

Protecting Our Children Fact Sheet

As adults working with youth, we need to do our best to protect children from the dangers of child abuse and neglect. And, we need to take steps to ensure we are operating in a low-risk environment when we are working with these youth.

Relevant statistics

- 7.4 million child abuse reports were filed in 2016.
- 1,750 children died from abuse or neglect in 2016, a rate of 2.36 per 100,000 children, or 5 deaths/day.
- In 2016 in Indiana, 225,152 reports of child abuse or neglect were made to the Department of Child Services. 29,359 abuse/neglect cases were substantiated, or 18.6/1000 Indiana children.

Reporting requirements

- Everyone has the moral, civic, and legal duty to help prevent child abuse/neglect
- Any person who has reason to believe that a child is an abuse/neglect victim is required by law to report this suspicion to the appropriate authorities.
- Confidentiality of the situation is crucial.

Child abuse

- A non-accidental injury caused by a child's caretaker
- Characterized by unexplained bruises, burns, or fractures; child may be depressed or frightened

Child neglect

- Failure to provide for a child's basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, supervision)
- Characterized by dirty, inappropriate clothing for the weather and frequent absences from school; begs/steals food; constantly fatigued; lacks needed medical or dental care

Child sexual abuse

- Any physical contact with a child for sexual gratification
- Characterized by pain in walking or sitting; anxious, irritable, inattentive; abrupt change in behavior

Reducing risks for staff and volunteers (to charges of child sexual harassment and abuse)

- Take precautions to avoid risky situations
- Ensure safety of all participants
- See risk factors included on matrix found on reverse side



Child Sexual Abuse Risk Exposure Matrix

Adults planning activities for youth audiences should consider the following factors. Planning activities to fall within the lower or medium risk categories will reduce the chance for allegations to be made of improper behavior between youth and adults.

	Lower	Medium	High
1	Activities held in facilities with public access	Activities held in private homes	Activities held in an isolated setting (e.g., wilderness)
2	Parents actively involved in program with their child	Some parental involvement in program	Little or no parental involvement in program with their child
3	Two or more adults supervising group activities	One adult supervising a group of children	Activity with one adult and one child
4	No regular interaction between volunteer and specific children	Periodic interaction for short periods of time between volunteer and specific children	Interaction between volunteer and specific children spanning long periods of time
5	No changing of clothing as part of activity	Changing of clothes, showering (such as for sports activities)	Changing of clothes, bathing, preparing for bed, overnight stays
6	Training for volunteers/staff concerning child sexual abuse is required	Training concerning child sexual abuse offered to volunteers/staff, but not required	Training concerning child sexual abuse not offered to volunteers/staff
7	Education about child sexual abuse is required for youth participants	Education about child sexual abuse is offered to children, but not required	Education about child sexual abuse is not offered to children
8	Organization regularly monitors and evaluates the volunteer's activity	Organization provides informal oversight of the volunteer's activities	Volunteer operates on organization's behalf without oversight
9	Volunteer has no physical contact with children	Volunteer and child engaged in activities involving some physical contact	Volunteer has close physical contact with children (e.g., swimming instruction, wrestling)
10	Organization has very little staff turnover (including volunteers)	Organization has some staff turnover (including volunteers)	Organization has considerable staff turnover (including volunteers)
11	Services offered to children older than 12 years of age	Services offered to children younger than 12 years of age	Services focused on children of any age who have disabilities

Source: Screening Volunteers to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse: A Community Guide for Youth Organization
The National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations. Washington, D.C.