

Title of the submission:

**How educators can report child abuse so Child Protective Services will listen
(Interdisciplinary approach to managing concerns about child abuse/neglect)**

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Abstract:

How educators can report child abuse so Child Protective Services will listen (Interdisciplinary approach to managing concerns about child abuse/neglect)

Educators are in a unique position in that they may be the only people, outside of the child's family, who have daily contact with a child. The educator's responsibility to recognize and report concerns about child maltreatment is vital to the protection of children. Children are not educated in a vacuum. What goes on at home is often brought to school. Getting to know the child on a daily basis allows the teacher to be able to judge whether a child and/or parent's behavior has changed over time or if there is a current/ongoing crisis in the family. Reporting a concern to child protective services should not be seen as an accusation but as a request to the child protection agency to investigate the matter further.

Educators are the most frequent professionals to report child abuse; more reports of child abuse come from educators than from doctors or any other type of professional. Educators, however, are often hesitant to make a child abuse report. A recent survey by the Rand Corporation found that educators often don't report suspected child abuse, even when they know they should, because they are concerned that the report will not result in decisive action by the child protection agency. In this presentation, we will provide educators with concrete and specific information on how to make a child abuse report so that the child protection agency can and will respond immediately and effectively.

An educator's mission is to create learning environments for their students. The effects of child abuse and neglect can obstruct the learning process. Educators are experts in knowing how to recognize when children are getting the most from the learning environment. Helping educators know when and how to refer to child protective services for the most effect is the focus of this session. Specifically what information is most helpful to the child protection agency so a determination can be made to investigate, assess current risk and determine actions for the protection of the child.

The following topics will be presented:

- What every educator should know about child abuse and neglect
- The basics to reporting to child protective services
- Barriers to reporting

The following handouts will be available:

- Do's and Don'ts when interacting with parents and children
- Child protective services terms and definitions
- Roles & responsibilities of community professionals in responding to child abuse/neglect
- Educator's bibliography on child abuse and neglect

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