Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Presentation to
Indiana School Safety Specialist – Advanced Academy
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Your Presenters Are:

Nathan Johnson, Child Abuse Hotline Director
Email: Nathan.Johnson@dcs.IN.gov

Melaina Gant, Education Services Director, DCS,
Email: Melaina.Gant@dcs.in.gov
Our Mission

The Indiana Department of Child Services engages with families and collaborates with state, local, and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and to provide child support services.

Vision: Indiana children will live in safe, healthy, and supportive families and communities.
Core Functions:
• Protect and keep children safe from abuse & neglect.
• Receive reports of abuse & neglect.
• Complete assessments on reports.
• Ongoing case management to guide a family through services, placement, permanency and case closure.
Indiana children will live in safe, healthy, and supportive families and communities.

DCS Education Services Team
Indiana children will live in safe, healthy, and supportive families and communities.
DCS Education Liaisons Can Help

• EL Roles and Responsibilities
Indiana children will live in safe, healthy, and supportive families and communities.

DCS Education Services Resources

• DCS Education Services team has many resources available on our public website: https://www.in.gov/dcs/3958.htm
  – Resource tools for specific audiences who work with foster youth.
    • DCS Staff
    • Caregivers
    • Educators
  – Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
  – 2019 List of free Professional Development Trainings available to DCS, schools, and foster families.

• The Indiana DOE collaborates with DCS and shares some of these resources on their webpage dedicated to serving the foster youth population.
What is Physical Abuse?

Any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by a parent or caregiver that results in or threatens serious injury.
What is Neglect?

Parent, guardian or custodian does not supply child with:

- Shelter
- Food
- Education
- Clothing
- Medical Care
- Supervision
What is Sexual Abuse?

Usually is unwanted sexual behavior by a person upon another or when consent for such behavior cannot be given. Indiana has several statutes that define sexual abuse.
Indiana children will live in safe, healthy, and supportive families and communities.

Child Abuse & Neglect

How do you report suspected child abuse or neglect?

Call the Indiana Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline, 24/7.

800.800.5556
Child Abuse & Neglect

Who should report?

• Indiana is a mandatory reporting state. Any person who has reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected shall make a report

• Medical professionals, school personnel & law enforcement officials have a higher duty to report abuse or neglect
• If an individual is required to make a report in the individual's capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school, facility, or agency, the individual shall “immediately” make a report to DCS or LEA. After making the report they will notify the individual in charge of the institution, school, facility, or agency or designated agent that the report was made.

• Prohibits schools/corporations, facilities, and agencies from establishing policies that restrict any employee’s duty to report.

• Allows professional reporters to make either an oral or written report to DCS or law enforcement.

• Requires child abuse/neglect training for school employees every two years.
Indiana Code § 31-33-5-1 et. seq.

• An individual is not relieved of the obligation to report on the individual's own behalf, unless a report has already been made to the best of the individual's belief. IC 31-33-5-3.

• A person who has a duty under this chapter to report that a child may be a victim of child abuse or neglect shall “immediately” make an oral report to the department and/or the local law enforcement agency. IC 31-33-5-4.
“Immediately” Defined

“immediately” means “in an immediate manner; specifically,
  • a) without intervening agency or cause; directly;
  • b) without delay; at once; instantly.”

A person who knowingly fails to make a report required by IC 31-33-5-1 [any individual] commits a Class B misdemeanor. IC 31-33-22-1 (a)

A person who knowingly fails to make a report required by IC 31-33-5-2 [individual in an institutional setting.] commits a Class B misdemeanor. This penalty is in addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (a). IC 31-33-22-1 (b)
• A sixteen-year-old girl is raped by a fellow student in the bathroom at lunch.

• **Around 12:20**, the girl is brought to the office and speaks to an assistant principal, who immediately notifies the principal.

• **Around 12:40** the principal calls the school nurse, sends the assistant principal to review the security footage, and forces the victim to write a hand written statement of her rape.

• **Between 12:45 and 1:00**, the principal calls the director of secondary education, the assistant superintendent, and HR director.
• **Around 1:25**, the principal has the perpetrator brought to the office and the victim is sent to the emergency room.

• **Around 1:40**, the assistant principal reports back the principal after reviewing the tape.

• **Around 1:45**, the perpetrator is sent back to class after being questioned by the principal and athletic director.

• **Around 2:00**, the principal and athletic director search the student lockers.

• **Between 2:30 and 4:30**, principal, HR Director, and others attend interviews for an open position.
• **Around 4:30**, the HR Director calls the DCS Hotline.

• Principal was charged and convicted of failing to immediately report.
Reporting

Call 800.800.5556

An intake specialist:

• Directs caller immediately to 911 or law enforcement if child is in imminent danger.
• Listens/asks questions using intake guidance tool.
• Captures report information.
• Sends report to local county office to determine next steps.
Reporting

Intake specialists will ask questions about the child’s current circumstances, safety, and identifying information:

- Names of children involved
- Parent, guardian or custodian’s name
- Substance abuse issues
- Mental health concerns
- Other household members
- Ages of children
- Addresses & phone numbers
- Current Location
- Domestic violence
- Weapons in the home

Always report suspected abuse even if you don’t know the answers to all the questions.
Per Indiana law, certain criteria must be met before a family case manager can be dispatched to a home. If criteria is met, a thorough assessment may be called for:

- Immediately/1 hour (imminent danger)
- Within 24 hours
- Up to 5 days

Reports related to an open involvement will be forwarded to staff working with the family.
Outcomes of Assessment

Substantiate
DCS finds enough facts to prove that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

Unsubstantiate
DCS finds no credible evidence that child abuse or neglect has occurred.
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**How You Can Help**

- Offer to help your relatives, friends and neighbors who are under stress and may need some assistance.
- Perhaps you can babysit, cook, provide transportation, mentor.
- Become a foster parent: 888.631.9510.
- Become an adoptive parent: 888.25ADOPT.
- Purchase a ‘Kids First’ license plate to help fund prevention services.
Educating Others

Public Online Training and Information Course

- Learn the meaning of child abuse and neglect in Indiana.
- Recognize and report child abuse and neglect in Indiana.
- Learn who is required to report child abuse and neglect in Indiana.
- Learn what happens once DCS receives a report of child abuse or neglect.
- https://reportchildabuse.dcs.in.gov/

Children are never protected by adult silence!
Additional Helpful Resources

Some resources to learn more about recognizing signs of abuse and neglect are:

• National Child Traumatic Stress Network - https://www.nctsn.org/resources/all-nctsn-resources?search=child+abuse=&=Submit&resource_type=All&trauma_type=All&language=All&audience=All
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Any Questions?