

## CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY & PROCEDURES

NOCAC Child Development believes in concentrating on families - not just the parent or child. Our goal is to help you do the best you can in raising healthy, happy children. We understand every household has a different parenting style and we strive to understand and respect the rights of parents. However we also know some parenting styles may place a child at risk of harm and/or injury.

Children are abused and neglected every day. It is our responsibility to provide support and education to our families in an effort to prevent child maltreatment. Despite our efforts, the child we work with may still be abused or neglected. When this occurs, it is our responsibility to report the concerns to the proper authorities.

Ohio law identifies certain professionals as mandated reporters (Ohio Revised Code, Section 2151.421). This means anyone who is identified as a mandated (definition: “to authorize or decree (a particular action), as by the enactment of law”) reporter **MUST** contact the appropriate authorities when faced with the **suspicion** that a child is being abused or neglected.

Some professionals identified as mandated reporters include child care workers, day care personnel, nurses, physicians and psychologists, school authorities and school employees, school teachers, social workers and speech pathologists



**NOCAC Child Development staff are mandated reporters. All staff are required by Ohio Revised Code 2151.421 to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect.** As required by Ohio Job and Family Services, NOCAC Child Development staff is trained in child abuse/neglect recognition & prevention and are made aware of the mandated reporting laws. Ohio Revised Code 2151.421 states, “reporting is required if a mandated reporter **suspects** that a child under 18 years of age has suffered or faces a threat of physical or mental abuse or neglect.”

Staff is expected to follow the law set forth by the state and NOCAC’s policies and procedures regarding suspected child abuse/neglect and **MUST** contact the proper authorities in the event of a concern or suspicion.

**If staff fails to report, they could be found guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree and liable for civil damages.**

You may contact the Family & Community Engagement Manager via phone at 419-784-5136 ext 1105 with any questions or concerns regarding the child abuse/neglect policy.

**Step by step procedures to be followed by all staff when suspecting child abuse/neglect.**

1. **Ask** (ONLY if necessary) the child what happened using open ended questions only. After the child responds, if it is suspicious and you suspect abuse or neglect, you must make a report. Remember, not to question the child too much.

2. **Document** all information on NOCAC Child Abuse/Neglect Incident form and take to DJFS within 24 hours and the yellow copy of the form is to be sent to the NOCAC Central Office. When reporting a concern regarding a child, be sure to have all needed information available including:

- name and address of the child you suspect is being abused or neglected
- date of birth and age of child
- name and address of parent or caretaker
- name of person you suspect is abusing or neglecting the child
- reason you suspect abuse or neglect
- other significant information

