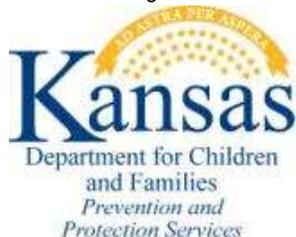


TIPS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

- Keep in mind it is often difficult for a child to disclose situations of abuse or neglect. The child may have been threatened not to tell. The child may feel ashamed, embarrassed, anxious or scared.
- Be respectful of the child's space by not leaning in too close while he or she is talking.
- Maintain a calm expression. The child's story may be shocking. If expressions of shock or other emotions are displayed, the child may shut down.
- Limit questions to obtain only the minimal information needed to make the report. Remember "a reason to suspect" is enough information to make a report.
- Do not put words in the child's mouth. Asking leading questions may harm the child and unintentionally alter the facts of the case. For example a child may disclose, "My daddy touched me." An example of a leading question is, "Did your daddy touch your private?" This is leading because it assumes where the child was touched before the child has disclosed this information; and it uses language ("private") the child may not use. A follow-up question may not be needed if a "reason to suspect" abuse is already established. A report may be made without asking for details.
- Do not interview the child to gather specific details or facts.
 - Interviewing children multiple times may be traumatizing to the child.
 - Interviews of children regarding abuse or neglect should be conducted by DCF Child Protection Specialists or Investigators, law enforcement or Child Advocacy Center staff specifically trained in forensic interviewing of children.
- Do not promise the child to keep the disclosure a secret. Reassure the child and explain that you will call someone who will be able to help.
- Reassure the child the information will not be shared with peers or anyone who does not need to know to keep him or her safe.

This information was adapted from Illinois Department of Children and Family Services "Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters". <http://www.dcfstraining.org>



Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas