

POLICY ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Sec. 1. ANTIVICTIMIZATION PROGRAM

IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. shall provide child abuse antivictimization programs in elementary and secondary schools. The School requires that every elementary, middle, and high school teacher, counselor, psychiatrist, nurse, or administrator complete at least four (4) hours of in-service training in child abuse prevention, school safety, violence prevention, human trafficking, substance abuse prevention, the promotion of positive youth development, and suicide awareness within two (2) years of commencing employment in the School, and every five (5) years thereafter. The School may develop its own curriculum or adopt the curriculum developed by the Ohio Department of Education for the in-service training. The School shall maintain records of staff participation in in-service child abuse detection.

Sec. 2. DUTY TO REPORT

a) General Duty to Report

Every School official, School employee, or employee assigned to the School who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a person in a similar position to suspect that a student under eighteen (18) years of age or under twenty-one (21) years of age with a developmental disability or physical impairment has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the student shall immediately report that knowledge or suspicion, by telephone or in person, to the public Children's Services Agency or local law enforcement agency. She or He shall also notify the Principal or his/her designee. IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. may not require that school personnel report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to a school administrator prior to making a report to one of the agencies identified in Sec. 4 below.

All suspected cases are to be reported even if documentation is not available. The law provides protection for the reporting person who acts in good faith.

b) Reporting Adult Victims of Abuse

A person or professional shall make a report in the manner required above if the person or professional has cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and the person or professional determines in good faith that disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child or an elderly person or person with a disability.

Sec. 3. CONTENTS OF REPORT

The report should reflect the reporter's belief that a child has been or may be abused or neglected or has died of abuse or neglect. The person making the report shall identify, if known:

1. The name and address of the child;

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2. The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child; and
3. Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

If the agency or officer receiving the report requests a written report, the Principal or his/her designee shall provide a written report containing the following information:

1. The names and addresses of the student and the student's parents or the person or persons having custody of the student, if known;
2. The student's age and current condition;
3. The nature and extent of the student's known or reasonably suspected or believed injuries, abuse or neglect, or of the known or reasonably suspected or believed threat of injury, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect; and
4. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or reasonably suspected or believed injury, abuse, or neglect, or of the reasonably suspected or believed threat of injury, abuse, or neglect.

In addition, the Principal or his/her designee may take color photographs of areas of trauma visible on the student and include them with the written report.

Sec. 4. ENTITIES TO WHOM REPORTS MUST BE MADE REPORTED

All reports shall be made to the public children services agency or a peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred.

Sec. 5. IMMUNITIES

A person acting in good faith who reports or assists in the investigation of a report of alleged child abuse or neglect or who testifies or otherwise participates in a judicial proceeding arising from a report, petition, or investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. may not suspend or terminate the employment of, or otherwise discriminate against, a professional who makes a good faith report of abuse or neglect.

Sec. 6. CRIMINAL OFFENSES

a) Failure to Report

A person commits a misdemeanor if he or she fails to report child abuse or neglect as provided by law. Failure to report child abuse or neglect violates the Ohio Licensure Code of Professional Conduct and may result in sanctions against an educator's license. Failure to make a report required by this section, or unauthorized disclosure of the contents of a report made under this section, may also result in disciplinary action against the employee.

b) False Report

A person who knowingly makes or causes another person to make a false report that alleges that any person has committed an act or omission that resulted in a child being an abused child or a neglected child is guilty of a violation of section 2921.14 of the Revised Code.

Sec. 7. STUDENT SUICIDE THREAT

If the School has notified Student's parents or guardian of a potential threat of Student suicide, and the School has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that the Student's parents or guardians have disregarded the reported threat, the School shall immediately report that knowledge or suspicion, by telephone or in person, to the public Children's Services Agency or local law enforcement agency.

Sec. 8. CONFIDENTIALITY

A report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect and the identity of the person making the report is confidential and not subject to release.

Unless waived in writing by the person making the report, the identity of an individual making a report under this chapter is confidential and may be disclosed only to a law enforcement officer for the purposes of a criminal investigation of the report, or as ordered by a court.

Sec. 9. INVESTIGATIONS

a) Reports to the School

If the children services initiates an investigation and determines that the abuse or neglect involves an IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. employee, and that the child is a student at IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc., the department shall orally notify the Superintendent.

The children services shall, upon request, send a written report of its investigation, as appropriate, to the Principal, unless the Principal is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect, to the Board, and to the Superintendent.

b) Interviewing Students

The investigating agency shall be permitted to interview the child at any reasonable time and place, including the child's school.

c) Interfering with Investigation Confidentiality

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A person may not interfere with an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect conducted by the children services.

A photograph, videotape, audiotape, or other audio or visual recording, depiction, or documentation of a child that is made by children services in the course of an inspection or investigation is confidential, is not subject to release under the Ohio Public Records Act, and may be released only as required by state or federal law or rules adopted by the children services.

Sec. 10. ANNUAL REVIEW

The Board shall annually review policies for reporting child abuse and neglect.

Sec. 11. VIOLATIONS OF POLICY

Any IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. employee who violates the reporting is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Sec. 12. ANNUAL DISTRIBUTION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Superintendent or designee shall develop additional guidelines concerning the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Such guidelines shall be distributed to all personnel at the beginning of each school year and shall be addressed in staff development programs at regular intervals determined by the Board.

Each school year, IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. shall provide to all new school employees as part of new employee orientation.

Sec. 13. POSTER

IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. shall place a poster of the following specifications at every campus in at least one high-traffic, highly and clearly visible public area that is readily accessible to and widely used by students. The poster must:

1. Be in a format and language that is clear, simple, and understandable to students;
2. Be in English and in Spanish;
3. Be 11x17 inches or larger;
4. Be in large print;
5. Be placed at eye-level to the student for easy viewing; and
6. Include the following information:
 - a. In bold print, the current toll-free Ohio Department of Job and Family telephone directory that will link callers to a child welfare or law enforcement office in their county 855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453);
 - b. Instructions to call 911 for emergencies; and

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- c. Directions for accessing the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website (<https://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/index.stm>) for more information on reporting abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

R.C. 2151.421; R.C. 3319.073.