Colorado School Laws. All staff-including administrators, teachers, special services, teachers, aides, volunteers, custodians, secretaries, food service staff, and bus drivers-should be trained to identify and report child abuse and neglect based on Colorado law and school district policy.

*See Colorado School Laws, p. 25-26

↳See CHILD PROTECTION ACT, p. 11-15

STAFF TRAINING

SAMPLE TRAINING AGENDA

PREVENTION/INTERVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

I. Introduction and overview

Trainer(s)
Participant(s)

II. Characteristics of child abuse and neglect

Definitions of various types of child abuse
Incidence of child abuse
Effects of abuse on children

III. Colorado laws regarding child abuse and neglect*

22-32-109, 22-32-110, 22-60-103 Colorado Revised Statutes
Child Protection Act
Discussion of legal issues

IV. Identifying the abused and neglected child*

Physical indicators
Behavioral indicators
Family indicators

V. Responding to disclosure*

Do's and don'ts of responding to abuse
Role-play situations

VI. Reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect

Legal responsibilities
School district policy and procedures
Sample reporting form

VII. After the report is made

Role of social services
Role of law enforcement
Court process
Community resources/treatment options
Interagency cooperation

*If staff training time is limited, these items are priority based on the requirements in Colorado school laws.

STAFF TRAINING

VIII. Assisting the child victim and family*

Classroom techniques
Working with the parents/families of abused children
On-going support

IX. Staff questions and concerns about child abuse neglect.

X. Approaches to prevention

K-12 curriculum
Community awareness
Resources in community
Parenting skills in curriculum

* If staff training time is limited, these items are priority based on the requirements in Colorado school laws

STAFF TRAINING

CONCERNS OF SCHOOL STAFF

School staff often have concerns and even fears about the school's implementing a child abuse prevention/intervention program. These concerns and fears are usually based on lack of knowledge about the program and its intent. Below are listed some common concerns that may need to be addressed during training.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS/CONCERNS:

- What happens after we report?
- Why don't we ever hear what happens to the child?
- Why doesn't social services ever do anything?
- When I report a suspected case to my school administrator, he/she doesn't report it. What should I do?
- Why should I report? Nothing is ever done and the child suffers more.
- If I report, is the child hurt more?
- We did what we were supposed to do; why didn't the legal system follow through?
- What do you do if the child/victim is the son or daughter of a close friend: my school principal a minister; a policeman?
- What are my legal responsibilities?
- What is the legal recourse for the accused?
- What if the caseworker tells the parent I'm the one who reported?
- Do I report if the abuse either physical or sexual-happened several years ago?
- Will the child be removed from the home; from school?
- What do the police do; social services; the hospital?
- Where is the line between parental discipline and abuse?
- Where do I find resources in my community?
- If it's a child beating another child (peer or sibling), should I still report?
- What if I suspect abuse when I'm off duty (example-a neighbor); am I still obligated to report?
- What constitutes suspicion? How much investigation should I do?

STAFF TRAINING

- What if a child accuses me or another teacher of abuse?
- Do I keep the report confidential? Shouldn't I tell others who work with the child?
- If the report comes from outside school, how much information should I give law enforcement? social services?
- What if a child reports during class?
- Should a teacher stay with the child during the interview by social services/law enforcement?
- Doesn't teaching this prevention program scare children? cause children to become rebellious? cause children to defy authority?
- What if you suspect abuse, report the incident, nothing happens and then the child shows signs of abuse again?
- Does teaching a prevention program promote sexual activity?

RESOURCES AGENCIES

LOCAL

Social Services, Hospital, Law Enforcement, Rape Crisis Center, Health Department/Clinic

Your County Department of Social Services: Phone # _____

Your Local Hospital ER Phone # _____

Your Police Department Phone # _____

STATE

AMEND

2727 Bryant Street, #350
Denver, CO 80211
303/832-6363

Colorado Department of Education
Prevention Initiatives
201 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203
303/866-6750

Colorado Department of Human Services
Child Welfare Services Unit
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203
303/866-3278

Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence
PO Box 18902
Denver, CO 80218
303/ 831-9632
TDD 303/573-7814

Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault
1600 Downing Street, 5th Floor
Denver, CO 80218
303/861-7033

NATIONAL

American Humane Association
63 Inverness Drive E.
Englewood, CO 80112-5117 303/792-9900

Kempe Children's Foundation
1825 Marion
Denver, CO 80218 303/864-5300

Colorado Department of Health
Prevention Programs
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80222-1530 303/692-2587

Rape Assistance and Awareness Program
640 Broadway, #112
Denver, CO 80203 303/329-9922
Hotline 303/322-7273

Prevent Child Abuse America
Fulfillment Center
200 State Road
South Deerfield, MA 01373-0200
800/835-2671

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