



# Protection of Minors Training

# Child Abuse Reporting Law

- The [Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law](#) requires certain people (called "mandated reporters") to report to the authorities any reasonable suspicion of child abuse:
  - Involving children they are responsible for, or come into contact with, during work (including while volunteering);
  - Based on a specific disclosure involving an identifiable child; or
  - By an individual over 13 years of age who committed the abuse.
- Pursuant to Board of Governors policy 2014-01-A: Protection of Minors, all State System employees are designated as mandated reporters. You are mandated to report any time you are on State System property, attending a State System event, or attending an event on behalf of the State System

# Who is a Mandated Reporter?

- Health practitioners;
- Clergy;
- Childcare services personnel;
- Adoptive and foster parents;
- Law enforcement;
- School employees who work with children;
- Individuals who come into contact with children while working under the management or supervision of most mandated reporters;
  - Attorneys affiliated with entities (including schools and religions) that are responsible for children; and
  - An adult responsible for a child with an intellectual or chronic psychiatric disability in a family living home, community home, or host home for children.

# Protections & Penalties

- **Protections:** You cannot be successfully sued or prosecuted, as long as the report was made in good faith — even if the agency's investigation does not confirm your suspicions. (**Title 23 § [6318](#)**)
- **Penalties:** If you willfully fail to report child abuse, you may be subject to criminal liability ranging from a misdemeanor to a felony.
- **Liability:** Committing any of these crimes could also expose you to a costly lawsuit.

# Long-Term Effects of Abuse

- Development of anti-social or self-destructive behaviors;
- Acting out or being cruel toward others or becoming sexually promiscuous.
- Becoming depressed, withdrawn, or suicidal.
- Even momentary abuse can cause permanent damage, including stress-related health problems and an increased risk of:
  - Anxiety, fear, panic, and depression;
  - Hostility, anger, and aggressive behavior;
  - Difficulty with trust, honesty, intimacy, and forming positive relationships;
  - Low self-esteem;
  - Isolation and alienation;
  - Guilt, shame, and humiliation; and
  - Alcohol and drug abuse.
- We can't ignore these long-term consequences. We all must do our part to stop child abuse to create a safe and healthy community.

# Recognize Child Abuse

- Types of child abuse:
  - Sexual abuse;
  - Physical abuse;
  - Neglect; and
  - Emotional or mental abuse.

• **Note:** Since abused children commonly suffer from more than one type of abuse, you do not have to identify each type to report your reasonable suspicions.

# Sexual Abuse

- Occurs when an adult exploits a child (anyone under 18 years old) for sexual gratification — even if no touching is involved.
- **Warning signs** may include, but are not limited to:
  - Unusual sexual knowledge or behavior considering the child's age;
  - Pregnancy, injuries to a child's private parts, difficulty walking or sitting, or sexually transmitted diseases;
  - Dramatic changes in appetite or behavior;
  - Nightmares or bedwetting;
  - Running away from home (or attempting to do so);
  - Parent(s) is extremely jealous, controlling, or secretive; or
  - An adult possessing child pornography.
- Sexual abuse and neglect often occur together
  - Example – if parents or caregivers fail to protect a child from sexual abuse by someone else.
- Sexual abusers are generally very careful to avoid getting caught in the act, so a child's words or other indirect clues may be all you have.
- If you suspect sexual abuse but are unsure, immediately contact the authorities and let them determine whether a child is a victim of sexual abuse.

# Physical Abuse

- Acts or omissions that cause, or fail to prevent, a serious physical injury to a child.
- **Warning signs** may include, but are not limited to:
  - Abnormal injuries for the child's age, maturity level, and physical ability;
  - Multiple injuries in different stages of healing;
  - Unexplained broken or fractured bones;
  - Glove-like or sock-like immersion burns;
  - Injuries in shapes of objects (belt or whip, iron, cigarette, etc.);
  - Restraint injuries (rope burns or similar bruises);
  - Withdrawal or extreme fear of parents, adults, or physical contact; or
  - Parent(s) offering implausible or changing explanations for the injury.
- Physical abuse injuries are not always visible.
  - Example – shaking a baby is a form of physical abuse that can result in significant internal injuries.
- **Note:** Although parents are generally permitted to use reasonable, age-appropriate physical force (corporal punishment or spanking) to discipline their children, excessive punishment that causes physical injury is considered abuse.



# Neglect

- One of the most common categories of child abuse.
- When a parent or any other person responsible for a child's care and protection severely or persistently fails to provide for a child's physical, emotional or basic needs.
- **Examples** include, but are not limited to:
  - Chronically failing to provide a child's basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, or personal hygiene);
  - Denying or delaying medical treatment;
  - Exposing a child to hazards, leaving a child unsupervised or with an inappropriate caregiver, or permitting a child to engage in risky, illegal, or harmful behaviors; or
  - Failure to educate a child or to provide psychological or psychiatric treatment.
- **Warning signs** may include, but are not limited to:
  - Dangerous or extremely unsanitary living conditions;
  - Malnutrition (child morbidly underweight/overweight); or
  - Severe hygiene problems, or filthy or inadequate clothing

# Emotional or Mental Abuse

- Words, acts, or omissions that have an actual or likely severe negative impact on a child's emotional and behavioral development, including those resulting from persistent or severe emotional mistreatment.
- **Examples** include, but are not limited to:
  - Humiliating, belittling, or ridiculing a child;
  - Intimidating, frightening, or terrorizing a child;
  - Withholding affection or refusing to acknowledge or speak to a child;
  - Exposing a child to domestic violence;
  - Exposing a child to alcohol or drug abuse; or
  - Encouraging a child's criminal or delinquent behavior.
- **Warning signs** may include, but are not limited to:
  - Extreme lags in a child's development;
  - Angry, aggressive, or destructive behavior to gain adult attention; or
  - A parent who is overly critical, doesn't understand child's basic needs, has unrealistic expectations about a child's development, or blames the child for the parent's problems.

# Detect Predators

- Most child predators lead a double life. They are careful to present themselves as someone you would never suspect of misconduct. Many are trusted family and friends, respected members of the community, and skillful liars.

- In this section, we'll cover how to:
  - Recognize predatory behavior; and
  - Avoid placing children at risk.

- **Note:** *Because 80-95% of predators are male, we will use "he" to refer to all predators. While there are fewer women who commit child sexual abuse, the harm they cause is as severe as that committed by male predators, and they are more difficult to spot.*

# Creating an Image

- You cannot identify predators by their age, sex, position, or appearance.
- Predators will do what it takes to make you like them and not consider them a threat.
- Many are smart, charming, and respected members of the community.
- If a child discloses abuse or an adult becomes suspicious, most people won't believe them because the predator isn't "that kind of person."
- Instead, you need to be suspicious of certain behaviors that help you identify high risk people and situations.

# Grooming Children

- Predators use calculated behavior called "grooming" to win children's affection and manipulate them into having sex.
- Signs of grooming may include, but are not limited to:
  - Preferring children's company over someone their own age;
  - Giving children gifts;
  - Showering children with attention and praise; or
  - Roughhousing with, tickling, and touching children.
- Often, predators prefer children who are easy targets, such as those who:
  - Lack confidence or have low self-esteem;
  - Have a reputation for lying or emotional problems;
  - Are needy and don't have a happy home life;
  - Have stressed-out and busy parents; or
  - Are easy to manipulate.

# Grooming Adults

- Predators also groom adults to appear like ordinary nice and helpful people, but predators have a hidden agenda.
- Gaining the trust of adults gives predators access to children, creating opportunities for abuse.
- These are a few of the primary techniques predators use to groom adults:
  - Offer unsolicited help and not ask for anything in return — but the price maybe unsupervised access to children;
  - Commit boundary violations to test physical and emotional limits on contact and interactions with children;
  - Create a team or insider status to avoid enforcement of boundaries and the usual screening process;
  - Make unsolicited promises (e.g., "they're safe with me, I promise"); or
  - Discount or ignore "no," trying to make adults feel wrong or guilty for enforcing boundaries.

# Digital Predators

- Technology has expanded the predators' ability to groom children without being detected. Predators use computers and cell phones to befriend their victims and lure them into sexual encounters.
- "Sexting" (sending revealing or sexually suggestive photos with a text message) has become more common among high school teens.
- "Sextortion" is another way online predators ensnare their victims. They take over the victims' computers, or hack into their Facebook or other online accounts, to find personal information and incriminating photos. The hackers contact the victims and threaten to publicly post incriminating photos unless the victims pose for increasingly sexual photos via webcam.
- As new media tools are created at a frenetic pace, they increase the risks that young people face in the digital world.

# Report Suspected Abuse

The procedures for reporting child abuse, include:

- Determining what is a reasonable suspicion;
- Knowing what information to report; and
- Knowing how to make a report of child abuse.



# Report Your Reasonable Suspicions

- You must make a report to the authorities when you have a reasonable suspicion that a child may be a victim of abuse.
- If you suspect a child was or is being abused, ask yourself "would a person with average judgment, who saw or heard what I did, suspect child abuse?" If the answer is "yes," you have a reasonable suspicion.
- A reasonable suspicion does not have to be based on your personal knowledge — but it does need to be based on more than a rumor.
- Reasonable suspicion doesn't always mean something bad happened. It only means you suspect that abuse may have occurred or a child is at risk of being abused. It can be based on a single incident, what the child says, or a combination of signs (physical, behavioral, environmental, or parental clues).

# How to Report

- Once you have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, **immediately** make a report to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services either:
    - Electronically at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home) OR
    - Orally at **1-800-932-0313** or TDD: **1-866-872-1677** (for the hearing impaired)
  - For emergencies or crimes in progress, call **911** or [local law enforcement](#).
  - If you make an oral report, you must follow up within **48 hours** with a written report to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and notify the individual designated in the University's Protection of Minors Policy <http://app.kutztown.edu/policyregister/Policy/GEN-005>. In lieu of making both an oral and a written report, mandated reporters may submit **one** report online at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>.
- Note:** Mandated reporters who are staff members of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania must notify the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Jesus Peña, Esq., and Public Safety if they suspect child abuse while performing their work.

# What to Report

- When you report, provide as much information as possible, including, but not limited to:
  - The child and child's parents' or caregivers' name, address, age, and sex;
  - Where the suspected abuse occurred;
  - The nature and extent of the suspected child abuse;
  - Any prior abuse to the child or siblings of the child;
  - The suspected perpetrator's name, age, sex, and relationship to the child, and any history of causing prior abuse;
  - The composition of the child's family;
  - Your name, telephone number, and email address;
  - Any actions you've taken on behalf of the child; and
  - Any other information that may be relevant.
- You must report your reasonable suspicions of abuse even if you do not have all of this information. You must provide all the information you do have available that may help the agency protect the child.

# Title IX Prohibits Child Sexual Abuse

- In addition to your duties under the child abuse reporting laws, you're also required to report sexual misconduct to your school under a federal law called Title IX.
- Title IX requires schools to address sexual misconduct — including child abuse — when it limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities.
- It does not matter whether the sexual misconduct is committed by school employees, other students, or third parties.
- Once the school knows or should have known about the sexual misconduct, it must take prompt and effective steps to:
  - Stop it;
  - Prevent it from happening again; and
  - Remedy its effects.

# Title IX Reporting Duties

- Title IX requires "responsible employees" to report information regarding alleged sexual misconduct to the school's Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Jesus Peña, Esq. at [pena@kutztown.edu](mailto:pena@kutztown.edu) or (610) 683-4700, and to Public Safety. Reports must be made to the Title IX Coordinator and Public Safety immediately.
- Responsible Employees – Any employee who:
  - Has the authority to take action to redress sexual violence;
  - Has been given the duty of reporting incidents of sexual violence or any other misconduct by students to the Title IX Coordinator or other appropriate school designee; or
  - A student could reasonably believe has this authority or duty.
- All employees are responsible employees.

# Kutztown's Protection of Minors Policy

- Can be found under the General Policies section of the University's Policy

Register at: <https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administration/governance/policy-register/policies.htm>

