

WHAT IS ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Abuse includes all forms of physical, psychological, sexual or verbal abuse. Abuse can include inappropriate touching, physical punishment, verbal taunting or threats, or isolation through silencing. Neglect is when a parent/care-giver does not provide for the basic emotional, physical and medical needs for the child or adult on an ongoing basis. Examples of this could include not providing basic necessities such as food or proper nutrition, supervision or prescribed medical treatment.

What do I do if I witness/suspect abuse or neglect or have information about abuse (past or present) disclosed to me?

Abuse of a Child:

1. **If the person being abused is a child**, you have a duty to report any incidents of abuse or neglect immediately. The mandatory child abuse reporting requirement in Section 72(3) of the Child and Family Services Act applies to social workers, nurses, service providers and any employee/volunteer of a service agency and any other person “who in the course of his/her professional or official duties has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may have suffered abuse”. This requirement takes PRECEDENCE over all other relationships and reflects the intent of the legislation to protect children from abuse and neglect.
2. If you witness or suspect abuse and/or have information disclosed to you regarding the abuse or neglect of a child follow the procedures as outlined below:
 - a) Intervene as appropriate to ensure the individual’s health and safety wherever possible;
 - b) If necessary, get immediate first aid or a physician’s care;
 - c) Contact your direct supervisor/coordinator or after hours on-call person immediately;
 - d) Contact Family and Children’s Services immediately;
 - e) Document what you witnessed or heard in writing and give it to your supervisor within 24 hours;
 - f) Maintain confidentiality.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO INTERVIEW THE CHILD. THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES

Abuse of an Adult who has a Developmental Disability or any Vulnerable Adult:

1. If the person being abused is an adult (over the age of 18 and has a developmental disability or a vulnerable adult) you have a duty to report any incidents of abuse or neglect immediately. The mandatory adult abuse reporting requirement is laid out in the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*.
2. If you witness or suspect abuse and/or have information disclosed to you regarding the abuse or neglect of an adult with a developmental disability or vulnerable adult follow the procedures as outlined below:
 - a) Intervene as appropriate to ensure that the individual's health, safety and well-being wherever possible;
 - b) If necessary, get immediate first aid or a physician's care;
 - c) Contact your direct supervisor/coordinator or after hours on-call person immediately;
 - d) Contact the police immediately if the abuse may constitute a criminal offense; do not attempt to investigate the incident;
 - e) Document what you witnessed or heard in writing and give it to your supervisor within 24 hours;
 - f) Maintain confidentiality

***DO NOT ATTEMPT TO INTERVIEW THE ADULT. THIS IS THE
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POLICE***