

Child Abuse

Report child abuse

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, please contact the child welfare agency in the area where the child lives. It is best if you contact the agency by telephone or in person. To find the child welfare agency in your area, please contact the agency or district office of the Department of Community Services nearest you for more information.

After regular business hours call 1-866-922-2434 if you believe a child is in immediate danger.

Child protection services are about protecting children under 19 from abuse and/or neglect while making every effort to keep families together. Under the Children and Family Services Act, designated social workers in child welfare agencies are required to assess reports of alleged child abuse and neglect.

There are different kinds of child abuse:

1. Physical abuse

The intentional use of force on any part of a child's body that results in injury.

2. Emotional abuse

Anything that causes serious mental or emotional harm to a child, which the parent does not attempt to prevent or address.

3. Sexual abuse

The improper exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behaviour.

4. Neglect

Any lack of care that may cause significant harm to a child's development or endangers the child in any way.

Everyone has the duty to immediately report to a child welfare agency even a suspicion that a child under 19 may be in need of protective services. Reports may be made anonymously. Once a report is made, child protection social workers assess the information provided to determine an appropriate response.

FORM I AND REPORTING PROCEDURES (Revised)

Basic Philosophy: Children have a right to be safe from harm and abuse.

Legal Obligation: You are obliged to formally report (Form I) in certain circumstances when a child has been abused, is being abused or could be abused or neglected.

There are four major “abuse allegation” categories that you need to **understand** and **report**:

1. Worker to Child Abuse (CFSA-Section 25)

In this Section, you need to suspect that another worker may have abused the child (**deliberately** or **negligently caused** physical, sexual or emotional **injury**).

This situation may arise at the Respite Apartment.

2. Child to Child Abuse (CFSA-Section 25)

In this Section, you need to suspect that a child has abused another child (**deliberately caused** physical, sexual or emotional **injury**).

This situation may arise either at the Respite Apartment, or in child’s home (community respite).

3. Parent/Guardian Abuse (CFSA Sect. 22 “2” [refer to paras (a) – (m)])

In this Section, you need to suspect that a parent of a child has harmed the child, or there is a substantial risk that the parent will harm the child, as per Sec. 22 “2”.

This situation may arise in the child’s home (community respite).

4. Third Party (Not worker, not other child, nor parent/guardian) (CFSA-Section 25)

This situation may arise in the child’s home or community (community respite).

If abuse is suspected to have occurred at the Respite Apartment, the responsibilities of the worker are to:

- a) Ensure health and safety of alleged victim.
- b) Immediately fill out **Form I** and contact the Respite Coordinator for the Society for Treatment of Autism (NS) (cell: 577-8127) (other contact information located by respite apartment telephone).
- c) Immediately report suspected abuse to Intake Worker at Community Services (563-3400) or after-hours emergency number (563-5151) if during non-business hours.
- d) Copy of **Form I** is to be sent (**how??**) confidentially to Community Services (**to whom/contact info??**) by the Respite Coordinator of the Society for Treatment of Autism (NS) (cell: 577-8127).

If abuse is suspected to have occurred in the community (child's home or community), the responsibilities of the worker are to:

- a) Ensure health and safety of alleged victim.
- b) Immediately report suspected abuse to Intake Worker at Community Services (563-3400) or after-hours emergency number (563-5151) if during non-business hours.

In all cases of suspected abuse:

- **DO NOT interview the child**
- **DO NOT notify the alleged abuser, whether worker, parent or third party**
- **DO NOT notify the child's parent(s).**

***Remember:* You have a legal obligation to report suspected abuse. You don't have to KNOW it's abuse...report any questionable or suspicious situation...it is for the child welfare authorities to decide if further investigation is warranted. There are no negative repercussions for anyone making a report in good faith.**