



Breaking the Silence
Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Training
Scenario 1

Raining Cats and Dogs (Secondary)

Mr. C has been the school custodian for 10 years. Employees have complained about his job performance, but he is a friendly person. During these 10 years, no one has ever reported any inappropriate conduct with him toward anyone. On this one day after school, it's raining cats and dogs. There is an unknown soaked student walking down a flooded street, and you see Mr. C pick up the student in his car and they drive off. You inform the principal, and he does a thorough investigation and finds that Mr. C did not engage in suspected child abuse. In short, Mr. C said he felt sorry for the student and gave him a ride. Mr. C had never given a ride to any student before or after this incident. The student and parent confirm Mr. C's explanation.

Discussion Questions

1. Is this enough information for reasonable suspicion of child abuse? If not, what clarifying questions would you ask?
2. What possible concerns arise from this scenario? How does this situation become a violation of law or district policy?

Keep in Mind

District Policy

All employees with reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect *must* report the suspected abuse or neglect to a Child Protective Agency (CPA) pursuant to the *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements* bulletin.

Reasonable Suspicion Definition

Reasonable suspicion means it is reasonable for a person, based on the person's training, education, and experience, to entertain a suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

Clarifying Questions

An employee who does not have reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect may ask clarifying questions to determine whether or not suspected abuse or neglect exists. If an employee, however, does have reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect, the employee *must* file a SCAR without further questioning. Also, an employee with reasonable suspicion *must* file SCAR even if the CPA states "handle it administratively."

Required Steps for Filing a SCAR

Filing a SCAR consists of two steps:

- (1) Telephone call *must* be made immediately, or as soon as practically possible to a CPA; and
- (2) Written report *must* be filed with a CPA within 36 hours of receiving the information. The CPA will either be the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) or the local law enforcement. Generally, SCARs are filed with DCFS if the alleged perpetrator is in the home, and if the allegations involve an out-of-home perpetrator (e.g., employee), the SCARs are filed with local law enforcement (e.g., LAPD).