

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF DYFS?

In New Jersey, the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) is the state agency that receives and investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect and, if necessary, arranges for the child's protection and the family's treatment.

## WHAT ARE MY OBLIGATIONS TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

By law (N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 and 18A:36-25) and Department of Education regulations (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11), any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected by a parent or caregiver is required to immediately notify DYFS. After reporting to DYFS, any school district employee, volunteer or intern must inform the principal or other designated school official so that law enforcement authorities can be notified.

School personnel play an important role as reporters since they closely observe and interact with children on a daily basis. The name of a reporter is kept confidential and reports to DYFS can be made anonymously. However, the investigator may need to clarify information with the reporter or have additional questions.

If you need help deciding whether to report a specific situation, contact the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-877 NJ ABUSE to speak to a screener.

## WHAT IS MY LIABILITY?

Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse is a disorderly person and subject to a fine up to \$1,000 or up to six months in prison, or both. Educators should know that you are protected from civil or criminal liability, discharge from employment and discrimination if you make a report in good faith.

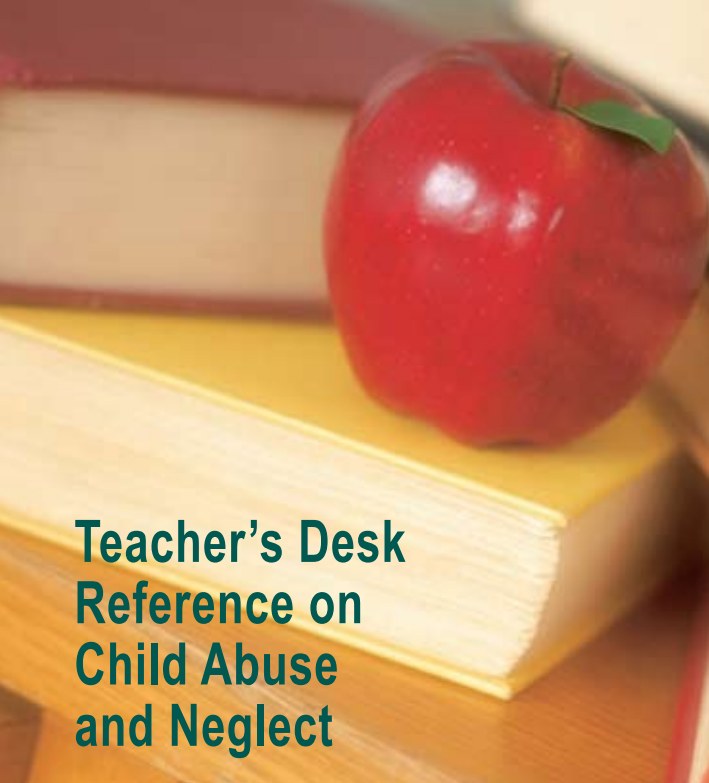
## RESOURCES

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline  
(State Central Registry)  
**1-877 NJ ABUSE**  
**(1-877-652-2873)**  
TTY 1-800-835-5510

For information and free  
publications regarding  
child abuse and neglect visit:  
**[www.nj.gov/dcf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf)**

If you know a parent who is  
feeling stressed out, they can call to  
speak anonymously with a trained  
volunteer who can listen and help.

**Family Helpline**  
**1-800-THE KIDS**



Teacher's Desk  
Reference on  
Child Abuse  
and Neglect

WHAT YOU DO  
CAN SAVE  
A CHILD'S LIFE

## WHAT ARE COMMON SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

### Physical indicators of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruises or welts
- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained fractures
- Unexplained abrasions or lacerations

### Indicators of neglect may include:

- Consistent hunger
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Inappropriate dress
- Poor hygiene
- Unattended medical needs

### Indicators of sexual abuse may include:

- Complaints regarding genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Unusual knowledge about or preoccupation with sex

### Indicators of emotional abuse:

- Aggressive or withdrawn behavior
- Unusual fears
- Running away
- Sudden change in mood or behavior

## HOW DO I REPORT CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

### CALL:

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline  
(State Central Registry)

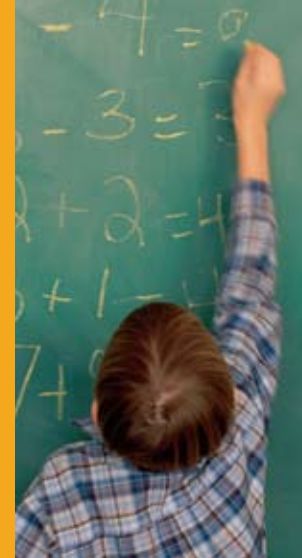
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**1-877 NJ ABUSE**  
**(1-877-652-2873)**

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I REPORT?

A professional screener will ask you questions to help determine the best response to the situation you are reporting. Not all reports result in a field investigation by DYFS. The screener may determine that another response is more appropriate.

When a report indicates that a child is at risk, DYFS will investigate the allegations within 24 hours of receipt of the report. You may be contacted by the investigator to supply additional information.



## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT LIAISON TO DYFS?

The school district liaison acts as the primary contact person between the schools in a school district and DYFS for the purpose of information sharing and other cooperative efforts such as the development of mutual training.



### THE REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE:

**Who:** Identifying information about the child, family and suspected perpetrator.

**What:** Type and frequency of alleged abuse/neglect, current or previous injuries to the child and what caused you to be concerned.

**When:** When the abuse/neglect occurred and when did you learn about it.

**Where:** Where the incident occurred, where the child is now and whether the alleged perpetrator has access to the child.

**How:** How urgent is the need for intervention and whether there is imminent danger to the child.