

Division of Child Protection and Permanency

What is the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P)?

- CP&P is New Jersey's child protection and child welfare agency within the Department of Children and Families. (Formerly the Division of Youth and Family Services – DYFS). Its mission is to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children and to support families. CP&P is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and, if necessary, arranging for the child's protection and the family's treatment.

Child Abuse Law:

- By law (N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10), and the Department of Education regulations (N.J.A.C. 6:29-9), any person having a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected in any environment (e.g. home, institutions) is required to immediately notify the CP&P). Reporting through a secondary source creates unnecessary delays in reporting, possibly resulting in further harm to the child and does not satisfy the statutory requirement to report directly to CP&P. Also, CP&P staff taking the referral may need information known only by the teacher.
- (Source:Frequently asked questions by teachers, administrators and school support staff, NJ Dept of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services).

How To Report Suspicions of Abuse:

- The Child Abuse Hotline (State Central Registry) receives all reports of child abuse and neglect 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.
- Reports requiring a field response are forwarded to the CP&P Local Office who investigates.
(<http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/divisions/dcphp/>)
- A concerned caller does not need proof to report an allegation of child abuse and can make the report anonymously.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT HOTLINE:

- **1-877-NJ ABUSE
(652-2873)**
- **1-800-835-5510
(TTY/TDD)**
- If a child is in immediate danger, also call **911**.

What information will I be asked to provide to the hotline screener?

- Screeners are trained caseworkers who know how to respond to reports of child abuse/neglect.
- Whenever possible, a caller should provide all of the following information:
 - **Who:** The child and parent/caregiver's name, age and address and the name of the alleged perpetrator and that person's relationship to the child.
 - **What:** Type and frequency of alleged abuse/neglect, current or previous injuries to the child and what caused you to become concerned.
 - **When:** When the alleged abuse/neglect occurred and when you learned of it.
 - **Where:** Where the incident occurred, where the child is now and whether the alleged perpetrator has access to the child.
 - **How:** How urgent the need is for intervention and whether there is a likelihood of imminent danger for the child.

What are some signs of child abuse and neglect?

Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises and welts:
 - On face, lips, mouth
 - On torso, back, buttocks, thighs
 - In various stages of healing
 - Cluster, forming regular patterns
 - Reflecting shape of article used to inflict (electric cord, belt buckle)
 - On several different surface areas
 - Regularly appear after absence, weekend, or vacation.
- Unexplained burns:
 - Cigar, cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back, or buttocks
 - Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like doughnut shaped on buttocks or genitalia)
 - Patterned like electric burner, iron, etc.
 - Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Unexplained fractures:
 - To skull, nose, facial structure
 - In various stages of healing
 - Multiple or spiral fractures
- Unexplained laceration or abrasions:
 - To mouth, lips, gums, eyes
 - To external genitalia

Signs of Abuse/Neglect continued...

- **Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse:**
 - Wary of adult contacts
 - Apprehensive when other children cry
 - Behavioral extremes: aggressiveness, withdrawal
 - Frightened of parents
 - Afraid to go home
 - Reports injury by parents

Signs of Abuse/Neglect continued...

- **Physical Indicators of Physical Neglect:**
 - Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
 - Consistent lack of supervision, esp. in dangerous activities or long periods
 - Constant fatigue or listlessness
 - Unattended physical problems or medical needs
 - Abandonment
- **Behavioral Indicators of Physical Neglect:**
 - Begging/stealing food
 - Extended stays at school (early arrival, late departure)
 - Constantly falling asleep in class
 - Alcohol or drug abuse
 - Delinquency (e.g. thefts)
 - States there is no caregiver
- **Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse:**
 - Difficulty in walking or sitting
 - Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
 - Pain or itching in genital area
 - Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal, or anal areas
 - Venereal disease, esp. pre-teens
 - Pregnancy

Signs of Abuse/Neglect continued...

- **Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse:**
 - Unwilling to change for gym or participate in PE class
 - Withdrawn, fantasy, or infantile behavior
 - Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
 - Poor peer relationships
 - Delinquent or run away
 - Reports sexual assault by caregiver
- **Physical Indicators of Emotional Maltreatment:**
 - Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.)
 - Conduct disorders (antisocial, destructible, etc.)
 - Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, speech disorders, inhibition of play)
 - Psychoneurotic reactions (hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria)
 - Behavioral indicators of emotional maltreatment:
 - Behavior extremes: compliant, passive
 - Aggressive, demanding
 - Overly adoptive behavior: inappropriately adult-like, inappropriately infant-like, attempted suicide.

(Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect, Department of Children and Families, February 2008)

School District Policies:

- The district board of education develops and adopts policies and procedures for school district employees, volunteers, and interns to provide for the early detection of missing, abused or neglected children through notification of, reporting to and cooperation with the appropriate law enforcement and child welfare authorities pursuant to NJSA 18A:36-25 and 9:6-8.10.
- School district employees must immediately notify designated child welfare authorities of incidents of alleged missing, abused, and neglected children.
- The person having reason to believe that a child may be missing or may have been abused or neglected may, prior to notifying designated child welfare authorities, inform the principal or other designated school official if the action will not delay immediate notification.
- The person notifying child welfare authorities shall inform the principal or other designated school official(s) of the notification, if such had not occurred prior to notification.
- Notice to the principal or other designated school official(s) need not be given when the person believes that such notice would likely endanger the reporter or student involved or when the person believes that such disclosure would likely result in retaliation against the student or in discrimination against the reporter with respect to his or her employment (Subchapter 11. Reporting Potentially Missing or Abused Children 6A:16-11.1 Adoption of policies and procedures)

Do callers have immunity from civil or criminal liability?

- Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.
- Calls can be placed to the hotline anonymously.

Is it against the laws of New Jersey to fail to report suspected abuse/neglect?

- Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect according to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is a disorderly person and subject to a fine of up to \$1000 or up to six months imprisonment, or both.

What happens after I make the call?

- When a report indicates that a child may be at risk, this information is forwarded to the Local Office and an intake caseworker will promptly investigate the allegations of child abuse and neglect within 24 hours of receipt of the report.