

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The Maine Legislature requires schools to implement a policy to address the prevention, response, and reporting of child sexual abuse within the school setting. The M.S.A.D. No. 75 School Board is committed to implementing best practices to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse, and to ensure that all children attend a school which is a safe and secure learning environment.

Definitions

Child sexual abuse – All sexual engagement either through hands-on or hands-off activities between an adult and a child is sexual abuse. Sexual engagement between children can also be sexual abuse when there is a significant age difference between the children or if the children are very different in development, size, or other power differential.

Evidence-informed practice or program – Programs that use the best available knowledge and research to guide program design and implementation; the program has clearly identified intended outcomes and conducts evaluations to measure those outcomes.

Qualified instructor – An individual who has the knowledge, skills and comfort level necessary to professionally address child sexual abuse prevention education, aligned to research and best practices. A qualified instructor will be school personnel or from a community-based behavioral health organization.

Procedures for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Sexual Abuse

School personnel or volunteers receiving a report of or suspecting child sexual abuse are required to follow our Policy KLF – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.

Individuals suspecting or knowing of child sexual abuse should not ask additional questions or engage in interviewing techniques with the child, and should limit written documentation to the information required by JLF-E – Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Form.

Child Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention Education for School Personnel

Child sexual abuse awareness and prevention education for all M.S.A.D. No. 75 personnel shall be:

1. Required for all school personnel;
2. Delivered by a qualified instructor(s);
3. A minimum of one (1) hour;

4. Evidence-informed;
5. Completed within six (6) months of hire; and
6. Updated every four (4) years.

The training will:

1. Increase awareness of developmentally appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviors in children; and
2. Increase ability to identify indicators of sexual abuse, including physical and psychosocial indicators on a spectrum (including lower to higher probability);
3. Increase ability to effectively respond to sexual behavior or disclosures or suspicions of child sexual abuse; and
4. Includes information about local resources.

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education Pre-K through Grade 5 Curriculum Programs

Age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education curriculum programs shall be:

1. Delivered by qualified instructors with support from school counselor and/or school nurse;
2. Part of the written comprehensive school health education curriculum;
3. Aligned to the Maine Learning Results Health Education Standards for Grades Pre-K through 5; and
4. Follow an appropriate scope and sequence.

The classroom curriculum will be consistent with evidence-informed, age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education for students, and include:

1. Age-appropriate education regarding physical and personal boundaries, including biologically accurate body terminology.
2. Helps children identify unsafe or uncomfortable situations including a range of feelings, touches or violations of physical boundaries;
3. Helps children identify safe adults with whom they could discuss unsafe or uncomfortable situations; and

4. Helps children identify and develop skills to support a friend who may be experiencing unsafe or uncomfortable situations.

Legal Reference: ***20-A MRS §254, sub-18, 20-A MRS §4502, sub-§5-C, 22 MRS §4012, 22 MRS §4011-A, sub-9***

Cross Reference: ***JLF-Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, JLF-E-Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Form***

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