



Town Hall Meeting
Preventing Child Abuse in Youth Athletics
A Call to Action

You play a vital role in:

- identifying,
- reporting,
- and preventing child abuse and neglect.
- You have a unique opportunity to advocate for children.
- You have close and consistent contact with children

Types of Abuse

Neglect - Failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.

Child's physical, mental, emotional condition has been impaired or is at imminent danger of becoming impaired. Some examples of neglect are:

- Caretaker's and /or parent's failure to exercise a minimum degree of care.
- Caretaker/parent fails to provide: adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and/or medical care, proper supervision
- Caretaker/parent misuses alcohol or other drugs and fails to make a plan for their child to be cared for while they are too intoxicated to do so. It also can be a caretaker that provides drugs or alcohol to their child, or allows the child to use drugs or alcohol.

Physical

Serious physical injury which causes permanent disfigurement, damage or risk of death.

- Serious physical injury that is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted on a child.
- Physical indicators may include: unexplained bruises, welts, burns, fractures, lacerations or abrasions.

Sexual Abuse

Touching Behaviors-

- Rape or any sexual contact with a child

Non-touching behaviors-

- Showing pornography to a child.
- Exposing a person's genitals to a child.
- Photographing a child in sexual poses.
- Encouraging a child to watch or to hear sexual acts either in person or on a video.
- Watching a child undress or use the bathroom, often without the child's knowledge

Emotional

Parents/Guardians who verbally terrorizes the child, who continually and severely criticizes the child, or who fails to express any affection or nurturing.

What Can I do?

* **Recognize the warning signs**

Some of the warning signs that a child might be abused or neglected include:

- Nervousness around adults, fear of certain people or places
- Aggression toward adults or other children

- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not appropriate for his or her age
- Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
- Low self-esteem
- Poor hygiene
- When a Child Discloses Abuse...

DO:

- Reassure the child that it is not his/her fault
- Assure the child that what he/she is telling you is very important and that there is someone they can talk to about what happened
- Respect the child's right to confidentiality
- Check to see if the child feels safe returning home

Use open-ended questions such as:

“How do you feel about going home today?”

Instead of leading questions like “Are you scared to go home today?”

“How did you get that mark?” or “How did you hurt yourself?”

When a Child Discloses Abuse...

DON'T:

- Don't show shock or other strong reaction
- Don't probe for more information
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Don't repeat what the child told you unless there is a clearly defined need for that person to know
- Legal Concerns
- Certain professionals are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

- Making A Report On Suspected Abuse or Neglect
- Reports can be made to the state or local hotline 24 hours a day 7 days a week to these numbers.

Reporting

A report of possible abuse is not an accusation – but a request to determine if abuse has occurred, and if so, it is the beginning of the helping process.

Anyone can call:

- State: 1-800-342-3720
- Local: 422-9701

Mandated reporter hotline numbers:

- State: 1-800-635-1522
- Local: 422-9840
- For other information or resources please call McMahon/Ryan Child Advocacy Site at 701-2985 or visit us at www.mcmahonryan.org