



# NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT

1	<b>I. GENERAL</b>	The PA Child Protective Services Act was signed into law in 1975. This law	1
2		was enacted to protect children from abuse, allow for the opportunity for	2
3		healthy growth and development, and whenever possible, preserve and	3
4		stabilize the family.	4
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6		Child abuse, according to the Child Protective Services Law, includes	6
7		any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental	7
8		serious physical injury, or nonaccidental serious mental injury to a child	8
9		under 18 years of age, sexual or sexual exploitation to a child under 18 years of	9
10		age, and serious neglect. "Recent" is defined as an abusive act within two	10
11		years from the date Childline is called. Sexual abuse has no time limit. Child	11
12		abuse also includes any recent act, failure to act, or series of acts or failures	12
13		to act by a perpetrator that creates an imminent risk of serious physical	13
14		injury to or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.	14
15			15
16		A perpetrator of child abuse can be a child's parent, the person responsible for	16
17		the welfare of a child such as a babysitter or day care staff person, an	17
18		individual residing in the same home as the child who is at least 14 years of	18
19		age, or a paramour of the child's parent regardless of whether or not they	19
20		reside in the home. As a mandated reporter, you do not have to determine	20
21		whether or not the person meets the definition of perpetrator in order to make	21
22		the report.	22
23			23
24		Individuals who, in the course of their employment, occupation or practice of	24
25		a profession, come into contact with children and have reasonable cause to	25
26		suspect that a child under the care, supervision, guidance, or training of that	26
27		person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which	27
28		that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse are mandated to report.	28
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30	<b>II. SPECIFIC</b>	In cases where serious physical, mental, sexual abuse or physical neglect is	30
31	<b>GUIDELINES</b>	suspected, the guidance counselor, social worker, nurse, or administrator, as	31
32		well as the mandated reporter must immediately contact Bucks County	32
33		Children and Youth Services and Childline in Harrisburg. The phone	33
34		numbers are listed in all school offices. Should more direction be needed, the	34

counselor, social worker, nurse, or administrator may contact Bucks County Children and Youth Services for clarification. After the call is made to Childline in Harrisburg, a CY-47 form (available through the school nurse) must be completed by the school nurse, or designee and filed with the Bucks County Children and Youth Services within 24 hours.

School staff must also refer all cases of suspected physical abuse or physical neglect to the school nurse for examination.

School staff (guidance counselor, social worker, nurse) must notify the building and district level administration that a call about suspected child abuse or neglect has been made to Children and Youth Services and Childline.

In emergency circumstances when designated personnel are unavailable (e.g. after school hours), school staff are advised to use prudent judgment and contact the local police or the toll free Childline in Harrisburg and request direction.

All documentation related to reports of abuse or neglect, including the CY-47 form, must be maintained in the student's confidential file. If the report is determined to be unfounded by the investigating agency, then the reports are to be removed from the files and destroyed immediately by the appropriate administrators.

**REMEMBER:**

- The victim child no longer needs to come directly before the mandated reporter in order for the reporter to be obligated to make a report. The mandated reporting requirements are expanded to require persons who have a reasonable cause to suspect – on the basis of medical, professional or other training and experience – that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of that person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse.
- Mandated reporters are now obligated to report suspected child abuse without regard for the relationship between the alleged perpetrator, or abuser, and the child. That is, the mandated reporter need not be concerned about whether or not the abuser fits the definition of a perpetrator under the Child Protective Services Law.
- Penalties for failing to report suspected child abuse were increased to a misdemeanor of the third degree for the first violation and a misdemeanor of the second degree for subsequent violations.

RSM/ms

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