

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and/or Neglect

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL §40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect.

Reportable Abuse & Neglect:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical endangerment
- Improper ethical guidance
- Lack of supervision
- Medical abuse
- Deprivation of basic needs
- Educational neglect
- Emotional conflict
- Psychological neglect

Call the Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) to report child abuse and/or neglect.

Child abuse and neglect means the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under the age of eighteen (18) by a person, including any employee of a residential facility or any staff person providing out-of-home care, who is responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare. The term encompasses both acts and omissions on the part of a responsible person.

A person responsible for a child's welfare includes the child's parent, guardian, foster parent, an employee of a public or private residential home or facility of other person legally responsible under State law for the child's welfare in a residential setting, or any staff person providing out of home care. Out of home care means child day care, i.e. family child care, group child care, and other center-based child care.

Calling the Hotline

- Operates 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Staffed by Child Protective Investigators
- All calls are recorded
- Caller may remain anonymous
- Must meet the following criteria to become a case:
 - A child is under the age of 18, living in his/her own home or under 21 and in DCYF custody;
 - Harm or substantial risk of harm must be present;
 - A specific incident or pattern of incidents suggesting child abuse and/or neglect must be identified;
 - A person responsible for the child's welfare or living in the same home as the child, must be the alleged perpetrator of the incident.

It is general policy if investigated as a resource family your license as a provider is typically placed on hold/suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.

Remember...

- **Remain calm**
- **Document everything** (ideally keep a journal for the child whom you are providing care for especially if there are ongoing behaviors, issues, etc.)
- **Be cooperative during the investigation process**
- **Allow CPI's access to speak with all the children**
- **Get support – supports are offered through Foster Forward www.fosterforward.net**