



California — Recognizing, Reporting and Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (Ethical Reporter Version)

WHERE TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE

Inside the Family: Call your county Child Protective Services.

Outside the Family: Call your local police or sheriff.

Child in Immediate Risk/Danger: Call your local police or sheriff.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM

Get free and anonymous help 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.



Childhelp® National Child Abuse
Hotline: 800-4-A-Child (800-422-4453)
www.childhelp.org/get_help

Quick Reference Guide



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A service of LawRoom in support
of the Safe Environment for
Children Program

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT ABUSE?

What To Teach Children

- ▶ how to say "no" to abuse
- ▶ how to run away from abusers
- ▶ how to recognize potential abusers
- ▶ how to report suspicious people
- ▶ how to seek help from safe adults
- ▶ not to accept gifts without their parents' knowledge



What to Warn Them About Online Usage

- ▶ clarify permitted and forbidden websites
- ▶ be aware of the dangers of online predators
- ▶ do not reveal personal information online
- ▶ do not engage in "private chats" online
- ▶ do not meet online friends in person without parent's permission
- ▶ alert parent if they're contacted online by a stranger
- ▶ people on the Internet can lie about themselves

What to Watch Out For

- ▶ adults more interested in youth activities than adult activities
- ▶ adults giving gifts to unrelated children
- ▶ changes in the child's behavior

What You Should Do

- ▶ participate in their lives daily
- ▶ know where they are at all times and with whom
- ▶ enhance their confidence
- ▶ listen to what they say
- ▶ discourage them from being alone with unrelated adults
- ▶ consult Megan's Law website
- ▶ ensure multiple adult supervisors at youth events
- ▶ keep computer in family room



- ▶ monitor the websites they visit
- ▶ join them online
- ▶ learn about or meet their online friends
- ▶ be the "administrator" on the computer
- ▶ insist on having their account passwords
- ▶ install software to limit website access

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Is an act that causes or threatens to cause non-accidental and unnecessary harm to a child.

It does **not** include:

- parents disciplining their child using reasonable, age appropriate, physical force that does not expose the child to serious injury.
- a "mutual fight" between minors.
- necessary force used by peace officers.
- necessary force used by public school staff to obtain a weapon from a student, or to control a violent or dangerous situation.

Sexual Abuse

- **Sexual Assault:** sex acts and attempts, incest, touching a child – even over clothing - for purposes of sexual gratification, or having a child sexually touch another person.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** preparing, selling or distributing child pornography, using a child for the sexual gratification of others, or child prostitution.
- **Molesting (annoying):** stalking, or exposing one's self to a child, soliciting a sexual act with a child, or photographing children against their wishes.

Emotional abuse

Occurs when a parent, guardian, or other significant adult withholds affection from a child and instead inflicts intentional and unjustifiable mental harm.

Neglect

Refers to a parent or guardian not meeting the child's basic physical, medical, educational, or emotional needs.

How Can I Recognize Child Abuse?

Any of the following physical, behavioral, parental, or environmental clues, alone or in combination, may give you cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected. **Suspicion is enough** to make a report!

PHYSICAL CLUES

- facial injuries (black eyes or swollen lips)
- multiple injuries in different stages of healing
- unattended medical problems or infections
- bite marks (animal or human)
- bruises or trauma on back, buttocks, or thighs
- repeated series of bruises or broken bones
- burns from objects, rope, or liquid
- pain or injury around genital area
- urinary tract infection
- sexually transmitted disease
- significant increase in physical complaints
- painful urination or defecation
- self-inflicted injuries (cuts or burns)
- signs of malnutrition (thin, fainting, hunger)
- extremely offensive body odor



BEHAVIORAL CLUES

- extreme anxiety, guilt, or shame
- unexplained crying
- difficulty sleeping or recurrent nightmares
- regressive behavior (acting much younger)
- clinginess or acting excessively responsible
- fear of certain adults
- extreme dependency on other adults
- increasing isolation and withdrawal
- running away from home
- depression or passivity
- increasing aggressiveness
- extreme anger and verbal abuse
- inappropriate sexual behavior
- dramatic change in school performance
- suicidal ideas
- substance abuse
- failure to bathe regularly
- excessive bathing
- inappropriate clothes for the weather
- filthy or unkempt clothes
- bedwetting

PARENTAL CLUES

- unwilling to provide for child's needs
- indifferent to child's condition or safety
- unable to explain child's injury
- gives improbable explanation for child's injury
- cannot describe anything positive about child
- constantly and angrily criticizes child
- states destructive thoughts about hurting child
- uses belt, or other object to discipline child
- discipline of child is impulsive or out-of-control
- expects child to serve or fulfill adult's needs
- describes child as "evil"
- has unrealistic expectations about child's development

ENVIRONMENTAL CLUES

- broken windows
- lack of utilities (heat, water, electricity)
- faulty electrical fixtures
- insects, mice, or rats
- spoiled food
- unsanitary kitchen
- garbage or hazards in the yard
- yelling or crying heard from outside





Why Make a Report?

In 2005, an estimated 899,000 children in the United States were found to be victims of child abuse or neglect. And by most estimates, this is a small percentage of the total actual abuse cases.

As a society, we're all responsible for protecting children.

Although you are not required by law to report suspected child abuse/neglect, you should report because everyone has an ethical duty to report child maltreatment.

Who are Permissive (Ethical) Reporters?

Permissive reporters are concerned citizens who encounter suspected child abuse or neglect and want to stop the maltreatment.

They are not persons who work in an occupation that requires them to report child abuse or neglect.

They may, but are not required to, file a report when they have a "reasonable suspicion" that a child is being abused or neglected.



YOUR PROTECTIONS

Permissive Reporters:

Immunity:

A reporter who fails to report suspected abuse/neglect, **cannot be held liable** for making a report, even if the report is wrong.

However, as a permissive reporter, you can be liable for making a false report if **you know** it's false.

Anonymity:

Permissive Reporters are **not** required to give their name when making a report. If they provide their name, it will not be released to anyone, except appropriate government officials.

Confidentiality:

Your name will **not** be released to anyone (other than governmental officials).

HOW DO I MAKE A REPORT?

- ▶ Do **not** "investigate" suspected child abuse/neglect in an attempt to prove it. Leave the investigation to the experts. All you need is **reasonable suspicion** to make a report, which can be based on a single incident or multiple factors.
- ▶ Once you suspect abuse, you should immediately call your local Child Protective Services for abuse committed by someone **inside** the family or your local police or sheriff for abuse committed by someone **outside** the family.
 - ****Don't worry** about calling the wrong agency. Each agency is required to transfer the report to the correct agency if you got it wrong. So, **make the call**. For the child's sake, it's always better to err on the side of reporting than not reporting.
- ▶ You will be asked to provide the following information when reporting: your address and telephone number; the name, address, and location of the child; and information about the abuse or neglect, the child's parents, and the suspected abuser (if known). You need not provide your name, but may volunteer it.
- ▶ Mail, fax, or electronically transmit a written report (Form SS 8572, attached) within 36 hours of your initial telephone report.

WHAT WILL CPS DO?

Child Protective Services will **perform an investigation** after receiving a report of suspected abuse or neglect.

Its response time will depend on its assessment of the danger to the child. Its goal is to **ensure the safety of the child** and to begin providing services and resources to the family.

However, if a child is in danger at home, the child will be removed to safety.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORT

To Be Completed by **Mandated Child Abuse Reporters**
Pursuant to Penal Code Section 11166

CASE NAME: _____

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

CASE NUMBER: _____

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|--|--|---|----------|--|
| A. REPORTING PARTY | NAME OF MANDATED REPORTER | | TITLE | | MANDATED REPORTER CATEGORY | | | |
| | REPORTER'S BUSINESS/AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS | | Street | City | Zip | DID MANDATED REPORTER WITNESS THE INCIDENT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | | |
| | REPORTER'S TELEPHONE (DAYTIME) () | | SIGNATURE | | TODAY'S DATE | | | |
| B. REPORT NOTIFICATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW ENFORCEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY PROBATION | | AGENCY | | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY WELFARE / CPS (Child Protective Services) | | ADDRESS | | City | Zip | | |
| | DATE/TIME OF PHONE CALL | | OFFICIAL CONTACTED - TITLE | | TELEPHONE () | | | |
| C. VICTIM One report per victim | NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | | | BIRTHDATE OR APPROX. AGE | | SEX | | |
| | ADDRESS | | | Street | City | Zip | | |
| | PRESENT LOCATION OF VICTIM | | | SCHOOL | | CLASS | | |
| | GRADE | | | PHYSICALLY DISABLED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | | DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | | |
| | OTHER DISABILITY (SPECIFY) | | | PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOME | | | | |
| | IN FOSTER CARE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | | | IF VICTIM WAS IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE AT TIME OF INCIDENT, CHECK TYPE OF CARE: <input type="checkbox"/> DAY CARE <input type="checkbox"/> CHILD CARE CENTER <input type="checkbox"/> FOSTER FAMILY HOME <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY FRIEND <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> GROUP HOME OR INSTITUTION <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVE'S HOME | | TYPE OF ABUSE (CHECK ONE OR MORE) <input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICAL <input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL <input type="checkbox"/> SEXUAL <input type="checkbox"/> NEGLECT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | | |
| RELATIONSHIP TO SUSPECT | | | PHOTOS TAKEN? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | | DID THE INCIDENT RESULT IN THIS VICTIM'S DEATH? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNK | | | |
| D. INVOLVED PARTIES | VICTIM'S SIBLINGS | | | | | | | |
| | NAME | | BIRTHDATE | SEX | ETHNICITY | NAME | | |
| | BIRTHDATE | | SEX | ETHNICITY | BIRTHDATE | | SEX | |
| | ETHNICITY | | 1. _____ | | 3. _____ | | 4. _____ | |
| | 2. _____ | | | | | | | |
| | VICTIM'S PARENTS/GUARDIANS | NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | | | BIRTHDATE OR APPROX. AGE | | SEX | |
| | | ADDRESS | | | Street | City | Zip | |
| | | HOME PHONE | | | BUSINESS PHONE | | | |
| | | () | | | () | | | |
| | PARENTS/GUARDIANS | NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | | | BIRTHDATE OR APPROX. AGE | | SEX | |
| ADDRESS | | | Street | City | Zip | | | |
| HOME PHONE | | | BUSINESS PHONE | | | | | |
| () | | | () | | | | | |
| SUSPECT | SUSPECT'S NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | | | BIRTHDATE OR APPROX. AGE | | SEX | | |
| | ADDRESS | | | Street | City | Zip | | |
| | TELEPHONE | | | () | | | | |
| OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION | | | | | | | | |
| E. INCIDENT INFORMATION | IF NECESSARY, ATTACH EXTRA SHEET(S) OR OTHER FORM(S) AND CHECK THIS BOX <input type="checkbox"/> IF MULTIPLE VICTIMS, INDICATE NUMBER: _____ | | | | | | | |
| | DATE / TIME OF INCIDENT | | PLACE OF INCIDENT | | | | | |
| | NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (What victim(s) said/what the mandated reporter observed/what person accompanying the victim(s) said/similar or past incidents involving the victim(s) or suspect) | | | | | | | |

DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF FORM SS 8572

All Penal Code (PC) references are located in Article 2.5 of the PC. This article is known as the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA). The provisions of CANRA may be viewed at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html> (specify .Penal Code. and search for Sections 11164-11174.3). A mandated reporter must complete and submit the form SS 8572 even if some of the requested information is not known. (PC Section 11167(a).)

I. MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

Mandated child abuse reporters include all those individuals and entities listed in PC Section 11165.7.

II. TO WHOM REPORTS ARE TO BE MADE ("DESIGNATED AGENCIES")

Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be made by mandated reporters to any police department or sheriff's department (not including a school district police or security department), the county probation department (if designated by the county to receive mandated reports), or the county welfare department. (PC Section 11165.9.)

III. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Any mandated reporter who has knowledge of or observes a child, in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect shall report such suspected incident of abuse or neglect to a designated agency immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone and shall prepare and send a written report thereof *within 36 hours* of receiving the information concerning the incident. (PC Section 11166(a).)

No mandated reporter who reports a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect shall be held civilly or criminally liable for any report required or authorized by CANRA. Any other person reporting a known or suspected incident of child abuse or neglect shall not incur civil or criminal liability as a result of any report authorized by CANRA unless it can be proven the report was false and the person knew it was false or made the report with reckless disregard of its truth or falsity. (PC Section 11172(a).)

IV. INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION A - REPORTING PARTY: Enter the mandated reporter's name, title, category (from PC Section 11165.7), business/agency name and address, daytime telephone number, and today's date. Check yes-no whether the mandated reporter witnessed the incident. The signature area is for either the mandated reporter or, if the report is telephoned in by the mandated reporter, the person taking the telephoned report.

ETHNICITY CODES

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Alaskan Native | 6 Caribbean | 11 Guamanian | 16 Korean | 21 Polynesian | 26 White-Armenian |
| 2 American Indian | 7 Central American | 12 Hawaiian | 17 Laotian | 22 Samoan | 27 White-Ctrl American |
| 3 Asian Indian | 8 Chinese | 13 Hispanic | 18 Mexican | 23 South American | 28 White-European |
| 4 Black | 9 Ethiopian | 14 Hmong | 19 Other Asian | 24 Vietnamese | 29 White-Middle Eastern |
| 5 Cambodian | 10 Filipino | 15 Japanese | 20 Other Pac Island | 25 White | 30 White-Romanian |

IV. INSTRUCTIONS (Continued)

SECTION B - REPORT NOTIFICATION: Complete the name and address of the designated agency notified, the date/time of the phone call, and the name, title, and telephone number of the official contacted.

SECTION C - VICTIM (One Report per Victim): Enter the victim's name, address, telephone number, birth date or approximate age, sex, ethnicity, present location, and, where applicable, enter the school, class (indicate the teacher's name or room number), and grade. List the primary language spoken in the victim's home. Check the appropriate yes-no box to indicate whether the victim may have a developmental disability or physical disability and specify any other apparent disability.

Check the appropriate yes-no box to indicate whether the victim is in foster care, and check the appropriate box to indicate the type of care if the victim was in out-of-home care. Check the appropriate box to indicate the type of abuse. List the victim's relationship to the suspect. Check the appropriate yes-no box to indicate whether photos of the injuries were taken. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether the incident resulted in the victim's death.

SECTION D - INVOLVED PARTIES: Enter the requested information for: Victim's Siblings, Parents/Guardians, and the Suspect. Attach extra sheets if needed (provide the requested information for each individual on the attached sheets).

SECTION E - INCIDENT INFORMATION: If multiple victims, indicate the number and submit a form for each victim. Enter date/time and place of the incident. Provide a narrative of the incident. Attach extra sheets if needed.

V. DISTRIBUTION

Reporting Party: After completing Form SS 8572, retain the yellow copy for your records and submit the top three copies to the designated agency.

Designated Agency: *Within 36 hours* of receipt of Form SS 8572, send **white copy** to police or sheriff's department, **blue copy** to county welfare or probation department, and **green copy** to district attorney's office.