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Saskatchewan Child Abuse Protocol

What is your Role?

“Duty to Report”

Prevention Matters Conference

October 4, 2017



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Background

- The provincial Child Abuse Protocol promotes a coordinated and integrated approach to child abuse investigations by describing the roles and responsibilities of government ministries, police, communities, professionals, individuals and organizations in responding to child abuse.
- The inter-ministry human service Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation (CASE) Committee is responsible for the Protocol and will be releasing an updated version in the fall of 2017.
- We are now talking to various groups to raise awareness about the legal duty to report suspicions of child abuse and to discuss roles and responsibilities under the Protocol.



Principles

- Responsibility for the protection of children and youth from abuse and neglect is shared by **all** in Saskatchewan.
- When there is a **suspicion** that abuse/neglect has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur, by law a report is required to be made.
- Every individual has a **personal** duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect. This personal obligation cannot be delegated to another individual.



What is Abuse?

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse/Exploitation
- Physical Neglect
- Emotional Maltreatment
- Exposure to Domestic or Interpersonal Violence
- Failure to Provide Essential Medical Treatment



What is Suspicion of Abuse?

Can you provide some examples where you may suspect abuse or neglect?



Concerned About Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse?

Some individuals have raised concerns about reporting suspicions of abuse noting:

- confidentiality;
- a relationship with the family- It's my family, friend or neighbour;
- the size of the community- It's a small community and someone might know where the report came from; or
- anxiety that the child(ren) may be apprehended or removed from the home.

But.....



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- You can make a report anonymously. Your duty to report suspected child abuse overrides any duty to protect the privacy of clients, individuals.
- You have a legal obligation to report regardless if it is regarding family, a friend or a neighbour.
- Just because a report is made that does not mean a child will be removed from the home. A case worker will assess the situation and where possible will provide supports to the family so the child can remain in the home safely.
- **Reluctance to report can contribute to continued abuse and even death of a child.**



IMPORTANT

- Child abuse referrals are confidential.
- Failure to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect may result in professional disciplinary or legal action.
- No action for damages may be brought against a person who reports suspected child abuse, unless that person has knowingly made a false report or if the report was not made in good faith.



What Information Do I Report?

- Your immediate concerns about the child's safety;
- The child's location, name, age and gender;
- Information about the family, caregivers and alleged abusers;
- Other children who may be affected; and
- Any other relevant information.



Always Report!!!

- Report even if you do not have all of the information.
- It is **not** your responsibility to determine if the abuse has occurred- report what information you have.
- If a child discloses abuse, **DO NOT** ask leading questions or insert information. When reporting, convey the information in the child's words.
- Report in a timely manner- timeliness is essential. Delays in reporting can impact an investigation and the integrity of evidence.
- Even if you believe someone else is reporting the information you still have a legal duty to report the information you have.



Where Do I Report My Suspicions of Child Abuse?

- Ministry of Social Services Child Protection Office
- Local child protection intake line
 - Prince Albert - North 1-866-719-6164
 - Saskatoon - Centre 1-800-274-8297
 - Regina - South 1-844-787-3760
- After hours
 - Mobile Crisis Services
 - Prince Albert 306-764-1011
 - Saskatoon 306-933-6200
 - Regina 306-569-2724
 - Other Communities Local Police/RCMP
- 17 First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies



What Happens After a Report is Made?

- After the report is made, it is the responsibility of the child protection worker and/or police to determine the outcome of the allegations.
- Other professionals also play a critical role in assisting with the investigation, supporting the child during and after the investigation, and providing the child and family follow up services.



Resources

- Saskatchewan Child Abuse Protocol 2014 (English)

<http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/17/18812-Saskatchewan-Child-Abuse-Protocol-2014.pdf>

- Saskatchewan Child Abuse Protocol 2014 (French)

<http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/17/33268-Protocole-2014-de-la-Saskatchewan-sur-l'enfance-maltraitee.pdf>

- Duty to Report Pamphlet (English)

<http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/17/85210-Duty-to-report.pdf>

- Duty to Report Pamphlet (French)

<http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/17/85213-Devoir-de-%20signaler-FR.PDF>

- Child Protection Services Factsheet

<http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/17/16895-Child-Protection-factsheet.pdf>



Next Steps

- We encourage you to:
 - Have discussions about the Saskatchewan Child Abuse Protocol.
 - Review the 'duty to report' suspicions of child abuse and neglect, what to report, and where to report those suspicions.
 - Incorporate the Protocol into your organizations training and policies/procedures.
- You Can Make a Difference In The Life Of a Child.



<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/>



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