

The Role of the First Responder and Mandated Reporter

In order to minimize trauma and ensure an effective investigation, the first responder or mandated reporter should follow these guidelines.



Determine whether the child needs medical care

Under the following circumstances seek immediate medical guidance.

- A child has an injury, is bleeding or seems unwell (vomiting, disoriented, etc)
- An infant or toddler may have been physically abused
- There is a psychological emergency (suicidal, etc.)
- Suspected sexual abuse occurred within the past 72 hours.
- An adolescent experienced non-consensual penetration within the past 5 days.
- If concerns or questions seem urgent



Take a non-leading minimal facts statement

This statement should be gathered from sources other than the child and should not be done in the child's presence.



Minimal facts interview with the child

There will be times when it is necessary to conduct a minimal facts interview of the child. Under the following circumstances a minimal facts interview of the child should be conducted:

- When the child may be in imminent danger.
- When you are unable to obtain basic information of the allegation from other sources.

- When the child is your only source of information.

Both a minimal facts statement and interview should include:

- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who did this?

Avoid why-type questions and asking children questions that elicit specific details about the abuse.



Mandated Reporting

- If a mandated reporter has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected the mandated reporter **MUST** report to Child Protective Services or Law Enforcement immediately.

- In cases of suspected child sexual abuse or severe physical abuse, Child Protective Services or Law Enforcement will arrange for an in-depth forensic interview of the child at the Children's Advocacy Center.



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Children's Advocacy Center

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