



Breaking the Silence Child Abuse Awareness Training

A Weekend Event



The Scenario

You are at an amusement park with your family on a weekend. You see Paul, a teacher from your school, kissing and holding hands with a girl you think may be a student from your school. They don't see you. What do you do?

Discussion Begins

What do you do?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to the young girl? To other students? To you? To your school? To LAUSD?

If you report and the Department of Children and Family Services or Local Law Enforcement Agency tells you...

...to **handle it administratively**, what do you do next?

...**they will investigate**, what do you do next?

Filing a Report

If an employee does not have reasonable suspicion of child abuse, he/she may ask clarifying questions; however, if an employee has reasonable suspicion, he/she must file a Suspected Child Abuse Report (SCAR) without further questioning.

In order to comply with the mandated reporting requirements, an employee must always file a SCAR if he/she has reasonable suspicion of child abuse, even if the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) or

the Local Law Enforcement Agency indicates to "handle it administratively."

Required steps for filing a SCAR:

1. Phone call immediately or ASAP to a Child Protective Agency (CPA)
2. Written report mailed to the CPA within 36 hours of receiving the information

SCARs must be filed with a CPA – either DCFS or a Local Law Enforcement Agency. Generally, reports are filed with the DCFS if they involve allegations of abuse or neglect by an in-home perpetrator. Generally, reports are filed with a Local Law Enforcement Agency if they involve allegations of abuse by a District employee or an out-of-home perpetrator or allegations of moderate to severe abuse by an in-home perpetrator.

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Legal Response

Technically, because the incident occurred during non-work hours, you are not in the course and scope of your employment. During the weekend, you are not legally mandated to file a SCAR. However, a SCAR should be filed immediately for two reasons. First, when you arrive to work on Monday morning you are in the scope of your employment and if you have reasonable suspicion, you must file a SCAR. Second, if you have reason to believe the student is being abused, you may file a SCAR regardless of whether or not you are in the course and scope of your employment at that time. Thus, in the student's best interest and well-being, the incident should be reported. Failure to report could jeopardize the student's safety.

Other Considerations

Whether you have reasonable suspicion that child abuse occurred, there is sufficient information to determine that improper conduct may have occurred (e.g., LAUSD Code of Conduct). You should notify an administrator of the possible inappropriate conduct. The administrator should then notify the Local District (LD) Operations Coordinator. At this time, the LD Administrator of Operations must exercise discretion as to whether the employee should be removed from the school site or work assignment (BUL-6532.1, Protocols and Procedures to Report, Reassign and Investigate Allegations of Employee Misconduct).

The site administrator/division supervisor will inform the Local District/Division of law enforcement's determination as to whether the District may proceed with or should refrain from conducting an administrative investigation. Once clearance has been obtained from the Local Law Enforcement Agency, the administrative investigation shall proceed. Upon conclusion of the investigation, appropriate administrative action will be taken, if warranted.

Emotional Support

Listen

Although it may be difficult to see your colleague in this position, this situation may elicit a strong emotional reaction. Pay attention to the details of what you see. Taking notes might be helpful with remembering the details to be included in the SCAR.

Protect

Act immediately by following the legal response. All District employees have a responsibility to ensure a safe learning environment. Doing so is the best way to protect students and the learning environment.

Connect

Every school site has protocols, systems, and resources to support and address student safety and well-being. This is an opportunity to become familiar with and use the procedures, policies, and resources at your work site.

Model

Maintain a professional and calm level of emotions and reactions. Do not express shock or anger at the possible perpetrator or event.

Teach

Take this opportunity to review the district policy regarding appropriate teacher/student boundaries. Refer to the LAUSD Code of Conduct with Students.

