



# Preventing and Reporting Abuse in Programs with Minor Participants

## Office of Human Resources – Policy 1.50

### Protecting Minors

#### 1. What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is any action that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a minor. There are four main types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect.

- **Physical Abuse:** any physical injury inflicted other than by accidental means.
- **Sexual Abuse:** when a person uses power over a minor, and directly involves the child in any sexual act.
- **Emotional Abuse:** a pattern of harmful interactions between an adult and child such as criticizing, belittling, and rejecting.
- **Neglect:** the failure of an adult to provide for a child’s basic educational or medical needs (i.e., food, shelter, supervision, and clothing).

#### 2. What are the Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse?

There are a few common signs and symptoms for each type of child abuse that you might notice in the camp setting. It is important to remember, however, that not all children will exhibit all of these symptoms. They may exhibit alternative symptoms.

Signs & Symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse and/or Neglect			
Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Unexplained bruises or burns</li> <li>– Fear of going home</li> <li>– Fear of going with a particular staff member or person</li> <li>– Physical force used by parents/staff to correct behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Unusual sexual knowledge or behavior</li> <li>– Child-to-Child sexual contact</li> <li>– Bruises on inner thighs or other “no touch” areas</li> <li>– Fear of being along with a particular camper or staff member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not eating or overeating at camp meals</li> <li>– Extreme habit behaviors</li> <li>– Parent/child interactions using inappropriate language or name calling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stealing food from the lunch hall</li> <li>– Poor shower habits/poor hygiene</li> <li>– Dirty clothes or clothes with numerous stains and/or tears</li> <li>– Low body weight</li> </ul>

#### 3. How Can I Help Prevent Child Abuse at Camps?

- Recognize and understand the signs and symptoms of child abuse. **Be alert** and act on your suspicions.
- Know the procedure for reporting child abuse – where to go, whom to call, and how to react.
- Always use safe touches when working with children. Some examples include: hand to shoulder contact, side by side hugs, rustling of hair, pats on the head, high fives, handshakes, eye contact, and smiles.
- Only use physical restraint in situations when a child puts herself/himself or others in danger.
- Minimize high risk opportunities for child abuse.
  - Eliminate one adult/one child interactions. Never be alone in a dorm room or restroom with a child.
  - Complete regular dorm room checks.
  - Send children to the restrooms and/or showers in groups.



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## **YOU MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY**

### **If You Witness or Believe That There Is A Substantial Threat of Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect**

As a member of our overnight camp staff, you have an obligation to **immediately report** all incidents whether you observed them directly, someone reported them to you or you believe that there is a substantial threat of child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse.

This obligation is *in addition to* any other obligation you may have under Ohio law (e.g., as a mandatory reporter).

#### **STEP 1: You must report in any of the above circumstances in the following order:**

1. Children Services Agency<sup>1</sup> - 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline at 614-229-7000 (Franklin County only) **or** Municipal or County Peace Officer (local law enforcement authorities - 911)
2. University Police (Columbus - 911, counties - local law enforcement)

B. University Police must notify the Office of Human Resources

**STEP 2:** Complete the **Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report** form which can be found online at [hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150abuse.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150abuse.pdf). Make sure all the information requested in the form is listed. Once completed, fax to the Office of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations at 614-292-6199, or call 614-292-2800.

**STEP 3:** Stay with the victim until Children Services Agency and/or local law enforcement representatives arrive, as appropriate. Preserve any evidence.

**STEP 4:** Once representatives from Children Services Agency or local law enforcement Office arrive, please provide them with a copy of the Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report form and maintain the original form for university files. Make sure to get the name and/or business card of the Children Services Agency/law enforcement representative. Provide the original Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report form and the name/business card of the Children Service Agency/law enforcement representative to University Police.

**STEP 5:** Once you made the report, Children Services Agency/local law enforcement, University Police, and Human Resources representatives will investigate the report and take appropriate action based on their respective findings.

The university will make every reasonable effort to conduct all proceedings in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of any person making a report of abuse. Please know that it may be necessary to disclose details in the course of the investigation or when required by law.

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<sup>1</sup> After talking with Children's Services, you will contact a parent if the child has been abused, except when the parent(s) may be the abuser(s).