

Additional Reference Material

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Oklahoma State law (10 O.S. Sec 7103 et seq.) requires every person, private citizen or professional, who has reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 is being abused and/or neglected, or is in danger of being abused, to promptly report the suspicion to the statewide hotline (1-800-522-3511).

Failure to report suspected abuse is a crime – legally and morally. No person, regardless of his or her relationship with the child or family, is exempt from reporting suspected abuse. A person reporting in good faith; however, is immune from both civil and criminal prosecution.

Abuse

“Abuse” means harm or threatened harm or failure to protect from harm or threatened harm to the health, safety, or welfare of a child by a person responsible for the child’s health, safety or welfare, including but not limited to non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation. Provided, however, that nothing contained in this act shall prohibit any parent from using ordinary force as a means of discipline including, but not limited to, spanking, switching, or paddling.

“Harm or threatened harm to the health or safety of a child” means any real or threatened physical, mental or emotional injury or damage to the body or mind that is not accidental including but not limited to sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect or dependency.

“Sexual abuse” includes but is not limited to rape, incest, and lewd or indecent acts or proposals to a child, as defined by law, by a person responsible for the health, safety, or welfare of a child.

“Sexual exploitation” includes but is not limited to allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, as defined by law, by a person responsible for the health, safety, or welfare of a child, or allowing, permitted, encouraging, or engaging in the lewd, obscene, or pornographic, as defined by law, photographing, filming, or depicting of a child in those acts by a person responsible for the health, safety, and welfare of the child.

Neglect

“Neglect” means:

1. The failure to provide any of the following:
 - a. Adequate nurturance and affection, food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, hygiene, or appropriate education,
 - b. Medical, dental, or behavioral health care,
 - c. Supervision or appropriate caretakers, or
 - d. Special care made necessary by the physical or mental condition of the child
2. The failure to protect a child from exposure to any of the following:
 - a. The use, possession, sale, or manufacture of illegal drugs,
 - b. Illegal activities, or

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c. Sexual acts or materials that are not age-appropriate, or
3. Abandonment.

Helpful links:

PDF of OKDHS reporting guide:

<http://bit.ly/1y5KeFJ>

Manual for schools: The School's Role in the Intervention of Child Abuse and Neglect (very helpful in creating a system-wide policy and understanding the complexities of the issue from an organizational standpoint)

<http://bit.ly/1sGLM8L>