



SD10 (Arrow Lakes) District Protocol

Child and Youth Protection Protocol

Overview

Anyone who has reason to believe that a child or youth under 19 has been or is likely to be abused or neglected has a legal duty under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* to report this matter.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach for responding to child and youth abuse and neglect by providing staff with direction and training on their legal obligation to report child and youth abuse and neglect and to identify the roles and responsibilities of district employees in this process.

How to Report:

Where allegations of child and youth abuse or neglect involve the conduct of parents or parental failure to protect a child or youth:

1. When a school district employee has reason to believe that a child or youth is in need protection, a report must be made to a Child Protection Worker employed by the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) office.
 - a. An up-to-date contact list must be maintained by each Principal with the hours of operations and direct contact information for the local MCFD office and Child Protection Worker.
 - b. The Child Protection Worker will determine if the child or youth is in need of protection and will contact the RCMP if a criminal investigation is required.
2. If the employee has a concern but is not sure whether the concern is founded, the employee should consult with a Child Protection Worker. Local MCFD Child Protection Reports & Inquiries: 250-265-4865
3. Employees who make reports to a Child Protection Worker need to inform the school principal immediately after that a report has been made. The confidentiality of the reporter will not be disclosed without prior consent.

Where a child or youth is in imminent danger:

4. School officials must notify the RCMP immediately. Call police (call 9-1-1 or the local RCMP) to intervene and a Child Protection Worker will be contacted to determine whether the child or youth is in need of protection.

Where allegations of child and youth abuse are made against a school district employee:

5. School officials have the primary responsibility for dealing with these allegations. Reports to Child Protection Workers from school officials are not usually required unless there is reason to believe that children or youth outside the school setting may need protection or the parents are unable or unwilling to take any action required to protect the child or youth.
6. Employees who have reason to believe that another employee has abused a student must report the incident or information to the school principal.
7. School officials and employees are legally responsible for providing a safe learning environment for students. Where there are allegations of child or youth abuse by a school

employee, the Superintendent must be notified and will be responsible to investigate and/or report the matter to the RCMP.

8. School employees and officials who hold a BC teaching certificate have an obligation under the Teachers Act (s. 38) to report to the BC Commissioner for Teacher Regulation where they have reason to believe another member is guilty of professional misconduct involving a student.
9. Parents of children or youth alleged to have been abused in the school setting must be informed by school district officials of the allegation and the outcome of the school district investigation, unless there are special circumstances (for example, relating to a child or youth protection or police investigation or endangerment of the child or youth).

Where allegations of child or youth abuse are made against a volunteer, contract service provider, or others in a school setting:

10. The principal has the authority to prohibit the volunteer, contract service provider or other person's attendance at school.
11. The principal may choose to seek the assistance of the RCMP.
12. If the volunteer or contactor is a registered member of another professional body, there may be a duty to report to that professional body.

Definitions

13. Reason to believe: means that, based on observation or information received, the person believes that a child or youth has been or is likely to be at risk. Proof is not required. The child protection worker may investigate and will determine whether abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur.
14. Needs protection: If the parent or caregiver is unwilling, or unable, to protect the child or youth.

Collaborative, Coordinated Child Protection Planning and Response

Responsibilities of the Employer are:

15. To make accessible to all staff members a copy of the *Duty to Report* brochure together with the Child and Youth Protection Protocol to be followed by staff.
16. To review and distribute to each employee at the beginning of each school year a copy of the *Duty to Report* brochure and the Child and Youth Protection Protocol.
17. To meet annually with local representatives from Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Child Protection and RCMP to review and update if necessary the Child and Youth Protection Protocol procedures, contact information and hours of operation information prior to September 1st of each year.

Responsibilities of Principals are:

18. To make accessible to all staff members a copy of the *Duty to Report* brochure together with the Child and Youth Protection Protocol to be followed by staff.
19. To review and distribute to each employee at the beginning of each school year a copy of the *Duty to Report* brochure and the Child and Youth Protection Protocol.
20. To maintain an up to date contact list with hours of operation and direct contact information for the local MCFD office and Child Protection Worker.

For Further Information:

http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/handbook_action_child_abuse.pdf