REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

RICE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

OVERVIEW

- Who should Report?
- When to Report?
- Where to Report?
- What happens with the information?
- Child Protection Process

WHO SHOULD REPORT?

- **Voluntary Reporters**
  - *Any person who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been abused or neglected is encouraged to report their concerns.*
- **Mandated Reporters**
  - If you're a professional who works with children & families, you are in a position to help protect children.
    - Minnesota law requires professionals who work with children to make a child protection report if they know or have reason to believe:
      - A child is being neglected or abused, or
      - A child has been neglected or abused within the preceding three years.

MANDATED REPORTERS

- Health Care Professionals
- Social Services
- Mental Health Professionals
- Child Care
- Education
  - Teachers / Assistants / Admin / Support Staff
- Law Enforcement
- Probation / Corrections
- Guardian ad Litem
- Anyone trained to work with children/families
- *Clergy (unless received under privileged circumstances)

MANDATED REPORTERS

- **YOU must make the report**
  - If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you cannot shift the responsibility to a supervisor or another person. You are required to report.

- **Immune from Civil Liability / Confidentiality**
  - Anyone who reports child abuse or neglect in good faith is immune from civil liability.
  - The reporter's name is confidential.

WHEN DO I REPORT?

- **Reports of child abuse or neglect must be made immediately.**
- Verbally within 24 hours.
- A written report must be submitted within 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays)
- ricecochildandfamily@co.rice.mn.us

WHERE DO I REPORT?

- Child Protection Unit @ Social Services when alleged offender is:
  - Parent/Guardian
  - Child care provider
  - Foster parent
  - Unlicensed personal care provider/organization
  - Trafficking / Exploiting children
    - Family relationship is not a factor in these situations

WHERE DO I REPORT?

- **MN Department of Human Services – Licensing**
  - 651.431.6600 (staff @ most DHS licensed facilities)
- **MN Department of Health**
  - 800.369.7994 (staff @ medical facilities)
- **MN Department of Education**
  - 651.634.2277 (school personnel)
- **Local Law Enforcement**
  - 507.334.4305 (Faribault Police Department)
  - 507.334.4391 (Rice County Sheriff)
    - Non-familial, not in a licensed facility (babysitter, athletic club staff, random/unknown individuals)

WHEN IN DOUBT…

- If you are unsure about who to call or if your concern is something that should be reported, contact:
  - **Child Protection at Rice County Social Services**
    - Rice County Social Services:
      - 507.332.6115 > Select 1 > Select 3 > Select 1
    - SUPERVISORS: 507.332.6269 or 507.332.6419

- *We will take information and make sure it is sent to the proper department.*

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Intake worker will gather information from you
  - Your name, contact information, relationship to child/family
  - Where is the child now? Immediate danger?
  - Description of what happened and when
  - Injuries? - Present condition of the child
  - Parents / Guardians: names, addresses, contact information
  - Any witnesses? Any siblings?
  - Any additional information you have about the child/family that may be helpful
  - Resources available to the family?
    - Relatives, Programs, Your capacity to help

CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITY

- Receive and screen reports of maltreatment
  - Screening Guidelines
- Assess or investigate when threshold is met
  - Two Tracks
- Provide ongoing child protective and family support services as needed.
  - Individualized / Family Strengths and Needs

- *If you receive more information after making a report, call Child Protection right away to provide new information.*

TWO TRACKS

- **Investigative Response** – Determination Required
  - Substantial Child Endangerment
  - Law Enforcement
  - Egregious Harm
  - High Risk Neglect
  - Sexual Abuse
- **Family Assessment Response** – No Determination
  - No Egregious Harm
  - No Substantial Endangerment
  - Family Centered / Strength-Based
  - Can be changed to Investigative, if necessary

FAMILY PRESERVATION

- Must work to prevent out-of-home placement
- If placement becomes necessary – relatives considered first
  - Primary Goal is always family reunification
- Only Law Enforcement or Court Order can remove children from their parent(s)

LEARNING THE OUTCOME

- **Mandated Reporter**
  - Shall receive notice of whether your report was accepted for assessment/investigation
  - Shall receive a summary of the disposition of the report (unless it would be detrimental to the child)
    - Social Worker's Name
    - Agency's Determination
    - Nature of Maltreatment
    - Whether Ongoing Services are Needed
- **Voluntary Reporter**
  - Whether report was accepted
  - Summary if requested

HELPFUL LINKS

- Rice County Child Protection web page:
  - http://www.co.rice.mn.us/362/Child-Welfare-Family-Protection
- Minnesota Child Maltreatment Screening Guidelines
  - https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5144-ENG
- Rice County Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Form (PDF)
  - http://www.co.rice.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/1068
- Resource Guide for Mandated Reporters of Child Maltreatment Concerns
  - https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-2917-ENG

QUESTIONS?

- Contact Information:
- **Rice County Child Protection**:
  - Office Number: **507.332.6115**
    - **Select 1 > Select 3 > Select 1**

- **Suzi Nerison**, Supervisor
  - Child & Family Unit – Rice County Social Services
  - 507.332.6269
  - snerison@co.rice.mn.us
- **Chris Davis**, Supervisor
  - Child & Family Unit – Rice County Social Services
  - 507.332.6419
  - cdavis@co.rice.mn.us