

## **Responding to Parent(s) Who Are Notified of Abuse**

- Remain calm and non-judgmental.
- Anyone who makes a report to the police or child protection authorities is usually granted anonymity; do not identify the reporter unless you are given permission to do so.
- Do not share any statements made by the child with a parent or relative who is implicated by the child as an abuser. It is advisable not to share the statements with anyone other than the authorities until the identity of the abuser can be determined and authorities have determined whether or not the child can be protected from contact with that person.
- Do not attempt to convince a parent that the alleged abuse happened or did not happen; do not attempt to discredit the child nor cast suspicion on the alleged abuser.
- Do not investigate with a parent what may be happening in the home; and do not share information with a parent that has been shared with authorities.
- Do not make promises to a parent about the outcome of the investigation.
- Listen to any information a parent may offer about the incident and record it immediately after the conversation; report additional information to authorities through the reporting procedure outlined in the church's policy.
- Offer parent(s) support.
- Suggest resources for parent(s) including books or literature that may be helpful to them.
- Allow parent(s) to express their disbelief, anger, and grief (parent(s) may be in shock or denial at the mention of abuse allegations).
- Do not minimize the type of abuse, its impact on the child, or its harm to the child.
- Assure parent(s) of the confidential nature of the report and the need to maintain confidentiality unless disclosure is necessary to protect the well being of other children.