

Orientation for School Volunteers



Sixes
Elementary
School

Purpose of School Volunteers

- To provide guidance and encouragement to students
- To share knowledge to help enrich academics
- To follow all procedures of the school, district and state
- To be consistent and committed
- To have fun!

Guidelines for Volunteers

- Always sign in & wear tag. We require our staff to challenge anyone who is not a staff member and/or who is not properly identified.
- If there is a school problem, refer it to a school staff member. It is our job to solve school problems
- If you see or hear students do or say things that are inappropriate, let a teacher or administrator know. Please do not attempt to solve the problem yourself.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries within/outside of school (including social media).

Guidelines for Volunteers

- As a classroom volunteer, make sure your presence is as unobtrusive as possible. Teachers need help, but a volunteer who doesn't follow directions becomes an added burden rather than a support.
- If you have concerns, write down your concerns and give it to Administration.
- Have a good time! Filling our school with happy volunteers makes Sixes a better place to teach and learn!

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

- O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 requires ALL employees and volunteers who work with children to report suspected abuse or neglect of children.
- Inclusion of volunteers as mandated reporters is a change in the law. This change took effect July 1, 2012.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

- Must have reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused.
- Immunity from civil or criminal liability if the report of suspected abuse is made in good faith.
- Guilty of a misdemeanor if any mandated reporter knowingly and willfully fails to report a case of suspected child abuse.

Four Types of Abuse

- Physical injury inflicted upon a child that is non-accidental
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse/exploitation of a child
- Emotional/verbal abuse

Physical Abuse

- Most visible form of abuse
- Patterned bruises or bruises in the shape of objects
- Bitemarks, scratches, welts, burns
- Unexplained fractures

Neglect

- Neglect is the most common form of child abuse
- Constant fatigue/falling asleep in class
- Hoarding or stealing food
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing for the weather
- Frequent absences

Neglect

****Neglect is a PATTERN of unmet needs over a period of time. Neglect is NOT an isolated incident. When considering suspected neglect, we should be sensitive that not all families have the same access or knowledge of resources.**

Sexual Abuse

- Most commonly perpetuated by an individual known to the victim. Offender is rarely a stranger.
- One third of all sexual abuse is perpetrated by another child
- Includes *touching* offenses (i.e.. fondling, sodomy and rape) as well as *non-touching* offenses (i.e. child prostitution, indecent exposure and use of internet for exploitation).

Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Play behavior with sexual overtones
- Advanced knowledge of sexual activity
- Sudden fear of people, places or specific activities
- Sudden changes in patterns of behavior or socialization

Emotional/Verbal Abuse

- Excessive or aggressive parental behavior that places unreasonable demands on a child.
- Frequently occurs as verbal abuse, but can include rejection, shameful punishments, withholding physical and emotional contact, and developmentally inappropriate expectations.
- Usually not an isolated incident, but a pattern that occurs over time.

Emotional/Verbal Abuse

- Habit disorders
- Antisocial or destructive behavior
- Behavior extremes
- Developmental delays

What if a Child Discloses?

- Stay calm-do not act visibly upset
- Do not ask leading questions
- Praise the child for the courage it took to tell you
- Do not make promises to the child (NEVER promise to keep a secret).
- REPORT information immediately

Procedure for Reporting

- Report any suspicion of abuse immediately to one of the following:
 - *Dr. Kennerly
 - *Mrs. Bartlett
 - *Ms. McKechnie
 - *Mr. Gunter
 - *Ms. Hayes
- Once you have made the report, you have satisfied your responsibility under Georgia Law.

Procedure for Reporting

- School personnel is not allowed to provide you with any follow up information about the case.
- Keep all information about the child confidential! (**do not** discuss the incident with other teachers, parents or volunteers either in the school or in the community!)