

California University of Pennsylvania Protection of Minors Training

This course covers how to:

recognize child abuse

detect child predators

report suspected abuse

Child Abuse Reporting Law

- The [Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law](#) requires certain people (called "mandated reporters") to report to the authorities any reasonable suspicion of child abuse:
 - involving children they are responsible for, or come into contact with, during work (including while volunteering)
 - based on a specific disclosure involving an identifiable child, or by an individual over 13 years of age who committed the abuse.
- Pursuant to Board of Governors policy 2014-01-A: Protection of Minors, all State System employees are designated as mandated reporters. You are mandated to report any time you are on State System property, attending a State System event, or attending an event on behalf of the State System.

Mandated Reporters are?

- Health Practitioners
- Clergy
- Childcare Services Personnel, Adoptive and Foster Parents
- Law Enforcement
- School Employees who work with children
- Individuals who come into contact with children while working under the management or supervision of most mandated reporters
- Attorneys affiliated with entities (including schools and religions) that are responsible for children
- An adult responsible for a child with an intellectual or chronic psychiatric disability in a family living home, community home, or host home for children

Protections & Penalties

- **Protections:**

- You cannot be successfully sued or prosecuted, as long as the report was made in good faith — even if the agency's investigation does not confirm your suspicions. (Title 23 § [6318](#).)

- **Penalties:**

- However, if you willfully fail to report child abuse, you may be subject to criminal liability ranging from a misdemeanor to a felony.

- **Liability:**

- Committing any of these crimes could also expose you to a costly lawsuit.

Long-Term Effects of Abuse

- Abused children may develop anti-social or self-destructive behaviors to cope with their experiences.
- Some act out and become cruel toward others or sexually promiscuous. Others act in by becoming depressed, withdrawn, or suicidal.
- Even momentary abuse can cause permanent damage, including stress-related health problems and an increased risk of:
 - anxiety, fear, panic, and depression
 - hostility, anger, and aggressive behavior
 - difficulty with trust, honesty, intimacy, and forming positive relationships
 - low self-esteem
 - isolation and alienation
 - guilt, shame, and humiliation
 - alcohol and drug abuse
- We can't ignore these long-term consequences. We all must do our part to stop child abuse to create a safe and healthy community.

Recognize Child Abuse

The different types of child abuse:

- sexual abuse
- physical abuse
- neglect
- emotional or mental abuse
- **Note:** Since abused children commonly suffer from more than one type of abuse, you do not have to identify each type to report your reasonable suspicions.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse occurs when an adult exploits a child (anyone under 18 years old) for sexual gratification — even if no touching is involved.
- Warning signs of sexual abuse could include:
 - unusual sexual knowledge or behavior considering the child's age
 - pregnancy, injuries to a child's private parts, difficulty walking or sitting, or sexually transmitted disease
 - dramatic change in appetite or behavior
 - nightmares or bedwetting
 - running away from home (or attempting to do so)
 - parent extremely jealous, controlling, or secretive
 - an adult possessing child pornography
- Sexual abuse and neglect often occur together — for example, if parents or caregivers fail to protect a child from sexual abuse by someone else.
- Sexual abusers are generally very careful to avoid getting caught in the act, so a child's words or other indirect clues may be all you have.
- If you suspect sexual abuse but are unsure, immediately contact the authorities and let them determine whether a child is a victim of sexual abuse.

Physical Abuse

- The term "physical abuse" refers to acts or omissions that cause, or fail to prevent, a serious physical injury to a child.
- Warning signs include:
 - abnormal injuries for the child's age, maturity level, and physical ability
 - multiple injuries in different stages of healing
 - unexplained broken or fractured bones
 - glove-like or sock-like immersion burns
 - injuries in shapes of objects (belt or whip, iron, cigarette, etc.)
 - restraint injuries (rope burns or similar bruises)
 - withdrawal or extreme fear of parents, adults, or physical contact
 - parent offers implausible or changing explanations for the injury
- Physical abuse injuries are not always visible. For example, shaking a baby is a form of physical abuse that can result in significant internal injuries.
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- **Note:** Although parents are generally permitted to use reasonable, age-appropriate physical force (corporal punishment or spanking) to discipline their children, excessive punishment that causes physical injury is considered abuse.

Neglect

- Neglect is one of the most common categories of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or any other person responsible for a child's care and protection severely or persistently fails to provide for a child's physical, emotional or basic needs.
- **Examples of neglect can include**
- chronically failing to provide a child's basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, or personal hygiene)
- denying or delaying medical treatment
- exposing a child to hazards, leaving a child unsupervised or with an inappropriate caregiver, or permitting a child to engage in risky, illegal, or harmful behaviors
- failure to educate a child or to provide psychological or psychiatric treatment
- **Examples of warning signs of neglect include**
- dangerous or extremely unsanitary living conditions
- malnutrition (child morbidly underweight/overweight)
- severe hygiene problems, or filthy or inadequate clothing

Emotional or Mental Abuse

- Emotional or mental abuse involves words, acts, or omissions that have an actual or likely severe negative impact on a child's emotional and behavioral development, including those resulting from persistent or severe emotional mistreatment. For example, it could include:
 - humiliating, belittling, or ridiculing a child
 - intimidating, frightening, or terrorizing a child
 - withholding affection, or refusing to acknowledge or speak to a child
 - exposing a child to domestic violence
 - exposing a child to alcohol or drug abuse
 - encouraging a child's criminal or delinquent behavior
- These are some behaviors that could be warning signs of emotional abuse:
 - extreme lags in a child's development
 - angry, aggressive, or destructive behavior to gain adult attention
 - parent is overly critical, doesn't understand child's basic needs, has unrealistic expectations about a child's development, or blames the child for the parent's problems

Detect Predators

- Most child predators lead a double life: they are careful to present themselves as someone you would never suspect of misconduct. Many are trusted family and friends, respected members of the community, and skillful liars.
- In this section, we'll cover how to:
 - recognize predatory behavior
 - avoid placing children at risk
- **Note:** *Because 80-95% of predators are male, we will use "he" to refer to all predators. While there are fewer women who commit child sexual abuse, the harm they cause is as severe as that committed by male predators, and they are more difficult to spot.*

Creating an Image

- You cannot identify predators by their age, sex, position, or appearance.
- Predators will do what it takes to make you like them and not consider them a threat. Many are smart, charming, and respected members of the community. If a child discloses abuse or an adult becomes suspicious, most people won't believe them because the predator isn't "that kind of person."
- Instead, you need to be suspicious of certain behaviors that help you identify high risk people and situations.

Grooming Children

- Predators use calculated behavior called "grooming" to win children's affection and manipulate them into having sex. Signs of grooming include:
- preferring children's company over someone their own age
- giving children gifts
- showering children with attention and praise
- roughhousing with, tickling, and touching children
- Often, predators prefer children who are easy targets, such as those who:
- lack confidence or have low self-esteem
- have a reputation for lying or emotional problems
- are needy and don't have a happy home life
- have stressed-out and busy parents
- are easy to manipulate

Grooming Adults

- Predators also groom adults to appear like ordinary nice and helpful people. But predators have a hidden agenda. Gaining the trust of adults gives predators access to children, creating opportunities for abuse.
- These are the primary techniques predators use to groom adults:
- offer unsolicited help and not ask for anything in return — but the price may be unsupervised access to children
- commit boundary violations to test physical and emotional limits on contact and interactions with children
- create a team or insider status to avoid enforcement of boundaries and the usual screening process
- make unsolicited promises (e.g., "they're safe with me, I promise")
- discount or ignore "no," trying to make adults feel wrong or guilty for enforcing boundaries

Digital Predators

- Technology has expanded the predators' ability to groom children without being detected. Predators use computers and cell phones to befriend their victims and lure them into sexual encounters.
- "Sexting" (sending revealing or sexually suggestive photos with a text message) has become more common among high school teens.
- "Sextortion" is another way online predators ensnare their victims. They take over the victims' computers, or hack into their Facebook or other online accounts, to find personal information and incriminating photos. The hackers contact the victims and threaten to publicly post incriminating photos unless the victims pose for increasingly sexual photos via webcam.
- As new media tools are created at a frenetic pace, they increase the risks that young people face in the digital world.

Report Suspected Abuse

The procedures for reporting child abuse, including:

- what is a reasonable suspicion
- how to make a report of child abuse
- what information to report
- how to report child sexual abuse under Title IX

Report Your Reasonable Suspicions

- You must make a report to the authorities when you have a reasonable suspicion that a child may be a victim of abuse.
- If you suspect a child was or is being abused, ask yourself "would a person with average judgment, who saw or heard what I did, suspect child abuse?" If the answer is "yes," you have a reasonable suspicion.
- A reasonable suspicion does not have to be based on your personal knowledge — but it does need to be based on more than a rumor.
- Reasonable suspicion doesn't always mean something bad happened. It only means you suspect that abuse may have occurred or a child is at risk of being abused. It can be based on a single incident, what the child says, or a combination of signs (physical, behavioral, environmental, or parental clues).

How to Report

- Once you have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, **immediately** make a report to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services either:
- electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home
- **1-800-932-0313**
- TDD: **1-866-872-1677** (for the hearing impaired)
- For emergencies or crimes in progress, call **911** or [local law enforcement](#).
- You must follow up within **48 hours** with a written report to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Notify the University or State System individual designated in the University's or State System's local Protection of Minors Policy.
- In lieu of making both an oral and a written report, mandated reporters may submit **one** report online at:
- <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
- A mandated reporter who reports online is not required to follow up with a written report.

- In addition to reporting directly to the government authorities, mandated reporters who are staff members of California University of Pennsylvania must notify the person in charge (or a designated person—Dr. John Burnett) if they suspect child abuse while performing their work. The designated person (Dr. John Burnett) must then facilitate our cooperation with the appropriate government agency.

What to Report

- When you report, provide as much of the following information as you can:
- child and child's parents' or caregivers' name, address, age, and sex
- where the suspected abuse occurred
- nature and extent of the suspected child abuse
- prior abuse to the child or siblings of the child
- suspected perpetrator's name, age, sex, and relationship to the child, and any history of causing prior abuse
- composition of the child's family
- your name, telephone number, and email address
- any actions you've taken on behalf of the child
- any other information that may be relevant
- You must report your reasonable suspicions of abuse even if you don't have all of this information. Just provide all the information you do have available that may help the agency protect the child.

Title IX Prohibits Child Sexual Abuse

- In addition to your duties under the child abuse reporting laws, you're also required to report sexual misconduct to your school under a federal law called Title IX.
- Title IX requires schools to address sexual misconduct — including child abuse — when it limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities.
- It doesn't matter whether the sexual misconduct is committed by school employees, other students, or third parties.
- Once the school knows or should have known about the sexual misconduct, it must take prompt and effective steps to stop it, prevent it from happening again, and remedy its effects.

Title IX Reporting Duties

- Title IX requires "responsible employees" to report information regarding alleged sexual misconduct to the school's Title IX coordinator (Dr. John Burnett) or other designated person. All employees are responsible employees.
- Reports must be made to the Title IX coordinator (Dr. John Burnett) **immediately**

CALU's Protection of Minors Policy

- Is located on the Social Equity page of the Calu Website or can be obtained at the Social Equity Office located in South Hall, Room 112. The Social Equity phone number is 724-938-4014.
- <http://www.calu.edu/faculty-staff/files/protection-of-minors-on-campus.pdf>

Congratulations! In this course you've learned how to:

- Recognize the signs and types of child abuse
- Recognize predatory behavior and avoid placing children at risk
- Report your reasonable suspicions of child abuse

- Lets work together to keep children and CALU safe!