

Mandated Child Abuse Reporting

All South Pasadena Unified School District employees are mandated to report suspected child abuse (see BP 5141.4). Child abuse is legally defined as any act of omission or commission that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development. Categories include:

Physical abuse: unlawful corporal punishment or injury.

Emotional abuse: Emotional maltreatment/deprivation; willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment.

Physical neglect: general and severe neglect.

Sexual abuse: Sexual assault; exploitation.

Indicators of suspected child abuse are listed below to assist in recognizing potential or existing problems.

Physical Abuse:

Bruises, burns, abrasions, lacerations or swelling caused by other than accidental means.

Belt buckle marks, handprints, bite marks and pinches.

History of recurring injuries.

Unexplained injuries: conflicting explanations or reasons for injury.

Emotional Abuse

Child is frightened of parents/caretakers or at the other extreme is overprotective of parents/caretakers. Child is frightened of going home.

Child is extremely passive, overly compliant, apathetic, withdrawn or fearful or at the other extreme, excessively aggressive, destructive or physically violent.

Child is clingy and forms indiscriminate attachments, or is wary of physical contact.

Physical Neglect:

Child is lacking adequate medical or dental care.

Child is often sleepy or hungry or appears malnourished.

Child is often unsupervised. The conditions in the home are unsafe or unsanitary.

Sexual Abuse:

Child makes statements about sexual activity with parents, relatives, friends of the family or other adults. Unusually seductive with classmates and/or adults.

Child shows an early or exaggerated awareness of sex.

Child is known to be a victim of other forms of abuse.

As mandated reporters for suspected child abuse you are NOT investigators. South Pasadena Police and the Department of Children & Family Services are child protective agencies and as such, are required to investigate reports of suspected child abuse. Although the District has a centralized internal suspected child abuse reporting system in place to facilitate reporting and effective communication with investigating agencies, Staff has the option to report directly to the South Pasadena Police or the Department of Children and Family Services. If you suspect child abuse: Contact your site supervisor immediately.