

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse



222 investigations of improper teacher/student relationships in 2016

Abuse Hotline Reports

- In 2016 the hotline received 444,500 reports of child abuse-English.
- 19,064 reports of child abuse in Spanish.

Van Zandt County Reports

- 2016 FY there were 378 completed investigations of child abuse in Van Zandt County.
- DFPS determined that 22.4% of the children living in Van Zandt County are considered at risk.

Mandatory Reporting

Reports by DFPS and TEA state, “School personnel represent the largest professional resource for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect in Texas.”

TFC 261.101 states that “Any suspicion of abuse and neglect must be reported within 48 hours, or less as determined by the local school board, by the person or persons who observed the suspected abuse and neglect. School personnel may not rely on another person or administrator within the school district to report suspected child abuse or neglect for them.”

Senate Bill 7

- Governor Abbott signed Senate Bill 7 which penalizes principals and superintendents who do not report improper teach/student relationships to TEA.
- The administrator, who fails to report, may be held criminally responsible for hiding improper teacher/student relationships.

Types of Abuse

Four Categories

- Physical- Results in substantial harm to child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to child.
- Neglect- Placing or failing to remove a child from a situation beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities resulting in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm.
- Emotional- Observable and material impairment in child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
- Sexual

Sexual Abuse

- A sexual act committed under any of the following conditions:
- Without consent
- Force, even if there is no injury
- Threats/Fear, regardless of whether the victim resisted or fought back
- Person incapable of giving legal consent, due to mental illness, developmental, or physical disability
- A person is intoxicated, drugged, or unconscious
- Victim under the age of consent (17 is the age of consent)
- 85% of sexual assault victims knew their attacker
- Terms such as “Date Rape/Acquaintance Rape/Marital Rape” minimizes the attack

Sexual Abuse Statistics

- 1/10 CHILDREN WILL EXPERIENCE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BEFORE THEIR 18TH BIRTHDAY.
- Child sexual abuse is probably the most prevalent health problem children face with the most serious consequences.
- Child victims of sexual abuse are likely to experience symptoms throughout their lives.

Effects of Child Abuse

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Anxiety and depression
- Substance abuse
- Aggression and defiance
- ADHD
- Sexual promiscuity
- HIV and sexually transmitted diseases
- Teen pregnancy and motherhood
- Self-inflicted harm
- Delinquency
- Runaway behavior
- Homelessness
- Decreased school performance and drop out
- Obesity
- Suicide

How to Report Child Abuse

- Texas Abuse Hotline:
1-800-252-5400

- Internet:
<http://txabusehotline.org>

Urgent or emergency situations should not be reported via internet:

Injuries to a child 5 or under

Serious injuries to any child

Immediate need for medical care

(including a suicidal child)

Sexual abuse where the perpetrator has, or will have access to the child
within 24 hours

Children 5 and under who are alone, or likely to be left alone within the next 24
hours

Any situation that you believe requires a response in less than 24 hours

Resources

- dfps.state.tx.us
- <https://tea.texas.gov/>
- D2L.org (Darkness to Light Stewards of Children)
- <https://www.texastribune.org>

Thank you