

THE EDUCATOR'S ROLE IN RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

MANDATORY TRAINING
FOR ALL SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

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OVERVIEW OF THIS PRESENTATION

GOALS:

- To provide information regarding Child Abuse and Neglect by increasing the educator's knowledge regarding factors, rules, regulations and school policy
- To give support toward handling the disclosure of abuse and or neglect, and for following through with our responsibility to report using guidelines set forth by Yadkin County Schools

THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS

- Children, adolescents, and teens spend a large portion of their time in school, which gives educators more access to students than most other professionals. With this time comes the opportunity to compare and contrast behaviors that are usual and unusual.
- For the purpose of this training, the term “educator” is meant to include not only the classroom teacher, but also other school personnel involved in serving children. This training is designed to help teachers, teacher assistants, school counselors, school nurses, special education professionals, administrators, secretaries, data managers and other school personnel that support children and any disclosures they make.

THE EDUCATOR'S ROLE (cont.)

- North Carolina's reporting law applies to every person and every institution in the state. School personnel are **REQUIRED** by North Carolina Law to report **SUSPECTED** incidents of abuse, neglect and dependency (GS 7B-101)
- Educators are a primary source for reports for school age children to the Child Protective Services (CPS) department in Yadkin County.

THE NORTH CAROLINA CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW

North Carolina General Statute 7B-101 defines 4 types of child abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Child Neglect

The law applies to any juvenile under 18 years of age

The law specifies that the abuser can be a:

- Parent
- Guardian
- Custodian
- Caretaker

YADKIN COUNTY SCHOOL'S BOARD POLICY

CHILD ABUSE

The Yadkin County Board of Education recognizes that child abuse and child neglect are serious social problems and shall actively cooperate with other segments of the community to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect. All employees of the Yadkin County Schools who have cause to suspect the abuse or neglect of any child shall comply with the provisions of Articles 4I and 44 of the North Carolina Juvenile code, G.S. 7I-5I7 et seq., and G.S. II5C-400, which provides as follows:

School personnel to report child abuse. Any person who has cause to suspect child abuse or neglect has a duty to report the case of the child to the Director of Social Services of the county, as provided in G.S. 7B-30I.

YADKIN COUNTY, NC. BOARD OF EDUCATION

YADKIN COUNTY SCHOOLS PROTOCOL FOR REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

The purpose of this protocol is to uphold our responsibility to protect our students in so far as we are able, from upsetting situations, to draw as little attention to confidential matters as possible, and to assure uniformity of practice within Yadkin County Schools.

REPORTING:

School personnel suspecting abuse or neglect will notify the principal/designee. In any such case, the school social worker or guidance counselor is available to consult with school personnel and the child, and to assist in the process of reporting. Your school social worker is available by phone and can come to your school to assist. **Your schools social worker and guidance counselor may be able to determine if a call needs to be made or if the situation needs an intervention by the school social worker.**

**AS SOON AS YOU ARE AWARE OF A SITUATION LET SOMEONE
KNOW. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY TO
EXPRESS YOUR CONCERNS.**

PROTOCOL, REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION, CONT.

- The person to make the actual report to the Child Protective Services Department (CPS) should be the person with the most complete knowledge of the situation.
- The school's responsibility is to report; the investigation of reports or suspicions is the responsibility of the Child Protective Services Department. CPS will determine if a report meets the legal definition of child abuse, neglect or dependency and if there is a need for intervention.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE BY A STUDENT

- Listen carefully to the child
- Tell the child you believe him or her
- Tell the child that is not their fault
- Tell the child you will try to help them with their situation
- Explain to the child that you will need to tell other adults who can help
- Don't promise to keep the situation a secret
- Don't share any information about the case with those who are not directly involved with it
- Do not ask leading questions

A SCHOOL SYSTEM EMPLOYEE'S ROLE IS NOT TO INVESTIGATE OR VERIFY THE SITUATION, BUT RATHER TO MAKE THE REPORT AND SET IN MOTION THE PROCESS OF GETTING HELP FOR THE CHILD

TYPES OF ABUSE

- NEGLECT:

Any serious disregard for a juvenile's supervision, care, or discipline. The caretaker may withhold or fail to provide the child with basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or attention to hygiene.

- EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

Expressing attitudes or behaviors toward a child that create serious emotional or psychological damage as evidence by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, aggressive behavior toward self or others, and delinquent acts.

PHYSICAL ABUSE is a non-accidental physical injury to a child ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or even death

Some examples are:

- Punching
- Kicking
- Biting
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Hitting
- Burning
- Bruises/welts

SEXUAL ABUSE is any sexual behavior imposed on a child

Examples

- Fondling a child's genitals
- Penetration
- Incest
- Rape
- Sodomy
- Indecent exposure
- Exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Unexplained abdominal pain
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Pain, swelling, or itching in genital area
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy, especially in early adolescence
- Knowledge of sexual matter inappropriate to age of child
- Sexually abusing other children

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is a pattern of verbal assaults that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth

Examples

- Constant criticism
- Threats
- Rejection
- Withholding
love, support, and guidance

Some signs of emotional abuse

- Anxiety or unrealistic fears
- Sleep problems and nightmares
- Overly compliant
- Oppositional, defiant of authority
- Depressed, isolated, withdrawn
- Habit disorders such as biting, rocking, head banging, or thumb sucking in an older child

CHILD NEGLECT is a serious disregard for the child's supervision, care, or discipline

Possible signs of neglect:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food/money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lack of supervision
- Unsanitary home environment
- Lack of food
- Lack of heat in cold weather
- Lack of adequate shelter
- Parent is abusing alcohol or other drugs
- Abandonment

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS OF CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

LACK OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE: Parents/guardians are often neglected as children. They didn't have positive role models in their lives and they lack parenting and survival skills. Social isolation such as no support from friends or family could also contribute to child abuse and/or neglect.

ALCOHOL/DRUG: Parents and guardians who have addictive behaviors themselves tend to support their addiction first. Money is spent for substances instead of food, and clothing, etc.

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS: They are not able to parent due to their own mental/emotional illness.

SINGLE PARENTS: With one or no income in the home, low paying jobs, no family/friend support and parenting without help 24 hours a day can become stressful leading to child abuse and/or neglect.

DISRUPTIONS OF FAMILY: Divorce, separation, family disputes, and domestic violence may be additional stressors for families.

REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

North Carolina vs Yadkin County

NORTH CAROLINA: 2012-2013 Number of Children Reported:

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Reports made: Abused: 8,200 Neglected: 138,847 Abused/neglected: 10,625
Substantiated : 12,414
% of Substantiation: 12.89%

YADKIN COUNTY: 2012-2013 Number of Children Reported:

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Reports made: Abused: 5 Neglected: 351 Abused/neglected: 55
Substantiated: 88
% of Substantiation: 4.70%

PRIMARY SOURCES OF REPORTING

- Non-relative
- Educational personnel
- Relative
- Human Services Personnel
- Anonymous
- Medical Personnel
- Parent
- Law Enforcement/Courts
- Child Care Provider
- Victim

WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)?

Child Protective Services (CPS) is a department administered through Yadkin County Human Service and managed by the state of N.C. that responds to reports of child abuse and/or neglect.

CPS strives to ensure safe, permanent, nurturing families for children by protecting them from abuse and neglect while attempting to preserve the family unit.



CPS ACCOMPLISHES THIS THROUGH

ASSESSING suspected cases of abuse and neglect

ASSISTING the family in diagnosing the problem

PROVIDING in-home counseling and supportive services to help children stay at home with their families

COORDINATING community and agency services for the family

INVESTIGATING BY CPS

CPS and Law enforcement personnel may require immediate access to a child in investigating an abuse and neglect report.

When the child is in attendance at a school in the Yadkin County School System, the principal or his/her designee shall provide access to the child and may remain with the child throughout any investigative interview conducted on the school premises.

Juvenile code permits a CPS worker or Law Enforcement to take a child into custody. The CPS worker or Law enforcement officer is required to notify the parent, guardian or custodian that the child has been taken into temporary custody; **NOT** the school system.

INVESTIGATING BY CPS, CONT.

The child should never be held at school after regular school hours simply because a CPS social worker has not yet arrived to interview the child.

**IF CONCERNS ARE SUCH THAT YOU ARE
FEARFUL FOR THE CHILD TO LEAVE THE
SCHOOL AND RETURN HOME, CONTACT 911**

WHEN CPS WORKER ARRIVES ON CAMPUS

- CPS worker makes his/her presence known at the school office.
- The staff, when possible, will notify the principal/guidance counselor and then will call the student to the office.
- All interviews with children should be conducted in private.

The School Social Worker may serve as the liaison between agencies

“SCREENED IN” or “SCREENED OUT”

“Screened In”

A report is screened in if there is sufficient information to suggest an investigation is warranted.

“Screened Out”

A report may be screened out if there is not enough information on which to follow up or if the situation reported does not meet the state’s legal definition of abuse or neglect.

IF REPORT IS “SCREENED IN” FOR INVESTIGATION:

CPS should initiate that investigation within 24 hours for abuse cases and within 72 hours for neglect/dependency cases

You will receive a letter in the mail letting you know their decision to either screen in or screen out the report you made.

PLEASE REMEMBER

If you report an incident of suspected child abuse and neglect, you will have accomplished the following:

- You fulfill your legal obligation
- A record of the report goes on file
- The information you provided is evaluated

If you don't report, you know that nothing will be done. Abused and neglected children cannot be protected unless they are identified, and the key to identification is reporting

RESOURCES:

- Department of Public Instruction; School Improvement Division
Alternative and Safe Schools/Instructional Support Section
- National Center of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect North Carolina
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Yadkin County Human Services Agency