



ANCS Mandated Reporting Inservice

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse



O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 requires **all** employees and volunteers who work with children to report suspected abuse or neglect of children.

- Including volunteers as mandated reporters is a change in the law. This change took effect July 1, 2012.

OCGA 19-7-5



- Must have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.
- Immunity from civil or criminal liability if the report of suspected child abuse is made in good faith.
- Guilty of a misdemeanor if any mandated reporter knowingly and willfully fails to report a case of suspected child abuse.

Four Types of Abuse



- Physical injury inflicted upon a child that is non-accidental
- Neglect or exploitation of a child
- Sexual abuse of a child
- Sexual exploitation of a child

Indicators of Physical Abuse



- Bite marks
- Patterned bruises or bruises in the shape of items
- Welts
- Scratches
- Patterned and immersion burns
- Unexplained fractures/dislocations
- Bald spots on the scalp

*Having a mark or bruise does not always indicate physical abuse.

Indicators of Neglect



- Hoarding or begging for food
- Poor hygiene (unclean or unkempt)
- Inappropriate clothing for the weather
- Un-met medical, emotional, or mental health needs
- Frequent unexcused absences

*Neglect is not an isolated incident. It is a pattern of unmet needs over a period of time. When considering suspected neglect, we should be sensitive that not all families have the same access or knowledge of resources.

Neglect continued



- Inadequate supervision
 - Age 8 years and younger should never be left alone
 - Ages 9-12, based on maturity, may be left alone for brief periods (less than 2 hours)
 - Age 13 and older, based on maturity, may be left alone and may act as a babysitter for up to 12 hours

Indicators of Sexual Abuse



- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Play behavior with sexual overtones
- Advanced knowledge of sexual activity
- Sudden fear of people, places, or specific activities
- Sudden change in patterns of behavior or socialization

Sexual Exploitation of Children



- Sexual activity involving a child in exchange for something of value, or promise thereof, to the child or another person or persons
 - ◆ Child treated as a commercial, sexual object
 - ◆ **INCLUDES:** street prostitution, pornography, erotic/nude massage, escort services, gang based prostitution, inter-familial pimping, internet based exploitation (pictures, videos, advertisements)

What to do if a child discloses



- Stay calm
- Do not act visibly upset or shaken, this could cause the child to backtrack
- Do not ask leading questions
- Praise the child for the courage that it took to tell you
- Do not make any promises to the child (never promise to keep a secret)
- **REPORT** information to counselor or principal

Procedures for Reporting Suspected Abuse



- Report any suspicion of abuse to the school counselor or administrator **immediately**.
 - Elementary Campus: Leslie Jo Tottenham or Lara Zelski
 - Middle Campus: Kristin Lee or CatheyGoodgame
- Once you have made this report, you have satisfied your responsibility under Georgia Law.
- Keep all information about the child confidential (do **not** discuss the incident with other teachers, parents, or volunteers)

Considerations for volunteers as you work with children



- Treat children with dignity and respect
- Maintain confidentiality
- Maintain appropriate boundaries within school and outside of school (including social networking)
- Avoid situations that can be misinterpreted as inappropriate



Thank you for your service to children!

If you have any questions about any of the information provided, please contact Ms. Tottenham, Ms. Lee, Ms. Zelski, or Ms. Goodgame

Please be sure that you have signed the form indicating that you have viewed this presentation and are aware of your legal responsibilities.