

Georgia's MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW

In Georgia, you may fulfill the mandate by reporting to a designated reporter (= MCGSA President)

The designated reporter makes an oral report to Department of Family and Child Services

Why? Because coaches do not know in which county player resides and reports of disclosure or suspicion of abuse must be made to DFCS office in the county in which the child resides. MCGSA President locates player's address in the Sports Engine registration portal

Coaches must **cause** a report because it is the President's responsibility to **make** the report.

Child Protective Services (CPS) is the division of the Department of Family and Child Services (DFCS), that responds to reports of child abuse and neglect.

What to do When a Child Discloses

1. Find a private place to talk with the child

2. Reassure the child (I'm on your Team!)

"I believe you."

"I am glad you told me."

"It is not your fault this happened."

"This is abuse and abuse is wrong."

3. Let the child tell his/her own story. (Tell me the play-by-play)

(Record the facts using the words as the child states them. Or record them as soon as you are able.)

DO: Listen attentively and calmly.

DO: Believe in the child and be supportive.

DO: Keep your own emotions and nonverbal cues neutral.

DON'T: comment with own assumptions and value judgments.

DON'T: try to get all the details. MINIMIZE the number of questions you ask the child and avoid the use of leading questions (questions that suggest an answer)

Ask: "Is there anything else you can/want to tell me?"

When he/she chooses to say nothing more,

Assure: "I believe you and I will help you. You are not in trouble and you did the right thing by talking to me.

write down the *actual* words used in the disclosure and your interaction with the child. This first statement made spontaneously has forensic significance to the investigators and the exact words can be important.

>>>>“cause a report”= **Report the disclosure to the MCGSA President** within 24 hours.

After a report has been made

- Respect the child’s need for confidentiality... ..by not discussing the abuse with anyone other than the MCGSA President.
- Follow up with the President to assure that a report is made to CPS

When You Suspect a Child is Being Maltreated

Suspected Child Abuse—A person must report when they have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred. Reasonable cause is anything that would lead a reasonable person to believe that child abuse has occurred. Reasonable cause to believe that abuse has occurred can be based on what the person observes or hears.

• **Report your concerns to the MCGSA President** within 24 hours.

• To *cause* a report to be made, mandated reporters only need to have “reasonable suspicions,” not direct evidence, but DO NOT photograph injuries!

What to Report?

Coaches must report as much information as can be obtained:

Name of Child, and identifying information including appearance, team, etc.

Child’s Age

Nature and extent of Child’s condition

The cause of the abuse and the person who caused the abuse