

This document is intended for all school staff. Every staff member must be made aware of this protocol in a timely fashion. It is imperative that staff members follow the district's protocol and ensure suspected child abuse cases are reported to the proper authorities.

School Board employees have a common law duty to ensure that reasonable care is exercised, and appropriate action taken, to protect students from harm or risk of harm. Accordingly, employees who have reason to believe that a student has been, or is likely to be, physically, sexually, or emotionally harmed must promptly report the matter to MFCD/FVACFSS (in the case of a non-employee) or the Superintendent or their designate (in the case of an employee of the Board).

“Child Abuse”, for the purpose of the Regulations, is meant to include sexual abuse and exploitation, physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation:

Is defined as any sexual exploitation of a child. It may also include any behaviour of a sexual nature towards a child. A child is not considered legally able to consent to sexual touching or sexual activity with an adult.

Physical Abuse:

Is defined as any physical force or action which results in or is likely to result in a non-accidental injury to a child and which exceeds that which could be considered reasonable discipline.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse may occur separately from, or along with, other forms of abuse and neglect and are likely to have serious, negative emotional impacts. Emotional abuse can include a pattern of: scapegoating, rejection, verbal attacks on the child, threats, insults or humiliation.

Neglect:

Is defined as the failure on the part of those responsible for the care of the child to provide for the physical, emotional or medical needs of a child to an extent that the child's health, development or safety is endangered.

Immediate Danger

There are rare circumstances where there is a significant risk of a student being exposed to immediate and/or serious harm. In these cases, it is the RCMP who should be notified first, followed by MCFD. The threshold for safety is that the risk of harm to a child is so great that it can reasonably result in serious injury, disability, severe trauma and death to vulnerable children. A critical factor to consider is the *immediacy of the harm*.

When a disclosure is received

1. If a student discloses their abuse to you, acknowledge their pain, tell them you will get them help, but do not promise to keep it a secret.
2. Begin the process by accessing the CAR form by logging in to 'staff net'. Complete all of the boxes regarding the student and the disclosure received. Once this information is filled in, keep the screen open to make the required phone call.
3. Report the suspected abuse to the correct authorities. If you feel the risk for harm is immediate, urgency in reporting is needed, which may also involve a police phone call. MCFD/FVACFSS and the R.C.M.P. prefer to talk to the person who took the disclosure personally.
4. Once the report has been verbally given to MCFD/FVACFSS, complete the final boxes pertaining to the phone call on the on-line reporting form and submit it to the District.
5. You may wish to consult with the school counsellor, administrator or even MCFD/FVACFSS prior to making a formal report. Please note that if you are completing a Form A (involving a Board employee), it may not be appropriate to consult with any staff member, Human Resources can be helpful in these situations.

*An important note: Teachers or staff who are reporting other teachers or staff of child abuse do not contravene the B.C.T.F. Code of Ethics (or similar with CUPE) in making a report of suspected child abuse.

It is not our responsibility to confirm or investigate suspected abuse, nor shall any School District personnel attempt to notify the parents of the child until a proper investigation is completed.

A Review of the Process for Reporting Child Abuse

If a child reports: abuse, neglect or need for protection and/or
you or a third party observe: abuse, neglect or need for protection of a child

You **MUST** report

Is not an employee
of the Langley
School District

CAR Reporting Process

1. Open an on-line Child Abuse Report (CAR) found on the Langley School District website site under Staff Net (login is required). Completing the form prior to the call will help prepare the caller for the questions that will be asked.
2. Call the necessary authorities. A reminder, that if there is immediate danger, call the RCMP (911) first. Call MCFD at 1-800-663-9122 or FVACFSS (if Aboriginal) at 1-855-533-8826 to report suspected abuse.
4. Complete the remainder of the CAR form and submit.

Is an employee of
the Langley School
District

Follow the **Form A** process

1. Complete Form A (found on the Langley School District website under Staff Net).
2. Fax the form to the Superintendent's confidential fax at 604-532-1473 or hand deliver if possible.
3. Superintendent and Human Resources will communicate with the RCMP and get direction.
4. Seal and send "secured" original to the Director of Human Resources (SBO).
5. Retain and secure personal notes for legal purposes.