

## Mandated Reporting and Responding to Disclosures

As teachers and school personnel you are a mandated reporter. This means it is your responsibility to make a report if a child discloses or you suspect any type of abuse. The law specifies that reporting to a supervisor is not adequate, it is your responsibility to make a report as the person who the child has disclosed to or if you suspect the child is a victim of abuse or neglect. Child on child sexual abuse is a sign of child abuse and should be reported to law enforcement to ensure both children can receive proper referrals. Legal action could be taken if you neglect to make a report of a disclosure.

### Talking about sexual harassment, child abuse, or childhood sexual abuse

Children often keep abuse and harassment a secret. Being able to talk openly about these tough topics can encourage children to share.

#### Listening to students

- Always be open-minded and nonjudgmental.
- Kids often tell other people than the caregivers
- Kids may tell portions of happened to “test the waters”
- They will shut down or recant their stories
- Kids have nicknames for private parts. Pocketbook, cookie, etc.

#### Talking to students

- Recognizing and talking about the private parts of the body in camp appropriate words
- No one should touch them
- Be proactive. If a child seems uncomfortable, or resistant to being with a particular adult, ask why

### Reacting Responsibility

It's important to understand how to appropriately respond to disclosures, discoveries, and suspicions of sexual harassment and abuse. Your goal is to create a trusting, nonjudgmental environment so the child will feel comfortable disclosing information about the abuse. It is not uncommon for a child to make a disclosure and then quickly recant, in this instance a report is still necessary.

#### Responding to a Disclosure

- Don't Overreact. Stay calm
- Be open-minded.
- Listen to what they have to say
- ALWAYS BELIEVE THEM
- Thank them for sharing; tell them they are brave for sharing this information
- No leading questions, no investigations.
- Let them know you are there to help them  
\*never make any promises\*
- If the child uses inappropriate language do not scold or correct the child's language during the disclosure.
- When documenting disclosure use their exact words and language to describe the abuse.

#### If you witnessed abuse or sexual abuse

- Report it immediately
- Share who, what, when, where it happened and where the offender is
- Share any other details you feel are related, example-victim behavior leading up to the incident

#### If you suspect abuse or sexual abuse

- Report the behavior
- Ask open ended questions
- Move on- “I'm on my way there, now, I'll walk with you”



## Important Phone Numbers

**Julie Valentine Center**

Office 331-0560

**24 hour confidential Hot-Line 864-467-3633**

**DSS Child Services ..... (864) 467-7750**

Greenville City Police ..... (864) 271-5333	Greer Police Dept. .... (864) 848-2151
Greenville Sheriff's Office. (864) 467-5300	Travelers Rest Police ..... (864) 834-9029
Fountain Inn Police Dept.. (864) 862-4461	Pickens Police Dept..... (864) 878-6366
Mauldin Police ..... (864) 297-5200	Easley Police Department:.....(864)859-4025
	Simpsonville Police ..... (864) 967-9536

There are a lot of great online resources for parents and students. Here are just a few:

- <https://www.positiveparentingsolutions.com/parenting/scripts-tips-talking-kids-sexual-harassment>
- <https://childmind.org/blog/talk-children-sexual-harassment/>
- <https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/>
- <https://childmind.org/article/helping-girls-deal-unwanted-sexual-attention/>
- <https://www.bark.us/blog/8-tips-talking-teen-sexting-sextortion/>
- <https://www.common sense media.org/sex-in-the-media/how-do-i-talk-to-my-teens-about-sexting>
- <http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/talking-your-kids-about-sexting-%E2%80%94-tip-sheet>
- <https://thatsnotcool.com/>