

**MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, ABANDONMENT, AND / OR NEGLECT**

To comply with appropriate Florida law which makes mandatory the reporting of child abuse, abandonment, and / or child neglect, any teacher or other school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been:

- subject to abuse, abandonment, neglect or
- a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families at the statewide toll-free hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE. After the report has been made, reporters may notify the principal or the child abuse designee to ensure appropriate support. Principals and child abuse designees shall maintain the confidentiality of the reporter.

Concern that a child has been sexually or physically abused by a person who is not a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for a child's welfare shall be reported to law enforcement immediately.

If there are any questions related to child abuse, abandonment, neglect or a child in need of supervision and care, the school employee shall consult with the school-based child abuse designee.

Florida law provides penalties: "A person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree...."

Authority: F.S. 1001.41 (1) (2); F.S. 39. 201, 205(1); F.S. 39.01(46)

Policy Adopted: 9/5/74; 5/8/78; 11/1/84; 12/7/93; 9/15/98; 5/2/00; 9/3/03

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