Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

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The well-being of children, particularly those who are abused or neglected, has been a long-standing concern. Legislation, which defines child abuse and determines the appropriate role for child welfare agencies, has been a part of state statutes for over 20 years.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Child abuse is defined in the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.020 as follows: “Abuse or neglect of a child means: Physical or mental injury of a non-accidental nature; sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or negligent treatment or maltreatment caused or allowed by the person responsible for his welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm.”

Nevada ranks among the highest in the nation in the number of reported cases of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children.

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) reports for 2010 that of the 681,033 children in Nevada, there were 4,947 substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect and 12,940 unsubstantiated cases (see Table 1).

Substantiated cases are investigations that conclude that the allegation of maltreatment or risk of maltreatment was supported or founded by state law or state policy.

Unsubstantiated cases are investigations that determine there is not sufficient evidence under state law to conclude or suspect that the child has been maltreated or is at risk of being maltreated.

Child abuse reports remain high, despite a corresponding decrease in the number of substantiated cases in Nevada. The number of children confirmed to be victims of abuse and neglect continues to a number just under 5,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maltreatment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>3545</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>1535</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Neglect</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Maltreatment</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Victims</strong></td>
<td>**4947 *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Many victims are subject to multiple types of maltreatment and more than one incident, therefore the number of individual types exceeds the total.
WHO MUST REPORT?

According to NRS 432.B121(1) any person who has “reasonable cause to believe” child abuse may be occurring or has occurred may report to a Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement agency. Mandated reporters are those persons, who in their professional or occupational capacities, know or have reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected. Mandated reporters include the following:

a. A physician, dentist, dental hygienist, chiropractor, optometrist, podiatrist, medical examiner, resident, intern, professional or practical nurse, physician’s assistant, psychiatrist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, alcohol or drug abuse counselor, athletic trainer, advanced emergency medical technician-ambulance or other person providing medical services licensed or certified in Nevada.

b. Any personnel of a hospital or similar institution engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of persons.

c. A coroner.

d. A clergyman, practitioner of Christian Science or religious healer.

e. A social worker, administrator, teacher, librarian or counselor of a school.

f. Any person who maintains or is employed by a facility or establishment that provides care for children, children’s camp or other public or private facility, institution or agency furnishing care to a child.

g. Any person licensed to conduct a foster home.

h. Any officer or employee of a law enforcement agency or an adult or juvenile probation officer.

i. An attorney, unless he has acquired the knowledge of the abuse or neglect from a client who is or may be accused of the abuse or neglect.

j. Any person who maintains, is employed by or serves as a volunteer for an agency or service that advises persons regarding abuse or neglect of a child and refers them to persons and agencies where their requests and needs can be met.

k. Any person who is employed by or serves as a volunteer for an approved youth shelter.

l. Any adult person who is employed by an entity that provides organized activities for children.

Anyone required to make a report who knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of NRS 432B.220 is guilty of a misdemeanor (NRS 432.B.240). Persons required to report may not invoke any of the privileges granted under Chapter 49 of NRS relating to patient or client confidentiality.

Effective October 1, 2005, a new section has been added to the list of persons required to report suspected child abuse or neglect (NRS 432.220(3)). The new section includes “any person who is described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 who delivers or provides medical services to a newborn infant and who, in his professional or occupational capacity, knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the newborn infant has been affected by prenatal illegal substance abuse or has withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure shall, as soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 24 hours after the person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the newborn infant is so affected or has such symptoms, notify an agency which provides child welfare services for the condition of the infant and refer each person who is responsible for the welfare of the infant to an agency which provides child welfare services.”

WHAT TO REPORT

According to NRS432B.230, a child abuse or neglect report may be made verbally by telephone or otherwise.

“The report must contain the following information, if obtainable:

a. The name, address, age and sex of the child.

b. The name and address of the child’s parents or other person responsible for his care.

c. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect of the child; the effect of prenatal illegal substance abuse on the newborn infant or the nature of the withdrawal resulting from prenatal drug exposure of the newborn infant.

d. Any evidence or previously known or suspected abuse or neglect of the child or the child’s siblings or effects of prenatal illegal substance abuse on or evidence of withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure of the newborn infant.

e. The name, address and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have abused or neglected the child.

f. Any other information known to the person making the report that Child Welfare Services considers necessary.”

WHEN AND WHERE TO REPORT

According to Nevada Revised Statute 432B.121(1), persons are required by law to report as soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 24 hours after the person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the child (under 18 years old) has been abused or neglected. Reports should be made to the local office of the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, to any county agency authorized by the juvenile court to receive such reports, or to any police department or sheriff’s office when there is reason to believe that a child under 18 years of age has been maltreated.

Washoe County is required to report within 1 hour.
PERPETRATORS

Most perpetrators of child maltreatment are caregivers who have been found to have abused or neglected a child. In most cases, the perpetrator is a parent who is responsible for the child’s well-being (see Table 2).

In 2010, 56.5 percent of the perpetrators were women and 43.5 percent were men. Female perpetrators were typically younger than male perpetrators. The median age for perpetrators was 31 years for women and 34 years for men.

### TABLE 2
Table 2 shows the perpetrators by relationship to the victim (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to Victim</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Parent</td>
<td>5,519</td>
<td>81.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or Neighbors</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepparent</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>3.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Relative</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>2.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown Parental Type</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Facility Staff</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptive Parent</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Parent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Guardian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Provider</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>6,747</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A REPORT IS RECEIVED?

When Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement agencies receive a report of child abuse or neglect, they must initiate an investigation. If a child is under the age of five, there is a high risk of serious harm or the child is seriously injured, an investigation will begin immediately. If a case is lower risk, an evaluation will be made within three days to determine if a formal investigation is needed.

During an investigation, information is gathered by CPS. Interviews are conducted with the child, the child’s caregiver, parents and/or guardian, and any other person who may have information regarding the child’s situation. The child’s age, development, family history, home environment and other risk factors are assessed. In lower risk cases, children are allowed to stay in the home and parents or guardians may be offered services. In higher risk cases, a child may be placed in protective custody. A Protective Custody Hearing is held within 72 hours and a judge determines whether a child will remain in custody. Children requiring longer term care are placed in foster care with either relatives or licensed foster parents.

- In 2010, there were 4,806 children in foster care in Nevada, compared with 4,779 in 2009.
- The average age of a child in foster care was 6.5 years, and the average length of stay was 16 months.
- There are over 1,178 foster care homes in Nevada. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the children in foster care reside with their relatives. Of the 2,833 children exiting out-of-home care in 2010, 61 percent were reunited with their parents or other family members.
Reporting

Reports can also be made by dialing the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-992-5757 for all areas of the state except Clark and Washoe Counties.

In Clark County, call 702-399-0081. In Washoe County, call 775-785-8600 or call your local sheriff.

The legal responsibility of the professional is to report suspected incidents of child abuse. The person making the report is usually not informed of investigation results.

If the person making the report is concerned about the adequacy of the investigation and is not able to remedy the situation with the local agency, contact:

Systems Advocate Unit
Crystal Maupin
775-684-4453 E-mail: emain@dcfs.nv.gov

FOR EDUCATIONAL HELP, CONTACT:
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension in
Clark County 702-222-3130, (Contact Teresa
Byington) Washoe County Cooperative Extension
office 775-784-4848, or your local County
Cooperative Extension office. Some offices offer
workshops on Recognizing and Reporting Child

Nevada Agencies Handling Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect are:
(Be prepared to put on hold or directed to dial “many numbers.” Don’t give up; your call is important.)

Nevada Division of Child and Family Services District Offices

Northern Region:
Washoe County Department of Social Services
350 Center St.
Reno, NV 89501
775-785-8600; 775-785-8648 (Fax)

Southern Region:
Clark County Department of Family Services
Claude I. Howard Children’s Center
701 N. North Pecos
Las Vegas, NV 89101
702-435-3444; 702-385-2999 (Fax)

Rural Services Locations:
Carson City Office
1677 Old Hot Springs Rd., Bldg. B
Carson City, NV 89706
775-687-4943; 775-687-4903 (Fax)

Elko District Office
1010 Ruby Vista Dr., Ste. 101
Elko, NV 89801-4611
775-738-2534; 775-778-6628 (Fax)

Fallon District Office
1735 Kaiser Street Reno, NV 89501
Fallon, NV 89406-3108
775-423-8566; 775-423-4800 (Fax)

Pahrump Office
2280 East Calvada, Suite 302
Pahrump, NV 89048-3161
775-727-8497; 775-727-7072 (Fax)

References


Department of Child and Family Services - Foster Care Available at: http://www.dcps.state.nv.us

Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child & Family Services, Nevada Child Abuse & Neglect Statistics

Nevada KIDS COUNT, 2010, Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Available at: http://kidscount.unlv.edu

Reports of Abuse or Neglect. Nevada Revised Statutes, 432B.020 - 432B.330


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What is Child Abuse?
Jackie Reilly, M.S., Youth Development Specialist

There are four kinds of child abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse is purposely hurting a child.
For example:
- beating a child
- burning a child
- throwing a child
- shaking a baby or child

Emotional abuse is when a parent says things that make a child feel bad.
For example:
- calling a child names
- telling a child he is stupid or ugly
- telling a child she can't do anything right

Neglect is not taking care of a child.
For example:
- leaving a young child alone
- not feeding a child
- not taking a sick child to the doctor

Sexual Abuse is any sexual activity with a child.
For example:
- showing a child sexual pictures
- having sex with a child
- taking sexual pictures of a child

If you or someone you know is abusing a child and you want it to stop, call for help. 1-800-992-5757, this is Nevada's toll-free 24 hour Crisis Call line. If each of us does our part to help just one child, Nevada will be a safer place for all children.
Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms

The first step in helping abused or neglected children is learning to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single sign does not prove child abuse is occurring in a family, but a closer look at the situation may be warranted when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination.

If you do suspect a child is being harmed, reporting your suspicions may protect the child and get

What's Inside:
- Recognizing child abuse
- Types of abuse
- Signs of physical abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Signs of sexual abuse
- Signs of emotional maltreatment

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

Child Welfare Information Gateway
Children's Bureau/ACYF
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20024
703.365.7565 or 800.394.3366
Email: info@childwelfare.gov
www.childwelfare.gov
help for the family. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Some people (typically certain types of professionals) are required by law to make a report of child maltreatment under specific circumstances—these are called mandatory reporters. For more information, see the Child Welfare Information Gateway publication, Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect: [www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm](www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm)

For more information about where and how to file a report, contact your local child protective services agency or police department. An additional resource for information and referral is the Childhelp® National Child Abuse Hotline (800.4.A.CHILD).

### Recognizing Child Abuse

The following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect.

**The Child:**
- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents’ attention
- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

**The Parent:**
- Shows little concern for the child
- Denies the existence of—or blames the child for—the child’s problems in school or at home
- Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
- Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs

**The Parent and Child:**
- Rarely touch or look at each other
- Consider their relationship entirely negative
- State that they do not like each other

### Types of Abuse

The following are some signs often associated with particular types of child abuse and neglect: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. It is important to note, however, that these
types of abuse are more typically found in combination than alone. A physically abused child, for example, is often emotionally abused as well, and a sexually abused child also may be neglected.

**Signs of Physical Abuse**

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child’s injury
- Describes the child as “evil,” or in some other very negative way
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abuse as a child

**Signs of Neglect**

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs

**Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:
- Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- Is secretive and isolated
- Is jealous or controlling with family members

- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the parent or other adult caregiver:
- Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
- Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
- Overtly rejects the child

Signs of Emotional Maltreatment

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the child:
- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development

RESOURCES ON THE CHILD WELFARE INFORMATION GATEWAY WEBSITE:

- Child Abuse and Neglect
  www.childwelfare.gov/can/index.cfm
- Defining Child Abuse and Neglect
  www.childwelfare.gov/can/defining/
- Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect
  www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
  www.childwelfare.gov/responding/reporting.cfm

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Title 4 – Codification of Board Policy Statements

Chapter 22

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

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Section 1. Introduction

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is committed to maintaining a supportive and safe educational environment, one which seeks to enhance the well-being of all members of the NSHE community, which includes creating a secure environment for children who may participate in NSHE programs or activities, or be present at NSHE facilities or events. The NSHE policies for the protection of children are intended for the protection all children who participate in NSHE events or activities for children or who are NSHE students.
(B/R 3/13)

Section 2. Public Events and Venues

Children are permitted at events and venues open to the public on NSHE property. However, NSHE reserves the right to determine whether selected events or venues are appropriate for unescorted or unsupervised children.
(B/R 3/13)

Section 3. Definitions

1. Child. A “child” is anyone under 18 years of age or, if in school, until graduation from high school, and includes children under the age of 18 years who are registered as NSHE students. The terms “child”, “minor” and “children” are used synonymously in this policy.

2. Volunteer. The term “volunteer” means individuals who are working at an institution pursuant to a volunteer agreement approved by the institution’s general counsel. For the purposes of this policy, the term “volunteer” does not include a parent or guardian of a child. Parents and guardians, however, should be supervised by appropriate NSHE or non-NSHE personnel during their participation in NSHE sponsored or approved programs and activities.

3. Child Abuse or Neglect. Child abuse or neglect is defined in accordance with the provisions of NRS 432B.020-NRS 432B.150.

4. Program or Activity Involving Children. “Program or activity involving children” applies to programs or activities for children that are established by NSHE institutions; and programs or activities for children sponsored by outside persons or entities which are permitted to take place at NSHE facilities. “Program or activity involving children” does not include events (such as concerts, plays, sporting events) or facilities (such as restaurants or stores) that are open to the public.

5. (B/R 3/13)

Section 4. Policies for the Protection of Children

1. Reports of Child Abuse or Neglect by All NSHE Personnel. All NSHE employees and volunteers, who have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred at an NSHE facility or during NSHE programs or activities, must report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or a child welfare agency, as soon as possible and within 24 hours. Retaliation against any individual who makes a report of child abuse or neglect is prohibited.
2. **Supervision and Protection of Children.** All children who participate in NSHE programs and activities must be appropriately supervised at all times. A child must be immediately removed from a dangerous situation involving suspected child abuse or neglect or other inappropriate conduct, or which presents a threat to the child’s health and safety.

3. **Policy and Procedure.** In order to implement these child protection policies, NSHE institutions and System Administration must:

   a) Periodically (at least annually) inventory all programs or activities that involve children under the age of 18 years, such as, daycare facilities, summer camps and programs, sport camps, research studies and other activities or programs that are specifically intended to involve children under the age of 18 years;

   b) Periodically review (at least annually) the security of programs and activities involving children, including considering measures that may be appropriate for the protection of students from sex offenders who are registered with the institution’s police departments;

   c) Provide for a uniform procedure for the approval of the use of facilities by outside persons or entities for programs or activities involving children, and requiring written acknowledgment of NSHE and institution policy and procedure for the protection of children;

   d) Identify all mandatory reporters of child abuse, pursuant to the provisions of NRS 432B.220-NRS 432B.250 and provide training materials regarding the mandatory reporting requirements;

   e) Provide a copy of this policy, and any supplemental institution policy and procedure, for the protection of children to all employees and volunteers who supervise or work in programs or activities involving children;

   f) Publicize this policy, and any supplemental institution policy and procedure for the protection of children on the institution or System website, including the Division of Child and Family Services toll-free telephone number and/or other law enforcement telephone numbers to receive reports of child abuse or neglect;

   g) Conduct appropriate investigations of all incidents of alleged child abuse or neglect, and provide confidential notice of such incidents to the Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Regents.

(B/R 3/13)