

# NO EXCUSE FOR CHILD ABUSE

ALLIANCE OF  
SCHOOLS FOR  
COOPERATIVE  
INSURANCE  
PROGRAMS

ASCIP

## See Something Say Something

The phrase began as a response to terrorism, but is now used to encourage reporting of any act of violence or crime. "**See something, say something**" can help prevent child abuse and neglect as well.

The long-term negative impact to victims and their families involved in sexual abuse and molestation cases is substantial. When school staff abuse their authority and undermine student safety and trust, it also erodes confidence in public education and the school staff, plus subjects school districts to costly litigation. Headlines show incidents not only occurring between male adults and female minors, but also female adults with male minors, male on male or female on female. It has now grown far beyond school administrators and teachers.

It is critical that all district employees understand their roll as mandated reporters to report suspicious behavior, whether the abuse is suspected to occur at home, at school, or elsewhere.

It is also important for School employees to help each other to maintain appropriate boundaries.

## Helping to Keep Schools Safe!

### Warning Signs of Abuse or Neglect

The first step in helping abused or neglected children is identifying signs. The following are examples of warning signs of potential abuse (emotional, physical, neglect or sexual):

- Frequent injuries or unexplained bruises, welts, cuts; wearing inappropriate clothing to cover up
- Frequently late or missing school
- Trouble walking or sitting
- Excessively withdrawn, fearful, anxious; shows extremes in behavior
- Untreated illnesses and physical injuries
- Overly sexual behavior or language for age



All school district employees are mandated reporters and must report suspicious behavior - and that includes empowering children.



# Obligations of Mandated Reporters

Employees who have knowledge of or suspect child abuse must contact an appropriate agency. The report must be made right away over the telephone and should be followed up in writing.

## Appropriate Interaction With Minors

All school employees are expected to act in a manner that reflects professional, moral, and ethical practices within established boundaries. By doing so, employees should be less susceptible to false allegations and instrumental in maintaining public trust, the integrity of public education, confidence in the safety of our schools and the students.

- Eliminate alone times without other adults being present, accessible, or in view
- Physical contact should always be non-sexual, appropriate to circumstance, and unambiguous in meaning
- Never be with minors in a concealed area
- Never host an event for minors or invite minors to homes without the presence of the minor's guardians/parents or multiple adults as part of an approved, well-supervised District function
- Never give a minor a gift without the consent of the District
- Never provide tobacco products, drugs, or alcohol to minors or purchase such for minors

### Who should report?

- The person who has reasonable suspicion must file the report.
- The report cannot be delegated to someone else, not even to a supervisor, but you should keep any supervisor informed, unless they are the suspected abuser.

### Am I liable if I make a report and it is not substantiated?

- No. Persons making a report in good faith are protected from liability. You are only to report reasonable suspicions based upon your observations and are not encouraged to conduct your own investigations.
- FAILURE to report, though, can lead to civil and criminal liability.
  - *Penal Codes §§ 11166(c), 11166.01(b); this includes jail time and or a fine*

### What is considered reporting?

- Make an initial report by telephone immediately, or as soon as practicably possible. By law, contacts can include the local police department, sheriff's office, or the county welfare department (i.e. Child Protective Services, Department of Children and Family Services, etc.)
  - *Penal Code § 11165.9.*
- Prepare a written follow-up report.
  - Use the California Attorney General's form SS 8572.
  - Submit the report by fax or electronic transmission within 36 hours.

### What information do I need?

- Child's name, address and age.
- Parent/guardian's name and address.
- Reason for making the report.
  - Additional helpful information: perpetrator's name; observable signs or what the child disclosed to you.

### What happens next?

- California law requires that the investigating agency inform the mandated reporter of the results of the investigation and any action taken once the investigation or disposition is complete.



This Safety bulletin is brought to you by ASCIP  
(ALLIANCE OF SCHOOLS FOR COOPERATIVE INSURANCE PROGRAMS)  
16550 Bloomfield Avenue • Cerritos, California 90703 • (562) 404-8029