



Whispering Teacher (EL)

Ms. W is Billy's 3rd grade teacher. Billy shared with his mom that he saw a picture of a man who "was not dressed" on Ms. W's computer. Previously, Billy reported to his mom that Ms. W once touched his shoulder and asked personal questions such as: "How was your weekend?" and "Where does your cousin live?" in a whisper-like voice. The teacher's aide in Ms. W's class has confirmed that Ms. W sometimes whispers to the students in class.

Discussion Questions

1. What initial actions should you take?
2. Is this information enough for reasonable suspicion of child abuse? If not, would you or the principal ask clarifying questions prior to filing a SCAR?
3. What policy considerations would you think about?

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 *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).