



HELPFUL HINTS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

1. Call the County Child Protective Services (CPS) hotline at 707-565-4304 or 1-800-870-7064 immediately if you suspect abuse or neglect of a child or children. As soon as you suspect abuse or neglect, the law requires you to call the hotline, allowing for CPS to make a timely and appropriate response. Delays can create unnecessary safety issues for the child.
2. The Reporting Party (RP) should be the person who directly spoke to the child or who has first-hand information about the family situation. The CPS screener will ask multiple questions of the RP. Be prepared.
3. Provide as much identifying info as possible (dates of birth of family members, address, phone numbers, etc.).
4. Keep in mind specific quotes from the child: where the abuse occurred, the description of the child's injuries, the abuse timelines, the whereabouts of perpetrator (s), whether there is a protective parent available and other details will be helpful.
5. Avoid direct questions. Allow the child to talk freely. Information you provide to the hotline should be based on the facts presented. Do not make assumptions or draw your own conclusions.
6. Relate how the family dynamics or parent's behavior directly results in neglect or abuse to child (i.e., a parent can suffer from a mental health condition or have a drug problem, but how does it impact the child's safety, cause injury or result in neglect issues?).
7. The Department's response is based on an assessment tool and child welfare laws. A Mandated Reporter will receive a verbal or written response that indicates the outcome of the referral. CPS is bound by confidentiality laws and will not disclose the RP information to the family.
8. By law (PC Section 111666(a)), a report is not complete until the mandated reporter completes a Suspected Child Abuse Report (SCAR), that can be downloaded at http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf. And faxed to 707-565-4399.