

**Reporting Suspected Abuse
or Neglect**

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In Texas, anyone who suspects that a child is being abused or neglected has a legal obligation to report it.

Professional reporters are required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect within 48 hours.

Professional reporters are Teachers, Nurses and District Employees



Required training objectives seek to provide school staff with definitions of 'Abuse' and 'Neglect', realistic reporting scenarios, overview of the web based reporting system, and guidance on commonly asked questions.



Abuse

Physical abuse is a physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, such as bruises, fractures, or death. It also can include a genuine threat of harm even if there is no visible injury.

Sexual abuse is sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare. This includes fondling a child's genitals, penetration, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or producing pornography.

Emotional abuse is an action that results in a marked impact on a child's growth, development, or psychological functioning. Emotional abuse includes extreme forms of punishment such as confining a child in a dark closet, habitual scapegoating, or belittling to the point that it results in noticeable effects on the child's daily functioning.



Neglect

Neglectful supervision means placing a child in a situation that requires judgment or actions beyond what the child is physically or mentally capable of doing and that results in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm to a child.

Medical neglect is failing to get or follow up with medical care for a child when the lack of care results in physical injury or in a marked impact on a child's growth, development, or functioning.

Physical neglect is the failure to provide a child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child. Physical neglect can include a situation where the home environment presents a health or safety threat to children.

Abandonment and refusal to accept parental responsibility are two other categories of neglect.

Failing to protect a child from any situation described above also falls under the definitions of abuse and neglect.



Reporting Abuse

**Make a call 1-800-252-5400
Or use the
Texas Abuse Hotline e-Report Site**



Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child in Texas: Reporting Basics Telephone Internet

You may call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 to report abuse or neglect. The hotline is answered by DFPS Intake Specialists (who are all degreed professionals) 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

You will be asked to provide your name and contact information.

You will be asked to explain your concerns. The Intake Specialist might ask additional questions to determine if the situation that you describe meets the Texas Family Code's definitions of abuse or neglect.



What if a reporter is unsure whether a situation or condition is a potential "warning sign"? While it would be ideal to have a clear-cut guide that would determine whether any given situation constitutes abuse or neglect, there are many factors that determine whether a situation warrants an investigation. When in doubt, you should always err on the side of the child's safety by making a phone or Internet report.



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

WWW.DFPS.STATE.TX.US/TRAINING/REPORTING



If you do not have a certificate of completion on file, you need to complete the training at the above listed website before the end of September, print off your certificate and submit to Kim Yukon in Staff Development.

