Mandated Reporter Training

Commissioner Joette Katz

Department of Children and Families

Purpose of Mandated Reporter Training

- Provide information
- To keep you up to date with your roles, responsibilities and changes in the law and possible preventive measures you can take to protect yourselves as well as the children and families you serve
- To hear concerns, answer questions, and develop ways to work together to better protect children.

Who Must Report

- Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.
- Battered Women's Counselors
- Chiropractors
- Dental Hygienists
- Dentists
- Department of Children and Families Employees
- Department of Public Health employees responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps.
- Judicial Employees
- Licensed/Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors
- Licensed/Certified Emergency Medical Services Providers
- Licensed Foster Parents
- Licensed Marital and Family Therapists
- Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Interns
- Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Physicians
- Licensed Physicians
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Licensed Professional Counselors
- Licensed Surgeons
- Medical Examiners
- Members of the Clergy
- Mental Health Professionals
- Optometrists
- Parole Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
- Pharmacists
- Physical Therapists
- Physician Assistants
- Podiatrists
- Police Officers
- Probation Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
- Psychologists
- Registered Nurses
- ✱ School Employees - *as defined in* section 53a-65 *of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) (subsection 13)*
- Sexual Assault Counselors
- Social Workers
- School Coaches or Coaches of Intramural or Interscholastic Athletics
- The Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate

✱ Newly Added October 2011

Reasonable Cause to Suspect

- Observed
- What is told or said
- Knowledge from professional training and experience
- A suspicion is enough to file a report based on what you observe or are told.

<u>CERTAINTY IS NOT REQUIRED</u>

Lovan C. –vs- DCF

- The child's misbehavior and the surrounding circumstances, including the parent's motive
- The type of punishment administered
- The amount of force used
- The child's age, size, and ability to understand the punishment

Whom does DCF investigate?

The Department will investigate cases where the abuse or neglect has been inflicted by or caused by a *person responsible or entrusted* for such child's health, welfare, or care or by a person given such access to such child by such person responsible. All other reports will be referred to the appropriate local law enforcement authority.

"Person Entrusted"

- Anyone given access to child or youth by a person who is responsible for the health, welfare, or care of a child or youth.

- For the purpose of providing education, child care, counseling, spiritual guidance, coaching, training, instruction, tutoring, or mentoring of such child or youth.

Information you may need when filing a report

- The names and addresses of the child and his parents or other person responsible for his care;
- The age of the child;
- The gender of the child;
- The nature and extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- The approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred;
- Information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or his siblings;
- The circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter;
- The name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- The reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- Any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child;
- Whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child (PA 11-93 §15). Items 9 and 10 are new.

Confidentiality
&
Anonymity

Legal Protections for Reporting & Consequences for Failing to Report

Failing to Report

- Any mandated reporter who fails to make a report or fails to report within 12 hours of the suspected child abuse/neglect or imminent risk of serious harm:
  - a. may be liable for civil damages caused by such failure.
  - b. shall be fined between $500-2500
  - c. attend educational training program

- School Employees - Any Mandated Reporter that is a School Employee (as defined *in* section 53a-65 *(subsection 13))* that fails to report OR fails to report within the 12 hour timeframe may be subject to an investigation by the Department of Children and Families and the penalties stated above..

Safe Haven Act

An act that creates a safe alternative to leaving infants in unsafe places

- A parent may voluntarily surrender physical custody of an infant age thirty one (30) days or younger to the nursing staff of a hospital emergency room. Parent is not required to provide his or her name or medical history.

Differential Response System

INVESTIGATION

- In cases of serious child maltreatment:

  A comprehensive investigative response that may include close collaboration with law enforcement that may result in a clear message that violence against children is a crime and will be punished.

FAMILY ASSESSMENT

- In cases of less serious child maltreatment:

  A comprehensive family assessment and coordinated service delivery will result in better engagement and involvement of families and consequently in better protection for children.

DCF
Strengthening Families

- DCF recognizes that strengthening Connecticut families requires partnership with the immediate family, the extended family, and community providers.

- Thank you for being part of this team.