

Breaking the Silence
Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Training
Scenario 2

Drama Rehearsal (Secondary)

Anabel enrolled in the school's performing arts program about a month ago. During the first week, she was cast as the lead in an upcoming school play. Ms. B, the drama teacher, often compliments her acting talent and tells the drama class how lucky they are to have her in the group. Recently, the teacher asked her to stay after school to "go over" some of her lines. During the conversations, the teacher started asking if she had siblings who also aspire to be actors. Anabel appreciates Ms. B's help but feels uneasy about the special attention and staying after school with her alone. A couple of days ago, Ms. B told Anabel that many students take advantage of private after-school tutoring, and she could help her if she was ever interested.

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?
3. What should a teacher do if they think they observe a breach of professional boundaries by another teacher?

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).