

Breaking the Silence
Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Training
Scenario 4

Anonymous Email (Secondary)

You receive an email from an employee stating that he received an anonymous email alleging that Michael, a young and friendly Building and Grounds worker, had written an inappropriate note to a female student describing her body parts and how he could help her family's undocumented immigration status. Michael is the principal's friend and is an outstanding worker. He is also loved by staff and students because of his helpful attitude. Michael's note was not included in the anonymous email and the female student was not named in the email.

Discussion Questions

1. What immediate action would you take?
2. Do you need to see the actual note to have reasonable suspicion? What about to make a child abuse report?
3. How could or how does this situation become a violation of law or District policy?
4. What should an employee do if they think they observe a breach of professional boundaries by an employee?

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).