

Child Abuse or Neglect Prevention

Reporting Responsibilities

The following procedures are to be used in reporting instances of suspected child abuse or neglect, including exploitation:

1. When there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect, including exploitation, the staff member who has formed the reasonable cause will personally contact the nearest office of the Washington State Department of Child, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Child Protective Services (1-866-END-HARM / 1-866-363-4276) and/or the Longview Police Department or Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office. The report will be made at the first opportunity, but in no case later than 48 hours after the staff member forms reasonable cause to believe a child has suffered abuse or neglect. "First opportunity" means as soon as the staff member can reasonably do so; the 48-hour outer limit is not permission to wait. The legal authority has the responsibility of determining whether abuse or neglect occurred; the staff member need not, and should not, investigate before reporting.
2. After making the report to DCYF and/or law enforcement, the staff member will, as soon as reasonably practicable after making the external report, notify their supervisor or the superintendent or their designee that a report has been made so that the District may document the report and provide appropriate support to the student. This internal notification does not satisfy the staff member's personal statutory reporting duty, which is discharged only by the staff member's own direct report to DCYF and/or law enforcement.
3. If the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that the principal, an assistant principal, the superintendent, or another administrator is the alleged abuser, or has reasonable cause to believe that the alleged abuse has not been or will not be reported by a supervisor or co-worker, the staff member will make the report directly to DCYF and/or law enforcement as described in the first paragraph above and will not notify the alleged actor. The staff member will promptly notify the superintendent of the report; if the alleged actor is the superintendent, the staff member will notify the Board President or, if unavailable, the Vice President.
4. No staff member or administrator may direct, instruct, request, suggest, encourage, or pressure any other employee to refrain from, delay, omit, modify, or limit a report required by RCW 26.44.030 or by this procedure. Any such direction must be disregarded; the receiving employee will make the report directly to DCYF and/or law enforcement, and will also promptly report the direction received to the superintendent (or to the Board President if the direction came from the superintendent). Retaliation against an employee who reports, cooperates in an investigation, or refuses to comply with such a direction is prohibited under Policy 5241.

5. When there is reasonable cause to believe that a student or school employee has engaged in sexual abuse toward a student, as defined in Policy 3421, the reporting staff member will notify the District's Title IX Coordinator in addition to performing all other reporting obligations under this procedure. Notification of the Title IX Coordinator does not satisfy or discharge the staff member's individual statutory reporting duty under RCW 26.44.030 or the parental-notification requirement under RCW 26A.320.160. The Title IX Coordinator will coordinate with the superintendent or designee to ensure that any potential Title IX investigation under Board Policy 3205 and Procedure 3205P proceeds in parallel with, and does not interfere with, law-enforcement and DCYF processes.
6. A written report will be submitted promptly to the agency to which the oral report was made, if requested by the agency. The report will include, to the extent known:
 - a. The name, address, and age of the child.
 - b. The name and address of the child's parents, stepparents, guardians, or other persons having custody of the child.
 - c. The nature and extent of the alleged injury or injuries.
 - d. The nature and extent of the alleged neglect.
 - e. The nature and extent of the alleged sexual abuse.
 - f. Any evidence of previous injuries, including their nature and extent.
 - g. Any other information that may be helpful in establishing the cause of the child's death, injury, or injuries and the identity of the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators. Such information may include, but is not limited to, siblings and/or other members of the home; and the identity, if known, of the person accused of inflicting the abuse or neglect.
7. When the District receives a report that a school employee has committed an act of sexual misconduct, it will notify the parents or guardians of the alleged victim immediately. The notice will include information about the parents' or guardians' rights under the Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW, to request public records regarding school employee discipline.
8. When the alleged conduct involves a certificated school employee, the superintendent or designee will, in addition to any law-enforcement and DCYF reporting, make the reports required by RCW 28A.410.090 and Chapter 181-87 WAC to the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Office of Professional Practices (OPP), within the timelines specified in those provisions. The superintendent will maintain a record of all such reports and follow-up correspondence.
9. The District will maintain documentation of each report made under this procedure, including the date and time of the report, the agency or agencies contacted, the name of the reporter, and a brief description of the conduct reported. Documentation will be

maintained in a manner consistent with RCW 26.44.030(11) (confidentiality of reporter identity) and retained per the District's records retention schedule. Training records demonstrating each employee's completion of the training required by RCW 28A.400.317 and by Policy 3421 will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

Abuse Indicators

The following lists are illustrative, not exhaustive. The presence of one or more indicators does not establish abuse or neglect, and the absence of indicators does not negate it. When a staff member has reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect has occurred or is at risk, the staff member must report—regardless of whether any listed indicator is present.

Physical abuse indicators:

1. Bilateral bruises, extensive bruises, bruises of different ages, patterns of bruises caused by a particular instrument (belt buckle, wire, straight edge, coat hanger, etc.) or unreasonable use of force (grabbing, pinching, dragging, and/or other unapproved forms of restraint).
2. Burn patterns consistent with forced immersion in a hot liquid (a distinct boundary line where the burn stops), burn patterns consistent with a spattering by hot liquids, patterns caused by a particular kind of implement (electric iron, etc.) or instrument (circular cigarette burns, etc.).
3. Lacerations, welts, abrasions.
4. Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child.
5. Injuries inconsistent with the child's age.
6. Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation.

Emotional Abuse Indicators:

1. Lags in physical development.
2. Extreme behavior disorder.
3. Fearfulness of adults or authority figures.
4. Revelations of highly inappropriate adult behavior, i.e., being enclosed in a dark closet, forced to drink or eat inedible items.

Sexual Abuse Indicators

Sexual abuse, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, is any act or acts involving intentional sexual contact, conduct or communication with a child, including conduct occurring

through electronic, online, or social-media communications. Beyond direct evidence of this kind of abuse, indicators may include but are not limited to:

1. A child's developmentally inappropriate sexual conduct, regardless of the child's own mental status or development.
2. Child engaging in "sex talk", drawing, or attempting to access, send, or solicit pornographic or sexually explicit material.
3. Child's disclosure of "grooming behavior" or inappropriate conduct that does not necessarily rise to a specific sexual act, including any disclosure that an adult has sought private contact, gift-giving, or communications outside ordinary school channels.
4. An adult's attempt to form a secret or unreasonably special relationship with a child, including private direct messaging, off-platform communications, or contact outside school hours not authorized by the parent and the District.
5. Sexually transmitted infection in a child of any age.
6. Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital or anal areas.
7. Pregnancy.

Physical Neglect Indicators

1. Lack of basic needs (food, clothing, safety, shelter).
2. Inadequate supervision.
3. Lack of essential health care and high incidence of illness.
4. Poor hygiene on a regular basis.
5. Inappropriate clothing in inclement weather.
6. Abandonment.

Some Behavioral Indicators of Abuse:

1. Wary of adult contact.
2. Frightened of parents.
3. Afraid to go home.
4. Habitually truant or late to school.
5. Arrives at school early and remains after school later than other students.

6. Wary of physical contact by adults.
7. Shows evidence of overall poor care.
8. Parents or caretakers describe child as “difficult” or “bad.”
9. Inappropriately dressed for the weather—no coat or shoes in cold weather or long sleeves and high necklines in hot weather (possibly hiding marks of abuse).
10. Exhibits behavioral extremes: crying often or never, unusually aggressive or withdrawn and fearful.

Note: Indicators in and of themselves do not necessarily prove that abuse, neglect, or exploitation has occurred. However, they still may warrant a referral to DCYF or law enforcement. When in doubt, staff should make the report; the duty under RCW 26.44.030 is triggered by reasonable cause, not by certainty, and any doubt about the child’s condition is to be resolved in favor of making the report.

Child abuse as defined by the statutes can be inflicted by any person and may include student-on-student abuse. These cases also require reporting to DCYF or law enforcement.

Reporting Contacts

DCYF Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-866-END-HARM (1-866-363-4276), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Longview Police Department: (360) 442-5800 (non-emergency); 911 (emergency).

Cowlitz County Sheriff’s Office: (360) 577-3092 (non-emergency); 911 (emergency).

District Title IX Coordinator: Bill Ofstun, Director of Assessment, CTE, and Instructional Technology, (360) 575-7012

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