

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ABUSE OUTSIDE ECRC

1. In order to remain above reproach in all aspects of our dealing with the children and youth in our care, we require that all people working with children or youth entrusted to our care report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect immediately.
2. If you observe or hear anything that gives you reasonable cause to suspect physical or sexual abuse/neglect, notify your ministry leader immediately and call the child abuse hotline (800) 25-abuse or (217) 524-2506 by yourself or with your ministry leader to help you. You can give your name or remain anonymous, but this must be done **within 24 hours**. The law protects your identity and protects you from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith.
3. No staff person or volunteer should conduct any investigation or attempt to “solve the problem” independently, but should show Christ’s love and caring to the child and family, whenever possible.
4. The guidelines for determining whether or not there is reasonable cause to suspect physical, or sexual abuse or neglect are as follows:
 - Injuries- bruises, human bites, bone fractures and burns that do not seem to be accidental in nature or occur more often than normal.
 - Unusual fears- around family members, familiar person or objects or fear of being touched. Statements such as, “I don’t like to be alone with so and so”. Observation of excessive corporal punishment.
 - Unusual behavior- regression to earlier stage of development, self-injury, poor concentration, acting out sexual behavior, fascination with fires, matches or lighters.
 - Change in social behavior- Excessive crying, aggression, hostility, withdrawal, unusual self-conscious behavior.
 - Unusual appearance- dirty, unkempt, hungry, inappropriate dress for seasons of the year.
 - Parental disregard in situations where risk of harm to child is apparent or imminent.

