

HOW TO REPORT ABUSE: SOUTH CAROLINA

DISCLOSURE TIPS



WHAT DO YOU SAY?

- An adult's reaction to disclosure plays an important role in the beginning of the healing process for the child.
- "I'm really glad that you told me."
- "It took a lot of courage to tell me."
- "It's not your fault."
- "We will work together to get you help."
- "I will need to tell some other people who help to protect children."



WHAT ARE THE CHILD'S NEEDS?

- Be careful not to make promises that you cannot keep. Do not promise you will not tell anyone.
- Report immediately.
- Only speak to those who have to know – confidentially.
- Gentle honesty – keep information age-appropriate and general.

INFORMATION NEEDED



HAVE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE:



WHO: Who was involved?



WHAT: What occurred?



WHEN: When did it occur?



WHERE: Where did it occur?



WHY: Why did it happen (what were the circumstances surrounding the event)?



MAKE A REPORT

If you suspect a child may be in immediate danger, call 911. In accordance with South Carolina law, teachers and other mandated reporters must make reports of suspected abuse. Whether a mandatory reporter makes the report to DSS or to law enforcement depends upon the identity of the alleged perpetrator of the abuse or neglect.

- When the alleged perpetrator of the abuse or neglect is the child's parent, guardian, or a person responsible for the child's welfare, mandated reporters must report to the county DSS office or to Law Enforcement in the county where the child resides or is found. For a complete listing of all DSS county locations, visit <https://dss.sc.gov/contact/>.
- When the alleged perpetrator of the abuse or neglect is not the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the law requires that a report be made to law enforcement.