



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Updated 6/11/2020

Your Role as a Mandated Reporter

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL §40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect involving any child under 18 years old to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect at **1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)**.

Reportable Abuse & Neglect

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical endangerment
- Improper ethical guidance
- Lack of supervision
- Medical abuse
- Deprivation of basic needs
- Educational neglect
- Emotional conflict
- Psychological neglect

Call 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) to report child abuse and/or neglect.

Calling the Hotline:

- Operates 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Staffed by Child Protective Investigators (CPI)
- All calls are recorded
- Caller may remain anonymous
- The following criteria must be met in order for the call to become a case:
 - A child is under the age of 18
 - A specific incident or pattern of incidents suggesting child abuse and/or neglect must be identified

Remember, when responding to a child who discloses abuse of neglect to you:

- **Remain calm.** Reacting with a negative reaction, including disgust, shock, or denial, may cause the child to shut down.
- **Reassure the child.** Remind the child they did nothing wrong and the abuse/neglect is not their fault. Reassure the child they did the right thing by sharing this with a trusted adult.
- **Listen.** Listen to what the child is willing to share in the moment.
- **Keep the child safe.** If the child is in immediate risk of harm, call 911. Otherwise, a report to the DCYF Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline should be made immediately.
- **Allow Child Protective Services (CPS)** to conduct the investigation. Your role is to report the incident to the DCYF Child/Abuse Neglect Hotline, where CPS will conduct an investigation which includes asking involved parties additional questions.
- **Document everything.** Your program may have requirements related to documenting this type of interaction in a child's file or program log.

The purpose of mandatory reporting is to keep children safe! Failure to report or delaying a report of suspected abuse or neglect longer than 24 hours may result in a penalty under state law (RIGL § 40-11.6.1). If you are unsure of whether to make a report, it is best to call the DCYF Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at **1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)**.