

# A TEXAS EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

## FACULTY RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- You have the right and responsibility to report suspected abuse or neglect free of fear, intimidation, or regret.
- Your report of child abuse or neglect is confidential and immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in “good faith” and “without malice.”
- Education professionals may not delegate the duty to report suspected abuse or neglect to any other person.
- Individuals making reports of suspected abuse or neglect are not required by law to first report the suspicion to a peer, colleague, or supervisor.
- If you request that your identity be kept confidential, DFPS may not reveal your identity to the child’s parents, to alleged perpetrators, or to others without consent or a court order. However, they may disclose your identity to the district attorney or law enforcement if the case requires further investigation.
- When responding to an outcry, let the child use his or her own words to tell you what happened, but leave the detailed questioning to the professionals. This is critical to ensuring the integrity of any investigation and minimizing additional trauma to the child.

## ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- You have the same rights and responsibilities as faculty members.
- Ensure all personnel are formally trained on an annual basis and prepared to deal with suspected abuse.
- There are steps you can take to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the reporter.
  - Do not discuss the report or the reporter.
  - You are not required to disclose knowledge of a report to a parent or caregiver. If asked, it may be easier to deny any knowledge of the report.
  - CPS or law enforcement may visit your campus during the course of an investigation. Avoid the use of public media, i.e., intercoms to notify the appropriate staff.
  - Establish a known, private location within your campus where both reporters and/or students can confidentially meet with CPS or law enforcement.

**If a child is in immediate danger, call 911**

**Statewide Intake 24/7 – 1.800.252.5400**  
**[www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)**

## HOW TO RESPOND IF A CHILD REVEALS ABUSE OR NEGLECT

- Remain calm.
- Always believe the child, but do not make promises.
- Assure the child that he/she did the right thing and is not to blame for the abuse.
- Let the child tell you about the experience, but leave questioning to authorities.
- Report the abuse to CPS or law enforcement within 48 hours.
- Out of the presence of the child, make notes about the child’s language/demeanor in the event you are asked for a statement at a later time.
- To learn more about the signs and symptoms of abuse and to find your local children’s advocacy centers, visit [www.onewithcourage.org](http://www.onewithcourage.org) or [www.cactx.org](http://www.cactx.org)

