

# CHILD ABUSE

## STEPS FOR REPORTING:

This card is a component of the Commit to Kids® program. It is intended as a quick reference and is not meant to be exhaustive or to replace legal advice. Consult with child welfare, law enforcement and legal counsel if child abuse is alleged or suspected.

1



Child **discloses abuse** by an employee. (Document)

2



Employee who receives disclosure:

- **Notifies law enforcement** and/or child welfare about the incident;
- **Consults with child welfare** about notifying parents; and
- **Notifies the manager**, who in turn notifies the head of the organization.

(Document)

3



Head of the organization/manager **suspends employee** suspected of abuse with or without pay until case is resolved.\* (Document) If the individual is a volunteer or unpaid staff, consider if the individual should be dismissed from their position immediately.



**Many of these steps would also apply when:**

- A child discloses abuse by someone outside the organization
- A peer discloses on behalf of another child
- An adult suspects a child is abused



**\*NOTE:**

Seek legal guidance prior to suspension and/or dismissal.



As part of any investigation or internal follow-up process, an organization should be **critically assessing the adequacy of existing policies** and practices, and strengthening as necessary to better protect children.

4



A child welfare agency and/or police **carry out investigation**. Organization should conduct an internal follow-up in consultation with police/child welfare and adjusts internal policies if needed.

**OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATION:**

- A) Abuse is not substantiated.** Follow internal policies. Those within the organization who know about the investigation are told that the investigation is complete and the employee will be returning to work.
- B) Abuse is substantiated.** Employee is dismissed from his/her position.\*
- C) Inconclusive.** Seek legal counsel. Consider if employee/volunteer should be dismissed, with or without severance.\*

5



- **Document the outcome** of the investigation on the incident report form.
- **Document the results** of the internal follow up.



*The safety of the child and other children in the organization must be ensured at all times in the process.*



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