

Reporting Child Abuse

WHY YOU SHOULD REPORT THE ABUSE:

1. 90% of parents can be helped.
2. Most parents want to be helped.
3. The sooner help is made available, the better are the chances for change to occur.
4. Help providers want to keep the family unit together.
5. The children need to be helped and they usually cannot help themselves.
6. You do not have to be involved AT ALL, after your initial report.
7. REPORTING THE ABUSE BREAKS THE CHAIN; abused children often become abusing adults.

WHAT KINDS OF HELP CAN BE PROVIDED FOR THE ABUSIVE ADULT:

1. Support Groups
2. Day Care
3. Parent Education
4. Counseling
5. Help with day-to-day problems
6. Homemaker services
7. Medical Help
8. Foster care if needed as a last resort.

HOW DO YOU REPORT:

1. Orally, In Person, or by telephone.
2. You DO NOT need to give your own name. No one needs to ever know that you reported this abuse.
3. Identify the abused child with their FULL NAME (first and last), and thier address. (if you do not know the address, you should tell where this child goes to school.)
4. Give a short explanation of why you think the abuse situation exists. (the nature of the abuse, what you've observed, history of the abuse, etc.)

WHO DO YOU REPORT TO:

1. Any Mandatory Reporter that you feel comfortable talking to
 - School Personel
 - Law Enforcement agency
 - Day Care Provider
 - Child Protective Services (DHS, HHS, etc)
 - Health Care Providers

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHETHER TO REPORT THE ABUSE OR NOT:

1. Do not over react. Discipline is different from Child Abuse!!
2. When you notice a potential problem, check the Signs & Symptoms of Abuse - also, the Characteristics of abusive adults, and see if they seem to fit this family.
3. Keep your eyes and ears open for more information. (but do not waste a lot of time, ie. weeks)
4. If you are relatively certain there is potential abuse in this situation, REPORT IT, DO NOT HESITATE!! **It is the responsibility of the agency to which you report, to determine if the situation is actually abuse. IT IS NOT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!** Remember - it is better to be SAFE THAN SORRY! And last of all REMEMBER THIS... **THIS CHILD CANNOT HELP THEMSELVES!**

