

Section 5 Programs and Services

5.2 Reporting Child Abuse

Policy Statement

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) acknowledges its responsibility to report suspected child abuse.

Any employee of APSEA who has reason to believe that a child or youth is being abused is obligated to report that information to a child protective services agency, Health/Community Services.

Definitions

Child Abuse - Behaviour that renders a minor child/youth a “child in need of protection” under the Children’s and Family Services Act of Nova Scotia; the Family Services Act of New Brunswick; the Child, Youth and Family Services Act of Newfoundland and Labrador; or the Child’s Protection Act of Prince Edward Island.

For the purposes of this policy "abuse" will include:

- *Physical Abuse* - The intentional use of force on any part of a child's/youth's body that results in injury.
- *Emotional Abuse* - Anything that causes serious mental or emotional harm to a child/youth.
- *Sexual Abuse* – The improper exposure of a child/youth to sexual contact, activity, or behaviour.
- *Neglect* - Any lack of care that may cause significant harm to a child's development or endanger a child in any way.

Policy Objectives

- (i) To ensure all employees of APSEA understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to reporting suspected child abuse.
- (ii) To provide APSEA staff with clear guidelines on what to do in the case of suspected child abuse.

Application

This policy applies to APSEA employees, volunteers, Committee members, and any individual in a contractual relationship with APSEA.

Policy Directives

- APSEA employees are required to report and respond to suspected child abuse in the course of their work as per provincial legislation.
- Everyone has the duty to immediately report to a child protective services agency, even a suspicion that a child/youth under 19 may need protective services. Reports may be made anonymously. Once a report is made, child protection social workers assess the information provided to determine an appropriate response.
- Failure to comply with this policy will be assessed by APSEA and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Accountability

All APSEA Employees

APSEA employees are responsible to understand and follow all APSEA policies and documents related to reporting suspected child abuse. Employees have an obligation to promptly report suspected child abuse according to the APSEA Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse.

Monitoring and Review

- The Superintendent of APSEA or their designate will review this policy annually.

References

- [New Brunswick: Family Services Act, N.N.B. 1980, c. F-2.2 \(Section 30\(3\)\)](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador: Child, Youth and Family Services Act, S.N.L 1998, c. C-12.1 \(Section 15.1\)](#)
- [Nova Scotia: The Children and Family Services Act \(CFSA \(Section 23\)\)](#)
- [Prince Edward Island: Child's Protection Act, RSPEI 1988, c. C5.1 Section 10](#)

This is an organizational policy designed to supplement other APSEA policies and is not intended to replace or preclude them. If a situation occurs where there is a conflict between application of this policy and any other APSEA policy, the policy most specific to the situation will apply.

Approval Dates

Approved: June 2015
Reviewed/Revised: January 2024