

Big Sandy Area C.A.P., Inc. - HEAD START
Program Policies and Procedures

SUBJECT:

Reporting Suspected or Known Child Abuse/Neglect

POLICY:

Head Start staff will report any suspected or known child abuse/neglect as required by law.

- *This policy relates to Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1304.31,1304.40*

PROCEDURE:

1. Each Head Start staff person is responsible for reporting any suspected or identified cases of child abuse immediately to the local Department of Protection and Permanency (DPP). The law is quite clear on the requirement to report such cases.
 - > Abuse includes: physical injury caused by actions other than accidental means, malnutrition, sexual molestation, emotional maltreatment which has an observable harmful effect on a child, gross neglect which could affect physical and/or mental well-being of the child.
 - > Children are unmarried persons under the age of eighteen; reporting is required for all children.
2. If there is a doubt as to whether a report needs to be made, the staff person will call the DPP office and give details of the situation without using the child/family name. If the DPP worker feels the situation warrants a report, the information will be given and abuse procedures followed.
3. Any reported case of suspected or known child abuse will be reported to the Delegate Director by submission of a "*Confidential Form for Reporting Child Abuse*" within a 24 hour period. If the person suspected of the abuse is a Head Start staff member, the "*Confidential Form for Reporting Staff Child Abuse*" will be used.
4. The Delegate Director will then follow-up:

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- a. Reassure staff that the program has complied with the law.
 - b. Contact the Department of Protection and Permanency to receive information, contribute additional assistance, and receive appropriate procedural directions regarding steps in the investigative process.
 - c. Submit a copy of the appropriate Confidential Reporting Form as well as any additional documentation of the situation to the Grantee Head Start Director within a 24 hour period.
5. If a report is made to DPP alleging staff abuse of a child, the Delegate Director will immediately contact the Grantee Director with details about the report.
 6. The Grantee Director will notify the Program Specialist in the Regional Office about any allegations of staff abuse toward a child within 24-48 hours of the time the report is made to DPP.
 7. Follow-up contacts with DPP regarding what is happening to the child and family after the investigation will be made and documented.
 8. When and where appropriate, the Family Advocate will work closely with DPP and family members to provide advocacy and support for the family.
 9. Documentation of child abuse reports and follow up will be filed separately and confidentiality maintained.

Approved by Policy Council, September 2016