

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

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### CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT (CAN) POLICY

**All staff are mandated reporters and are required by RCW 26.44 to report any and all suspected incidences of child abuse and neglect.**

### **CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION POLICY**

Child abuse, neglect, and exploitation are violations of children's human rights and an obstacle to their educational development. The Board directs staff to be alert for any incidence of such abuse, neglect, or exploitation. For purposes of this policy, "child abuse, neglect, or exploitation" shall mean:

- 1) Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing death, disfigurement, skin bruising, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function.
- 2) Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning.
- 3) Committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code, or intentionally committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code, or intentionally touching, either directly or through the clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for other than hygiene, child care, or health care purposes.
- 4) Committing acts which are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain or mental suffering.
- 5) Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by the criminal code.
- 6) Failing to provide food, shelter, clothing, supervision, or health care necessary to a child's health or safety.
- 7) Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to, the physical or mental health or development of a child.
- 8) Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of the preceding actions.

When feasible, the ESD may provide community education programs for prospective parents, foster parents and adoptive parents on parenting skills and on the problems of child abuse and methods to avoid child abuse situations. The ESD 114 also encourages staff to participate in in-service programs that deal with the issues surrounding child abuse.

The Administrator of each program directly serving students shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to staff. The purpose is to identify and report as soon as possible to the proper authorities all evidence of child abuse or neglect.

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Professional staff are legally required to report all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect, and all staff are required to by the ESD 114. Under state law, staff are free from liability for reporting instances of abuse neglect and professional staff are criminally liable for failure to do so.

Staff need not verify that a child has in fact been abused or neglected. Any conditions or information that may reasonably be related to abuse or neglect should be reported. Legal authorities have the responsibility for investigating each case and taking such action as is appropriate under the circumstances.

Reference:

RCW 13.34.300  
RCW 26.44.020  
RCW 26.44.030  
RCW 26.44.070  
RCW 28A.310.180  
RCW 28A.310.210  
RCW 43.43.830(6)  
AGO 1987, No. 9  
WAC 388-15-130(3)