

Students

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

The Board of Education recognizes that student's mental and physical health will have an effect on the student's ability to obtain the most benefit from attending school. In order to increase the student's ability to learn while in school, the Board of Education realizes the importance and legal responsibility of mandated reporters in identifying students who may be suffering from abuse.

Connecticut General Statutes 17a-101 has defined various school employees as mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are required to report if they suspect or believe that a child has been abused (CGS 17a-101) or may be abuse (CGS 17a-102). The reporting procedures will vary for mandated reporters depending upon whether the suspected abuse has been inflicted by a person responsible for the child or by a school employee.

The Board of Education will provide in-service training concerning the child abuse and neglect as required by state law.

Reporting of Alleged Child Abuse Inflicted by Person Responsible for Child

1. Suspected abuse believed to be caused by a person responsible for a child under the age of eighteen, in accordance with CGS 17a-101, as amended, requires a mandated reporter to report it orally within twelve hours, by telephone or in person to the Department of Children and Families or to the local or state police.
2. This is to be followed within 48 hours with a written report to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families and the local or state police. The Board directs mandated reporters to inform the building principal immediately after an oral report has been made and the principal in turn will notify the Superintendent of Schools.
3. The report shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents, if known, age of child, the nature and extent of his/her injuries, together with any evidence of previous injury or maltreatment to the child or his/her siblings, and the name of the person suspected to have caused injury or maltreatment and any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury or injuries and protecting the child.

Students

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Reporting of Alleged Child Abuse Inflicted by School Employee

As the result of increased awareness of child abuse in our society, CGS 17a-101 requires mandated reporters to report child abuse by school employees.

1. In cases where the mandated reporter suspects or believes such injury has been inflicted by a school employee, he/she shall immediately inform the Superintendent of Schools.
2. The Superintendent shall immediately make an oral report by telephone or otherwise to the Commissioner of Children and Families and the local police department or the state police.
3. This oral report is to be followed within 48 hours with a written report to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or his/her representative, the local or state police, and, in the case of a report concerning a certified school employee, the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative.
4. The report shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents, if known, age of child, the nature and extent of his/her injuries, together with any evidence of previous injury or maltreatment to the child or his/her siblings, and the name of the school employee suspected or believed to have caused injury or maltreatment and any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury or injuries and protecting the child.
5. The Superintendent is obligated to immediately begin the investigation of the report with the Department of Children and Families. The Superintendent may request assistance from the local police or state police in the investigation.
6. If the Superintendent finds evidence of child abuse by a school employee, he/she must immediately notify the child's parent/guardian, the local or state police, the Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her representative, and, in the case of an investigation of a certified school employee, the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative.
7. When an investigation produces such evidence, and the employee in question is in a position requiring a certificate, the Superintendent may suspend the certified employee with pay and without termination of benefits, provided he/she notifies the Board of Education of the reasons for the suspension within 72 hours thereafter.
8. The suspension remains in effect until the Board takes acts pursuant to CGS 10-151 (Teacher Tenure Act).

Students

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Reporting of Alleged Child Abuse Inflicted by School Employee (continued)

9. The Superintendent must report suspected child abuse by a certified school employee to the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative. If the contract of employment of a certified school employee is terminated as a result of an investigation which reveals that child abuse has occurred, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education within 72 hours of such termination.

Identification of Problem

The following are indicators of possible abuse and neglect:

- A. Bruising, burns, injuries of suspicious origin
- B. Ongoing malnutrition
- C. Chronic illnesses
- D. Excessive absenteeism
- E. Sub-standard cleanliness
- F. Inadequate clothing
- G. Excessive cuts, scrapes, and broken bones
- H. Any mention by the student or others of episodes of physical or sexual abuse as well as neglect including lack of supervision
- I. Gross neglect of child's physical needs
- J. Lack of medical treatment for the sick child.

Students

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect (continued)

Emergency Health Care and Reasonable Inquiry

When reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected exists or when a child has a visible injury, school personnel may take reasonable inquiry of a child regarding such suspicion or visible injury.

School personnel, except for a school nurse or a School Medical Advisor, may not remove or insist that a child remove clothing to confirm suspected cause or neglect, except in those circumstances where immediate action is required or in the case of apparent need for emergency medical treatment. A School Medical Advisor or school nurse may request that a child remove clothing when the following condition exists:

1. A child has identified a particular injury, the extent of which can only be determined by removing the child's clothing, and
2. The examination is necessary to determine whether medical attention is required and not merely to confirm suspected abuse, and
3. The request is made in such a manner that the child clearly understands that compliance with the request is optional and that no adverse consequences will result from a refusal to comply.

Investigation of Reports of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect in the School Setting

As part of the investigative process, the DCF social worker and social work supervisor may determine, based upon the nature of the referral, that an interview with the child needs to be conducted in the school setting. Interviewing in the school setting will be limited to emergency situations such as the following:

1. There is probable cause to believe that a suspected child abuse/neglect victim is in need of emergency medical services; or
2. A child, who is a suspected sexual abuse victim will return upon leaving school to the care of the suspected perpetrator; or
3. There is probable cause to believe that a suspected abuse victim will be in imminent danger if returned home.

Students

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect (continued)

Investigation of Reports of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect in the School Setting (continued)

School personnel who believe that an interview in the school setting may be necessary in order to protect the child, must notify DCF as early in the day as possible to provide both DCF and the education agency ample time to coordinate activities and actions as may be appropriate. Upon receipt of such notice, DCF will advise school personnel whether the child must be interviewed in the school.

If school personnel decide to retain the child after the scheduled school day in order to ensure that DCF or local or state police be involved, school personnel must attempt to notify the parents of the child.

DCF shall be solely responsible for notifying the parent of the interview, if such notification has not already taken place. DCF shall also be responsible for notifying the parent of any activities or actions taken by DCF following the interview.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order. (as amended by PA 96-246, PA 00-220, PA 02-106 and PA 03-168)

17a-102 Report of danger of abuse.

17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse/neglect.

Policy adopted: October 23, 1995
Policy revised: December 10, 2007

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut

REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

DCF-136
10/01/02 (Rev)



HOTLINE
1-800-842-2288

Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a written report (DCF-136) to the Hotline. See the reverse side of this form for a summary of Connecticut law concerning the protection of children.

Please print or type

CHILD'S NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	AGE OR BIRTH DATE
CHILD'S ADDRESS		
NAME OF PARENTS OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD'S CARE	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
WHERE IS THE CHILD STAYING PRESENTLY IF NOT AT HOME?	PHONE NUMBER	DATE PROBLEM(S) NOTED
NAME OF HOTLINE WORKER TO WHOM ORAL REPORT WAS MADE	DATE OF ORAL REPORT	DATE AND TIME OF SUSPECTED ABUSE/NEGLECT
NAME OF SUSPECTED PERPETRATOR, IF KNOWN	ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER, IF KNOWN	RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE CHILD'S INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT.

INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY PREVIOUS INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT OF THE CHILD OR HIS/HER SIBLINGS.

LIST NAMES AND AGES OF SIBLINGS, IF KNOWN.

DESCRIBE THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT CAME TO BE KNOWN TO THE REPORTER.

WHAT ACTION, IF ANY, HAS BEEN TAKEN TO TREAT, PROVIDE SHELTER OR OTHERWISE ASSIST THE CHILD?

REPORTER'S NAME AND AGENCY	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
REPORTER'S SIGNATURE	POSITION	DATE

WHITE COPY: TO DCF HOTLINE, 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106

YELLOW COPY: REPORTER'S COPY

SUMMARY OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

PUBLIC POLICY OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

To protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary; and for these purposes to require the reporting of suspected child abuse, investigation of such reports by a social agency, and provision of services, where needed, to such child and family.

WHO IS MANDATED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

Battered Women's Counselors	Optometrists
Chiropractors	Parole Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
Dental Hygienists	Pharmacists
Dentists	Physical Therapists
Department of Children and Families Employees	Physician Assistants
Licensed/Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors	Podiatrists
Licensed/Certified Emergency Medical Services Providers	Police Officers
Licensed Marital and Family Therapists	Probation Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Interns	Psychologists
Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Physicians	Registered Nurses
Licensed Physicians	School Coaches
Licensed Practical Nurses	School Guidance Counselors
Licensed Professional Counselors	School Paraprofessionals
Licensed Surgeons	School Principals
Medical Examiners	School Teachers
Members of the Clergy	Sexual Assault Counselors
Mental Health Professionals	Social Workers

Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.

Department of Public Health employees responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps.
The Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate.

DO THOSE MANDATED TO REPORT INCUR LIABILITY?

No. Any person, institution or agency which, in good faith, makes or does not make a report, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability provided such person did not perpetrate or cause such abuse or neglect.

IS THERE A PENALTY FOR NOT REPORTING?

Yes. Any person, institution or agency required to report who fails to do so shall be fined \$500.00 - \$2,500.00 and shall be required to participate in an educational and training program.

IS THERE A PENALTY FOR MAKING A FALSE REPORT?

Yes. Any person, institution or agency who knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be fined not more than \$2,000.00 or imprisoned not more than one year or both. The identity of such person shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

- An oral report shall be made by a mandated reporter by telephone or in person to the DCF Hotline or to a law enforcement agency as soon as practicable, but not later than 12 hours after the mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm. If a law enforcement agency receives an oral report, it shall immediately notify Hotline. Oral reports to the Hotline shall be recorded on tape.
- Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a written report to the DCF Hotline.
- When the report concerns an employee of a facility or institution which is licensed by the State, the mandated reporter shall also send a copy of the written report to the executive head of the state licensing agency.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child Abuse: any child or youth who has a non-accidental physical injury, or injuries which are at variance with the history given of such injuries, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

Child Neglect: any child or youth who has been abandoned or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being.

Exception: The treatment of any child by an accredited Christian Science practitioner shall not of itself constitute neglect or maltreatment.

Child Under 13 with Venereal Disease: a physician or facility must report to Hotline upon the consultation, examination or treatment for venereal disease of any child not more than twelve (12) years old.

DO PRIVATE CITIZENS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING?

Yes. Any person having reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child or youth under the age of eighteen (18) is in danger of being abused or has been abused or neglected, may cause a written or oral report to be made to the Hotline or a law enforcement agency. A person making the report in good faith is also immune from any liability, civil or criminal. However, the person is subject to the penalty for making a false claim.

WHAT IS THE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF)?

All children's protective services are the responsibility of the Department of Children and Families.

Upon the receipt of a child abuse/neglect report, the Hotline shall cause the report to be classified, evaluated immediately and forwarded to the appropriate investigation unit for the commencement of an investigation within timelines specified by statute and policy.

If the investigation produces evidence of child abuse/neglect, the Department shall take such measures as it deems necessary to protect the child, and any other children similarly situated, including, but not limited to, immediate notification to the appropriate law enforcement agency, and the removal of the child or children from his home with the consent of the parents or guardian or by order of the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters.

If the Department has probable cause to believe that the child or any other child in the household is in imminent risk of physical harm from his surroundings, and that immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, the Commissioner or designee shall authorize any employee of the Department or any law enforcement officer to remove the child and any other child similarly situated from such surroundings without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. The removal of a child shall not exceed ninety-six (96) hours. If the child is not returned home within such ninety-six hour period, with or without protective services, the Department shall file a petition for custody with the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters.

WHAT MEANS ARE AVAILABLE FOR REMOVING A CHILD FROM HIS HOME?

- 96-Hour Hold by the Commissioner of DCF (see above)
- 96-Hour Hold by a Hospital – Any physician examining a child with respect to whom abuse or neglect is suspected shall have the right to keep such child in the custody of a hospital for no longer than ninety-six hours in order to perform diagnostic tests and procedures necessary to the detection of child abuse or neglect and to provide necessary medical care with or without the consent of such child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care, provided the physician has made reasonable attempts to (1) advise such child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care. In addition, such physician may take or cause to be taken photographs of the area of trauma visible on a child who is the subject of such report without the consent of such child's parent's or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care. All such photographs or copies thereof shall be sent to the local police department and the Department of Children and Families.
- Custody Order – Whenever any person is arrested and charged with an offense under Section 53-20 or 53-21 or under Part V, VI, or VII of Chapter 952, as amended, the victim of which offense was a minor residing with the defendant, any judge of the Superior Court may, if it appears that the child's condition or circumstances surrounding his case so require, issue an order to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families to assume immediate custody of such child and, if the circumstances so require, any other children residing with the defendant and to proceed thereon as in cases reported.

WHAT IS THE CHILD ABUSE CENTRAL REGISTRY?

The Department of Children and Families maintains a registry of reports received and permits its use on a twenty-four hour daily basis to prevent or discover child abuse of children. Required confidentiality is ensured.

DCF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT HOTLINE: 1-800-842-2288

STATUTORY REFERENCES: §17a-28; §17a-101 et. seq.; §46b-120.