

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of Global Preparatory Academy @ Riverside 44 to provide a safe, supportive, and responsive school environment for all students. The Global Preparatory Academy School Board believes that all students have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect. The board thus acknowledges the necessity of this policy to ensure school personnel are able to recognize and report suspected cases of abuse and neglect.

Purpose

- To protect students from child abuse and neglect.
- To educate all school personnel on of the requirement to immediately report suspected child abuse (neglect, physical, sexual); their right to confidentiality; and of immunity from civil liability or criminal penalty for reporting.
- To establish procedures to be used by all school personnel when reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Child Abuse

I. Types

- A. Physical Abuse:** Any intentional, non-accidental physical injury to a child. Physical injury (may not be visible), indicative that a child's health or welfare may be harmed or at risk of being harmed;
- B. Neglect:** General neglect is the failure of a parent or caregiver to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, nurturing or supervision whereby a child's health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm. Severe neglect results from failure to protect the child from severe malnutrition or medically diagnosed non-organic failure to thrive.
- C. Emotional Abuse:** The intentional or accidental failure of a parent or caregiver to provide adequate nurturing or positive interaction to a child, causing injury to the psychological capacity or emotional stability of the child, observable as a substantial change in behavior, emotional response, cognition, anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior.
- D. Verbal Abuse:** Includes belittling, screaming, threats, blaming, sarcasm, bullying, harsh and insulting language, unpredictable responses, continual negative moods, constant family discord, and chronically communicating conflicting messages to children.
- E. Sexual Abuse:** Any violation, exploitation, or sexual activity with a child to provide sexual gratification or financial benefit to the perpetrator. This includes

contact for sexual purposes, molestation, statutory rape, prostitution, pornography, exposure, incest, or other sexually exploitative activities.

- F. Child Safety: A subset of neglect, and includes leaving young children unsupervised, or leaving children in locked cars with closed windows. Hot cars can be lethal to young children.
- G. Substance Abuse: Use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and controlled substances by a parent or caregiver, which impairs their ability to adequately care for a child. Exposing a child to the chemicals, equipment, or manufacture of illicit drugs, and selling, distributing, or giving drugs or alcohol to a minor child.
- H. Abandonment: Parent's identity or whereabouts are unknown, the child has been left by the parent in circumstances in which the child suffers serious harm, or the parent has failed to maintain contact with the child or to provide reasonable support for a specified period of time.

II. Warning Signs

- A. The child has repeated injuries that are not properly treated or adequately explained.
- B. The child begins acting in unusual ways ranging from disruptive and aggressive behaviors to passive and withdrawn.
- C. The child acts in the role of parent toward their siblings or even toward their parents.
- D. The child may have disturbed sleep (nightmares, bed wetting, fear of sleeping alone, needing a nightlight, etc.), which may also result in fatigue during the day at school.
- E. The child loses his/her appetite, overeats, or reports being hungry.
- F. There is a sudden drop in school grades, attendance, or participation in activities.
- G. The child may act in stylized ways, such as sexual behavior that is not normal for his/her age group.
- H. The child may report abusive or neglectful acts.

III. Reporting

- A. *Under Indiana law, any individual who has a reason to believe a child is a victim of abuse or neglect has the duty to make a report; thus, everyone in Indiana is considered a mandated reporter.*
- B. School professionals are required to immediately make a report to the Department of Child Services (DCS) or the local law enforcement agency.
- C. *After making the report, the school staff person must notify the Assistant Principal of Culture and Discipline and the Principal that the report was made.*
- D. Any staff person who has a reason to believe (evidence that would cause you to believe that a child was abused or neglected), should immediately make a report

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to DCS or local law enforcement. When in doubt, if you have ‘reason to believe’, make the report.

- E. Do not investigate. If abuse or neglect is suspected, no further questioning should occur. DCS and law enforcement are responsible for the investigation and gathering of information.
- F. Do not call the parent unless told to do so by DCS.
- G. A child may be in distress after reporting abuse or neglect. Therefore, it would be important to stay with the student or to ensure the student is not alone. Request assistance from School Counselor, School Social worker, Psychologist, if appropriate. A call or email to the counselor may be appropriate to request assistance, keeping in mind minimum details should be shared.
- H. Contact local law enforcement without delay if the child’s immediate safety is a concern.
- I. Report suspected abuse or neglect to the Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-800-5556. It is recommended that you identify yourself as a school professional.
 - 1. Have readily available: name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s); name(s) of alleged victim(s); approximate time and duration of alleged abuse; and general nature of the abuse (the [DCS Intake Tool](#) will guide you on what information will be requested from DCS).
 - 2. Provide the most detailed information available.
 - 3. Notify your school administrator or designee that a report was made and request signature on the [preliminary report of alleged child abuse or neglect](#).
 - 4. Maintain a copy of the preliminary report of alleged child abuse or neglect for your records and provide a copy to the administrator or designee.
 - 5. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a Class B misdemeanor.

If it is determined that a student should not be sent home after dismissal, or if a student expresses concern for his/her safety or well-being by returning home or being released to the parent/guardian, DCS and/or local law enforcement should be consulted immediately. School staff should follow instructions from law enforcement and/or DCS.

IV. Support for Students

- A. School employees will collaborate with the department of child services and local law enforcement to provide support to the alleged victims of abuse and neglect as well as students who make such reports.

- B. School Counselors, School Social Workers, School Psychologists, Nurses, and other appropriate school personnel are available to provide support and counseling to students who are victims or alleged victims of abuse.
- C. Multidisciplinary/Student support/intervention team meetings should occur for the purpose of providing services and support to students in need. To the extent permitted by confidentiality laws, information may be shared and concerns discussed to coordinate planning services for the student. Appropriate school personnel may also request information outside of the team meeting to coordinate services that may be provided in the community.
- D. Community referrals may need to be made as necessary. The school should have a list of community resources available for the student and family.
- E. Interventions
- F. Counseling options
- G. Education support available for a child to continue to be successful in school

V. Immunity

School personnel who make a report of child abuse or neglect, or participate in good faith in a related judicial proceeding, are immune from civil or criminal liability.

VI. School Employee Training

Per IC 20-28-3-4.5, each school corporation, charter school, and accredited nonpublic school shall require each school employee likely to have direct, ongoing contact with children within the scope of the employee's employment to attend or participate in training on child abuse and neglect, including reporting suspected abuse or neglect and recognizing possible signs, at least once every two years. Training must count toward professional development required by the governing body and must be during the employee's contracted day or at a time chosen by the employee.