



# KENORA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## 300 Student Procedures

### AP 315: Safe Schools – Child Abuse

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All children are a special gift from God and childhood is a precious time of a child's life. School employees, because of their daily contact with school-aged children, are in an excellent position to identify abused or neglected children.

In compliance with the [Child and Family Services Act](#), any employee who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is or may be in need of protection must report this information immediately to the appropriate children's aid society.

#### 1. General

- 1.1 All staff members of Kenora Catholic District School Board shall be alert to the early recognition and identification of child abuse among the children under their care.
- 1.2 This administrative procedure has been developed to provide procedural guidelines for the reporting of child abuse.
- 1.3 Principals and supervisors shall review this procedure with all their staff annually.

#### 2. Duty to Report

- 2.1 Local Children's Aid Societies have the responsibility to investigate any allegations or evidence of child abuse, and to initiate the appropriate services to the family for the protection of the child. (*The Child and Family Services Act, Section 15[3]*).
- 2.2 Any staff member who believes, on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection as defined by *The Child and Family Services Act*, shall forthwith report the belief and the information upon which it is based to the local Children's Aid Society.
- 2.3 Despite the provisions of any other Act, a staff member who, in the course of his or her professional or official duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be suffering, or may have suffered abuse, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the local Children's Aid Society.

## 2.4 Service Providers

- 2.4.1 The Director of Education and the director's designates, in any contracts for the provision of services to students, shall require that the service provider recognize the legislated responsibility of its contracted employees to report to the local Children's Aid Society, the belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is or may be in need of protection.
- 2.4.2 The service provider shall review the requirements to report with the service provider's employees who are providing service to Kenora Catholic District School Board students on at least an annual basis.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Reporting

- 3.1.1 The *Child and Family Services Act* clearly states the requirement that all persons report situations of possible child abuse to the local Children's Aid Society.
- 3.1.2 Any staff member of the board suspecting child abuse shall confer with the principal or designate and immediately contact the local Children's Aid Society.
- 3.1.3 Consulting with the principal or designate does not in and of itself, absolve an employee of the legal responsibility to report or to ensure that the report is made to the Children's Aid Society.
- 3.1.4 If neither the principal nor the designate is available for consultation and a report of suspected abuse is to be made to the local Children's Aid Society, the employee shall first consult with either the Director of Education, the Superintendent of Education, or the director's designate.
- 3.1.5 The employee making the report shall advise the principal as soon as practicable.
- 3.1.6 The staff member, the principal, or the principal's designate shall contact the Children's Aid Society first without contacting the parents.
- 3.1.7 The compulsory reporting requirement, outlined in Section 72 of the *Child and Family Services Act*, takes precedence over existing legislation and policies which prohibit interference with the child by the police or by other professionals without prior parental consent.

### 3.2 Documentation

- 3.2.1 Detailed facts surrounding the purported abuse should be carefully documented by the reporting person and these facts shall be reported to the Children's Aid Society.
- 3.2.2 Any personal interview or physical examination of the child shall be carried out only in the line of normal, daily observations and discussions.
- 3.2.3 Form 047 – *Record of Suspected Child Abuse* is to be completed.
- 3.2.4 The completed report on form 047 – *Record of Suspected Child Abuse* is to be attached to any other *Record of Suspected Child Abuse* forms that involve the same family and filed in the school's *Record of Suspected Child Abuse* file.

### 3.3 Consultative Service

The Children's Aid Society offers a consultative service and shall be contacted immediately if there are concerns about a child and/or an uncertainty about the appropriateness of a referral.

### 3.4 Proof

It is not a staff member's responsibility to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to determine whether the child is in need of protection.

### 3.5 Investigation Team

- 3.5.1 If a Children's Aid Society/Police Investigative Team comes to the school, in response to a reported case of child abuse, the principal shall review the responsibilities of the principal under the *Education Act* and under this procedure with the members of the Investigative Team.
- 3.5.2 This having been done, the responsibility to proceed with the investigation now rests with the Investigative Team.
- 3.5.3 Parental consent is not a requirement to interview the child with respect to a reported case of child abuse, and in fact, parental involvement before the Children's Aid Society/Police Investigative Team sees the child, might jeopardize the Team's investigation and thus diminish efforts to protect the child.
- 3.5.4 Initial contact of the parents is the responsibility of the Investigative Team, and not a school responsibility.

### 3.6 Principal Responsibility

- 3.6.1 While the child is in the school and until the parents are notified, and are present, the principal or designate, or support person (teacher or counselor) shall remain with and render assistance to the child during any interview of the child. Support will also be provided to the Investigative Team.
- 3.6.2 If it is necessary to remove the student from the school for any purpose associated with the investigation, it is the responsibility of the investigating person(s) to notify the parent or guardian either personally or by telephone before doing so.
- 3.6.3 The principal shall not release a student to the Investigative Team until such time as there are assurances from the Investigative Team that the parents/ guardians have been informed.
- 3.6.4 If this is not possible, then the required notification of the parent or guardian must be accomplished as soon as circumstances will permit and without undue delay.

### 3.7 Co-operation

Staff members of Kenora Catholic District School Board are required to cooperate fully with the Children's Aid Society and the police in their investigation.

### 3.8 Follow-up

- 3.8.1 Subject to the requirements of the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), the staff member filing a child abuse report with the local Children's Aid Society shall receive a report on the investigation, particularly as it relates to any further role in providing support to the child in the educational setting.
- 3.8.2 The principal will establish and maintain a file *Record of Suspected Child Abuse*.
- 3.8.3 If a student transfers to another school in Ontario, the principal or vice-principal must notify the receiving school principal of the existence of any substantiated reports involving the student in the *Record of Suspected Child Abuse* file. The principal must notify the children's aid society of such communication.
- 3.8.4 Reports unsubstantiated after 60 days may be removed from the file after consultation with the society.
- 3.8.5 If a report has been expunged by the Central Registry of Ontario, the comparable report must be expunged from the school files, on notification by the children's aid society.

Form(s) associated with this procedure:  
047 – Record of Suspected Child Abuse

Legal References:

1. Education Act :
  - S. 265 (1) (j) Duties of Principals: Care of Pupils
  - S. 266 Pupil Records Privileged
2. The Child and Family Services Act
3. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

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