

**A resource for those identifying and reporting
a child in need of protection, including child abuse**
(Provincial Advisory Committee on Child Abuse)

A child is
anyone under
the age of 18

What is abuse?

Under section one of *The Child and Family Services Act*, **abuse** means an act or omission by any person where the act or omission results in:

- (a) **physical** injury to the child,
- (b) **emotional** disability of a permanent nature in the child or is likely to result in such a disability, or
- (c) **sexual exploitation** of the child with or without the child's consent.

One of the problems in dealing with child abuse is that one cannot tell by looking at a child/youth that she/he is being abused. Children do not always show bruises or visible signs of abuse.

Reporting

Child abuse reports should be made immediately to protect the child from any possible further danger or consequences of delay. When you make a report, you should ask for the name of the person taking the call. Also, write down the date and time when you make the initial call. The report can be done orally (either in person or on the phone) or in a written document. Once you have made a report to a CFS agency, you should not inform or discuss the suspected incident(s) with the alleged offender.

If you need help making a report you can seek out a trusted adult such as a teacher.

Who do I call?

You need to call your local CFS agency (204-785-5106) about your concerns. If you think the child is in immediate danger, you need to contact the police. When you call, you will be asked questions about the situation. Try to answer them to the best of your ability.

Can it be confidential?

You do not have to give CFS agency staff your name. If you do give your name, you are not legally responsible for information provided in good faith. Your identity will remain confidential except where required by the court, or with your written consent. You are also protected from anyone harassing you for giving the information.

What happens next?

After you make the report, the CFS agency worker should advise you what initial steps are planned and when they will occur. You are also entitled to know what the agency

concluded at the end of its investigation, unless the agency feels that it is not in the best interest of the child.

If you think the child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police.