

# CHILD ABUSE

## THE MANDATED REPORTER'S RESPONSIBILITY

### MONROE COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

#### What is Child Abuse?

In Pennsylvania, an abused child is one who is under 18 years of age and a victim of serious non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or serious physical neglect caused by the parents, a person responsible for the child's welfare, any individual residing in the same home as the child, or a parent's paramour.

#### Who is Required by Law to Report Suspected Child Abuse?

Any persons who, in the course of their employment, occupation, or practice of their profession come into contact with children and have reason to believe that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an Abused Child.

Mandated reporters include but are not limited to the following:

- . School Staff
- . Hospital/Medical Staff
- . Law Enforcement Personnel
- . Day Care Workers
- . Counselors, Psychologists, Psychiatrists
- . Human Service Workers
- . Foster Care Workers
- . Mental Health Professionals

NOTE: The privileged communication between any professional person required to report and his/her patient/client shall not apply to situations involving child abuse and shall not constitute grounds for failure to report as required by Child Protective Services Law.

#### How Does the Mandated Reporter Report Child Abuse?

You may call the Children and Youth Agency of the county where the abuse took place. In Monroe County, call (717) 420-3590 any time of the day or night.

You must call the 24-hour, toll free Child Abuse Hotline (ChildLine), 1-800-932-0313 and report your suspicions with as much of the following information as is available:

- . Your name, business name, and phone number;
- . Names, addresses, phone number of the child and parents;
- . Age and gender of child;
- . Where incident occurred;
- . Nature of abuse;
- . Name, address, phone number of person doing the abuse;
- . Any additional information.

Remember!! You only need to have reason to suspect abuse to be required to report it, you do not need to know or have proof that abuse took place.

Following your verbal report to ChildLine you should fill out Form CY-47 and mail it to your county children and youth services agency.

NOTE: See sample CY-47 in this pamphlet

### What Protection Does the Law Give the Mandated Reporter?

Confidentiality of Referral Source - Although in cases of mandated reporters making a report, the persons concerned may be able to conclude who made the report, however our agency will neither give nor confirm this information.

Immunity from Liability - Any person, hospital, institution, school, facility or agency participating in good faith in the making of a report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. For the purpose of any proceeding, civil or criminal, the good faith of any person required to make a report shall be assumed.

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### What Follows Your Report?

ChildLine and the respective county children and youth agency will communicate and begin an abuse investigation. Within hours of the referral, Children and Youth Services will interview the child, assess, with the use of our risk analysis survey, and determine whether or not it would be necessary to take the child into protective custody.

Having assured the safety of the child, we will begin a thorough investigation which may last up to 30 days. These investigations include home visits, office visits and phone calls to the alleged victim, the parents, siblings, and any other collateral contacts that can give a more detailed, accurate picture. In some cases where circumstances make it impossible to complete our investigation in 30 days, we can get an additional 30-day extension.

Upon completion of our investigation, we make one of the following determinations:

Unfounded - When the standards for Founded or Indicated are not met.

Indicated - When the Child Protective Services Unit (C.P.S.) determines there is substantial evidence of abuse based on medical evidence, the CPS investigation or an admission of the act or acts of abuse by the perpetrator.

Founded - When there is judicial adjudication that the child is abused.

What Information is the Mandated Reporter Entitled To?

As well as being concerned for the protection of children, the laws are also concerned for the protection of all parties involved in an abuse investigation. Therefore, unless you are a participant in the Multi-Disciplinary Team when said case is discussed, our agency can give no information relating to what we are doing or what we have learned during our investigation. What we can tell you, upon request, is what your final finding is (Unfounded, Indicated, or Founded) and what services our agency is providing, offering, and/or requiring for the family. If you are interested in this information, please let us know within the 30-day period and the caseworker will make a note to inform you of the status of the case upon completion.

## Child Abuse - Steven Shapiro, M.D.

### Unexplained bruises and welts:

- on face, lips, mouth
- on torso, back, buttocks, thigh
- in various stages of healing
- reflecting shape of an article (electric cord)
- on several different surface areas
- regular appearance after absence/vacation

### Burns:

- burns - cigar, cigarette, especially on soles, palms, and buttocks, back immersion burns (sock like, glove like - doughnut shape on buttocks or genitalia)
- patterned like electric burner, iron, etc.
- rope like burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso (friction burns)

### Unexplained fractures:

- to skull, nose, facial structure
- various stages of healing
- multiple or spiral fractures (bone broken by a twist)

### Unexplained lacerations or abrasions:

- to mouth, lips, gums
- to external genitalia

### Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse:

- wary of adult contacts
- apprehensive when other children cry
- behavioral extremes - aggressiveness or withdrawal (acts out in mature ways), excessive hitting, hitting with objects)
- frightened of parents
- afraid to go home'
- reports injury by parents

### Physical Neglect:

- consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
- consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities or for long periods
- unattended physical problems or medical needs (mucous from nose, ear drainage, losing weight)
- abandonment

**Behavioral Indicators of Parent Neglect:**

- begging, stealing food
- extended stays at school (early arrival, late departure)
- constant fatigue - listlessness or falling sleep in class
- alcohol or drug abuse
- delinquency (thefts)
- states there is no care given

**Sexual Abuse:**

- difficult in walking, sitting
- torn, stained or bloody underclothes
- pain or itching in genital area
- bruises, bleeding in exterior genitalia, vaginal, anal area
- venereal disease (pre-teen)
- pregnancy
- unwilling to change clothes
- withdrawal, fantasy, infantile behavior
- bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
- poor peer relationships
- delinquent - run away
- report from child

**Emotional Maltreatment:**

- speech disorders
- lags in physical development
- failure to thrive

**Behavior from Emotional Maltreatment:**

- habit disorders
- conduct disorders
- neurotic traits
- psychosomatic disorders

**Steps to Take:**

- talk to the child gently
- report orally to person in charge
- seek medical help
- advise parent of your intent to file a report
- follow with written report
- teacher continue to show support to child and parents