

St. Mary's County Public Schools

Volunteer/Visitor

C.A.S.H

Child Abuse & Sexual Harassment

Training



CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

What child abuse can look like?

- Child abuse may present itself as physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental injury, and neglect

Physical abuse

- Indicators of physical abuse may include bruises, burns, welts, cuts, abrasions, and fractures or certain behaviors like overly compliant/aggressive, avoidance of care takers/physical contact, distrustful, easily frustrated, and crying

Sexual child abuse

- Involves children under the age of 18 and can include sexual molestation or exploitation of the child
- Behavioral indicators of sexual abuse may include unusual sexual behavior or knowledge, poor peer relationships/isolation, few social skills, depression, repeated runaways, nightmares

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Sexual child abuse (cont.)

- Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse may include difficulty walking or sitting, repeated medical problems with stomach or digestive system, diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy

Mental Abuse/Injury

- Mental abuse is the impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function. The Impairment must be observable, identifiable, and substantial

CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- If you suspect abuse you do not need to investigate but must report it. This is the LAW and includes ALL school employees, volunteers, and bus drivers. Students are under our care and supervision.
- As the reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect, you have legal protections.
- Protections of a reporter include immunity from civil or criminal penalty, and confidentiality. If you do not report, you are subject to professional and legal sanctions/actions that may include criminal (prosecuted as common law conspiracy and obstruction of justice)
- Possible offenders of child abuse or neglect may be a parent, legal guardian, or any person with temporary or permanent care, custody, or supervision of a child.

CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

When an employee is suspected of child abuse the reporter must:

- Notify your Site Administrator immediately.
- Notify the Department of Social Services (DSS) or Sheriff's Office (by phone) ASAP.
- Coordinate the reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect with your school principal or designee within 48 hours.
- The principal/site Administrator will notify the Chief of Safety and Security, and the police are notified.

**Staff/Student
Dating or Fraternization is
PROHIBITED**

by

**St. Mary's County Public Schools'
Policies and Regulations**

FINAL COMMENTS

RELATIONSHIPS

- Relationships between volunteers/visitors and students should be professional at all times, and one of cooperation, understanding, and mutual respect.

FRATERNIZATION

- Volunteers and visitors should NOT engage in interactions with students that rise to the level of fraternization, engage in non-school related communications with students, including electronic communications unless under the supervision of the parents/legal guardians.
- Communicating with students on social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter is prohibited under SMCPS' policy.

FINAL COMMENTS

REMEMBER

- No dating or fraternization with students under any circumstance!
- Students are under our care and protection

WARNING

- You could can lose your approval status as volunteer
- Inappropriate interactions with students will be reported to authorities for investigation

FINAL COMMENTS

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Governed by the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- All student records are sensitive in nature
- Some records are more sensitive than others such as discipline records, treatment for alcohol/drugs and child abuse and neglect reporting forms are not kept in the students' record
- All student records are protected by FERPA.
- Protect Students' Privacy
- Student information may only be released with expressed written permission by parents/legal guardians.
- Educators must have a need to know to access identified student information.
- All conversations about students must be for professional reasons only and in appropriate locations.

FINAL COMMENTS

AN SMCPS VOLUNTEER'S LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect,
- Reporting Sexual Harassment,
- Maintaining Student Confidentiality-Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA),
- Admitting Homeless Students, and
- Reporting Delinquent and Gang Related Acts.

