

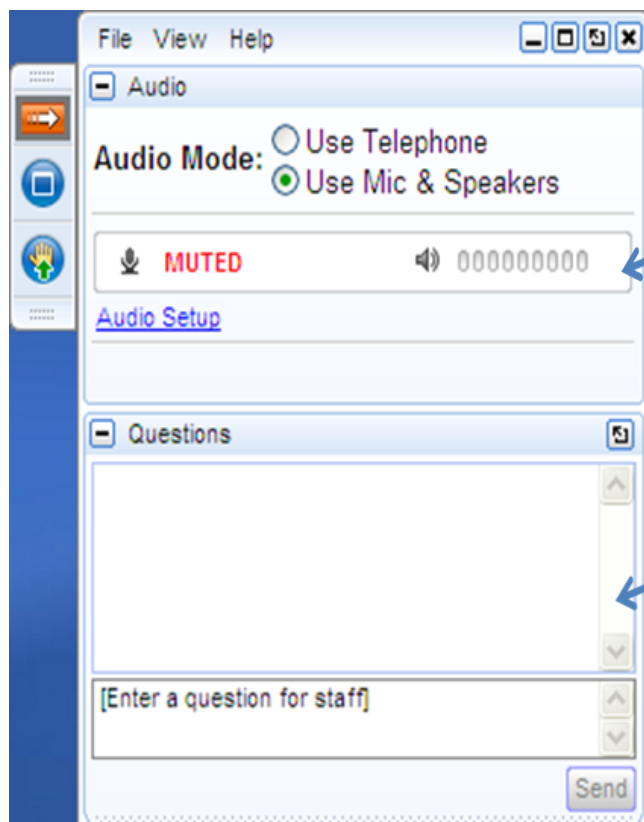
Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

What You Should Know

OJJDP's MECP

- MECP offers assistance to local, state and tribal law enforcement, nonprofit organizations, and other juvenile justice practitioners to:
 - strengthen their responses
 - increase the use of evidence-based practices
 - identify and address operational and programmatic needs
- Coordinated by Fox Valley Technical College
- For more information or to submit a training and technical assistance request:
 - www.mecptraining.org
 - mecptraining@fvtc.edu
 - 1-888-347-5610

Webinar Housekeeping



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To ask a Question:

- Type a question in the box; click Send
- Staff will respond in the 'Questions' box

Introduction

Required Reporters

- In general, the majority of states require the following professionals to report:
 - Social workers
 - Teachers and other school personnel
 - Physicians and other health-care workers
 - Mental health professionals
 - Child care providers
 - Medical examiners or coroners
 - Law enforcement officers

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Required Reporting

- Commercial film photographers or processors = 11 states
- Substance abuse counselors = 14 states
- Parole and probation officers = 17 states
- Domestic Violence workers = 7 states and D.C.
- Animal control or humane officers = 7 states and D.C.
- CASA = 9 states
- Clergy = 26 states
- Any person who suspects or believes a child is being abused or neglected = 18 states

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Why Some Don't Report

- Lack of understanding or knowledge of signs of abuse.
- Do not know how to report.
- Fear of retaliation.
- May think it is a breach of confidentiality (especially professionals).
- Past experience of reporting and lack of action.
- Does not want to get involved.
- Uncomfortable to report.

How to Report

- Report to either Law Enforcement or CPS
 - Cross reporting occurs on most cases.
- Reporting guidelines and contact information on-line.
- Most CPS agencies are open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-F.
- When in doubt, call 911 or non-emergency police number for information.
- Screeners weigh the call by risk to child, accuracy and depth of information.
- See resources slide

Reporter Information

- Valued by CPS as calls are not biased, interpretive or emotionally driven.
- Must have specific information – such as knowledge of abuse or injuries or articulate neglect.
- Anonymous reports will be accepted, however, efforts will be made to have reporters identify themselves, so follow-up information can be obtained.
- Mandated reporters cannot by law report anonymously.
- Hearsay reports are not acceptable; therefore Child Protection intake will make every effort to secure first-hand information before case assignment.

Reporter Information cont.

- The abuser need not be know to the reporter.
- Do not investigate – rather listen or observe what the child is saying.
- The caller is not required to prove the abuse is occurring.
- Screener is responsible for knowing the law and county interpretation of law for assignment not the reporter.
- Screener will assist in finding the right words to meet criteria.
- Screeners are gatekeepers; their job is to build a solid case for assignment.

Screeners look for...

- High Risk
- Chronic
- Pain
- Possible Permanent Damage
- Failure to Thrive
- Caregiver unwilling/unable to provide necessary cares for child

What happens after a report is made?

- All reporters are to report to CPS/LE within 24 hours of suspicion
- Delays harm the integrity of the report
 - Do not protect the child
 - Can harm any subsequent investigation
- Child will be seen immediately if there is a present danger.

Once the report is received

- CPS and LE begin the initial assessment and plan of action.
- Contact is made with the child and non-offending care giver.
 - Neglect cases may be different
 - In general, non-offending care givers are contacted.
- Safety of child is first priority.
- Medical treatment if needed.
- Forensic Interview
- Gathering of Evidence
- Criminal and/or CPS findings.

Myth Busting!

- The reporter's name is always provided to the investigated family. FALSE
- Retaliation is common when making a report. FALSE
- I will be updated on the case progress as time allows. FALSE
- Children are often removed from the home during an investigation. FALSE
- I can be sued for making a "good-faith" report. FALSE
- I shouldn't report the abuse if it didn't just happen. FALSE
- I can be active in the investigation and help interview the child. FALSE
- Cases are solved in an hour – just like TV. FALSE

Resources

- How to Report Suspected Child Maltreatment
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/responding/how.cfm>
- Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline
 - 1-800-4-A-CHILD
 - <http://www.childhelp.org/pages/hotline>
- Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect: Summary of State Laws
 - http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/mandata.pdf
- State Reporting Agencies
 - http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=5&rate_chno=W-00082