

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WAUPACA

SERIES 400 STUDENTS

CODE: 454

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING GUIDELINES

School District personnel are required to report all incidences of suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. In so doing, the School District of Waupaca joins other community agencies in minimizing the negative effects of child abuse or neglect.

Definitions: The following definitions are to assist in defining suspected abuse or neglect:

1. "Abuse" means any physical injury inflicted on a child by other than accidental means. "Physical injury" includes, but is not limited to, severe bruising, lacerations, fractured bones, burns, internal injuries or any injury constituting great bodily harm. Abuse also includes sexual intercourse, sexual contact or sexual exploitation.
2. "Neglect" means failure, refusal or inability on the part of a parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person exercising temporary or permanent control over a child for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.
3. "Emotional damage" means harm to the child's psychological or intellectual functioning which is exhibited by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal or outward aggressive behavior, or a combination of those behaviors, which is caused by the child's parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person exercising temporary or permanent control over the child and for which the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian has failed to obtain the treatment necessary to remedy the harm. "Emotional damage" may be demonstrated by a substantial and observable change in behavior, emotional response or cognition that is not within the normal range for the child's age and stage of development.

Penalty for Non-Reporting:

School personnel who fail to report suspected abuse or neglect are subject to a fine or imprisonment. Whoever willfully violates the law by failure to report as required may be fined not more than \$1,000.00 or imprisoned not more than 6 months or both.

In addition to the penalty prescribed by state law, school district staff could be subjected to legal action by the abused/neglected child's parent or guardian if it is established that the staff member had prior knowledge which, if reported, may have prevented further injury.

Procedures for Reporting:

1. Any school district employee who has reason to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur should immediately contact, in person or by phone, the **Waupaca County Department of Health and Human Services at 258-6300** and inform the agency of the facts and circumstances contributing to the reasons for suspecting child abuse or neglect. Information that will be required includes the student's name, address, age, parent/guardian's name, nature and extent of abuse or neglect and any other information that might assist the Department of Health and Human Services in its investigation. **If the Department of Health and Human Services cannot be reached, the local police at 258-4400 or County Sheriff's Department at 258-4466 shall be contacted.** The employee shall

request an immediate investigation by the sheriff or police department if there is reason to believe that the child's health or safety is in immediate danger. The employee shall also report the situation to the school principal as soon as possible.

2. Following the contact with the Department of Health and Human Services, written documentation of the report shall be completed by the reporter utilizing the proper written form. Copies of this report are to be kept on file in the school building within 2 days of the initial contact with the Department of Health & Human Services. All reports and records made under this section shall be confidential (regardless of where they are physically located) and the information can be shared only with legally specified individuals.
3. The Department of Health & Human Services is required to commence an investigation within 24 hours of receipt of the initial report. School district staff should not pressure the child to gain privileged information regarding an injury or other information surrounding the suspected abuse or neglect. Representatives of the Department of Health & Human Services are expected to follow normal school procedure requiring them to report to the school office prior to interviewing a child. However, school employees cannot deter them from interviewing children on school premises as part of their investigation. The Department of Health & Human Services is required to inform the mandated reporter of the status of the case within 60 days after the receipt of the initial report.

ADOPTED: 022007

REVISED:

REVIEWED:

LEGAL REFERENCE: Wisconsin Statutes - Chapter 48 and 944

CONTRACT REFERENCE:

CROSS REFERENCE: 454-1 Record of Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

The School District of Waupaca does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.