

	REGULATION TITLE: Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection
	CODE: JLF – R
	LEAD DEPARTMENT: Academic Excellence

The purpose of this regulation is to provide guidelines for all staff and volunteers in Tucson Unified School District regarding their roles and responsibilities to report child abuse.

School personnel generally will receive information about possible abuse in one of three ways:

- the child will self report,
- physical injury or unusual behavior will be observed,
- a third party will disclose the abuse.

Interaction with child prior to report:

- In order to minimize the number of times the child victim is interviewed, minimize disclosure trauma, and insure that the appropriate and most qualified professionals conduct the investigation, school personnel should not pre-interview children.
- If the child has not spontaneously provided the following information about the abuse, only these exact questions may be asked as needed to provide basic information needed by the Department of Child Safety (DCS) and/or law enforcement for triage and prioritization:
 - What happened?
 - Who did it?
 - Where were you when it happened?
- It is not the job of school personnel to establish beyond a doubt that abuse has caused the observed injury or behaviors.
- It is completely inappropriate for school personnel to gather additional details in order to respond to anticipated questions by the DCS Hotline worker. The Hotline worker’s questions are for the purpose of gathering information that MAY be known to the person making the call, but is not EXPECTED to be known.
- Effort should be made to remember the child’s exact words during the disclosure and write them down afterward.
- In the case of third party reports (someone tells school personnel that a child has been maltreated), the school personnel should make a report based on the information provided and should not call in the child for an interview.
- School personnel shall maintain confidentiality of all information regarding the abuse report, except when such information is requested by DCS, law enforcement, or the County Attorney.

- School personnel should never promise to keep abuse information a secret, or make remarks like “No one is going to go to jail,” or use other distracting or dishonest information to reassure a child.
- Never delay a report pending approval of a supervisor, school resource officer, counselor or health staff person who is not immediately available.

Making Phone Reports

- Abuse reports should be telephoned to the DCS Hotline 1-888-SOS-CHILD (or 1-888-767-2445) and to 911.
- If unsure if the information constitutes abuse or is reportable, contact the DCS Hotline and DCS will evaluate the information and determine if a report should be made.
- Do not contact or provide information to the parent(s) and/or the alleged perpetrator. Refer all inquiries to police or DCS. It is the duty of Police and DCS, not school personnel, to notify parents of the investigation.
- Call within 72 hours the Arizona Department of Education, Investigative Unit if the alleged perpetrator is a certified teacher or administrator (602) 542-2972.

After the telephone report has been made

- Contact the appropriate school personnel (i.e. principal, assistant principal) who need to know in order to protect the child.
- School office personnel must maintain utmost confidentiality about investigators reporting to the school. Names and purpose for visit should not be spoken aloud in the presence of other visitors, students, or school staff by investigators or by school personnel.
- Assist police and Department of Child Safety upon their arrival by sharing information and providing a private place on campus for the agencies to meet with the child and/or with the reporting source.
- If a parent or guardian calls or comes to the school in an effort to locate a child being interviewed, sheltered or removed from school grounds, the Principal should refer the parent or guardian to DCS and the law enforcement agency for information. Parent or guardian should not be given information about the allegation or about the alleged abuser.

Reviewed: April 24, 2015 [Friday Report]

Revision:

Legal Ref: A.R.S. §13-3620; §15-514