

Child Protection Law

STAFF

The website that gives you information about this is www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov

With the new law because we work with youth, we are now mandated reporters of child abuse. This means if you have reason to suspect abuse or if a person under the age of 18 tells you about something that would be considered abuse you MUST report it. To report suspected child abuse go to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or call 1-800-932-0313.

Child abuse, according to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

Child abuse also includes certain acts in which the act itself constitutes abuse without any resulting injury or condition. These recent acts include any of the following:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
- Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
- Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
- Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
- Interfering with the breathing of a child.
- Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
- Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.

"Recent" is defined as an abusive act within two years from the date the report is made to ChildLine. Sexual abuse, serious mental injury, serious physical neglect and deaths have no time limit.

If you willfully fail to report suspected child abuse penalties range from a misdemeanor of second degree to a felony of the second degree.

Persons making a report of suspected child abuse are immune from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith.

The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers who are coming with or going to be here at the same time as children (under the age of 18) need clearances.

If they are coming with a church or school group from the state of PA they should have the clearances already. Their church or school is required to require these clearances. We will need a copy of them.

If the volunteer is from Pennsylvania and has lived in Pennsylvania for at least ten years they only need two clearances:

1. report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police
2. child abuse history clearance

These can both be obtained online instantly at keepkidssafe.pa.gov.

They will also need to swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense under §6344 (which includes an list of crimes that would disqualify a person from working or volunteering with children under the age of 18).

If the volunteer is from Pennsylvania and has lived in Pennsylvania for less than ten years they need all three clearances

1. report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police
2. child abuse history clearance
3. FBI clearances

If the volunteers are from outside of Pennsylvania, they will need to provide the clearances from their own state and FBI clearances. They can go online to https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm to get a mail-in fingerprint card to get this clearance. This can be a time-consuming process and needs to be done well in advance of their planned activity with Hosanna.

PRECAUTIONS

To protect Hosanna Industries and our staff, we are making a few changes. First we will be putting signs in the dormitory stating that we are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Hopefully this will discourage any would-be offender staying in our dormitory. It will also help to show that we are committed to protecting young people.

The second precaution relates to dual adult supervision. At NO time should a staff member be alone with someone under the age of 18. This includes volunteers, summer staff members, and children in the homes of our clients. This includes riding in vehicles, working in small spaces, or walking into the dormitory when young people are there. Dual adult supervision means at least two adults must be present whenever there are children present.

The third precaution deals with adult volunteers who are coming to stay in the dormitory at the same time children will be in the dormitory. The volunteer packet is being updated to reflect these precautions. The volunteer intake coordinator will be requiring clearances to be turned in at least a week before a group arrives on our campus. Most volunteers should have their clearances already because their church or school should be requiring them. The church leader can then simply fax or email or mail a copy of the clearance to our volunteer intake coordinator who will then compile a list of all people who are supposed to be coming who have turned in their clearances. When the group arrives, one staff person will meet the volunteers outside and corral them together into the entrance of the dormitory. A second staff person will be sitting at a desk and will allow no one past until they have shown photo id proving that they are the person from whom our volunteer intake coordinator has appropriate clearances. All volunteers age 16 and older will need to show photo id. Only those volunteers 18 and older will need clearances. If an adult volunteer shows up without clearances, they will not be permitted to stay on campus or work with us. We will provide a list of hotels in Cranberry and the group will be responsible for the fact that they brought an uncleared adult with them. If the individual has lived in the state of Pennsylvania for 10 years or more, they are only required to provide two clearances, both of which provide instantaneous results. It will be their responsibility to get those clearances completed, print them, and provide them to Hosanna staff before they can stay in the dormitory or work with us. If they are from out-of-state or have not lived in Pennsylvania for at least 10 years, they will need to be fingerprinted the results of which take several weeks to obtain. If we allow a known sex offender to stay in our dormitory when children are present, we are committing a crime. It is irrelevant if we don't know they are a sex offender because we didn't get a clearance. We committed a crime by allowing him or her to stay there.

Finally, you are all mandated reporters. This is important. If you are told of or suspect child abuse and do not report it, you are committing a crime which can range from a misdemeanor of the second degree to a felony of the second degree. If a child begins to tell you about abuse he/she is or has experienced, please attempt to lead the child immediately to a senior staff member who will then make the report. If the child is unwilling to talk to anyone but you, listen carefully and then you will need to make the report later. To report suspected child abuse go to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or call 1-800-932-0313.

None of this is to be taken lightly. Ever.

Medical Emergency

It is not possible to describe and plan for every situation. However, having a plan in mind before an emergency will be helpful. First, if there are volunteers present, except for doctors, nurses, EMTs or similarly trained people, it is important to keep volunteers out of the way and preferably unaware of the situation until it has been handled. If your presence is not necessary to help with the medical emergency, keep your volunteers out of the way and busy with the work they have been tasked to complete. If a medical emergency occurs in your presence, two things

need to happen immediately. The emergency needs to be dealt with and a senior staff person must be notified. This would first be the Executive Director if he is present, second the construction supervisor, and third the project leader. If there are two or more staff members present, one stays to care for the individual and the second goes to find the leader. If there are volunteers present, select the most mature, capable volunteers to help you with the medical emergency and to find the leader. Other volunteers should be redirected as soon as possible to another location or task. If the medical emergency happens to a volunteer, the leader of their group also needs to be informed as soon as possible. As the leader in the case of a medical emergency, it is most important to be discerning at this time. Is the emergency life-threatening? Call 9-1-1 right away. Make sure you know the address of your location or have someone help you get it. Can the emergency be handled by our staff or a volunteer leader? Make the person as comfortable as possible. Be sure they are stable. Choose someone to transport them to a medical facility if necessary. Each of our vehicles is equipped with a first aid kit, including food items for a diabetic emergency. Familiarize yourself with the first aid kits so you know just where they are and what is available to you in case of an emergency. When the situation has been handled, if appropriate gather all staff and volunteers together, explain what happened, what is being done, say a prayer, and lead others back to work.

Fire

Know the location of the fire extinguishers in each building on our campus. If the fire is small, is not in danger of creating an explosion, and containable put it out. Use a fire extinguisher if available. Unless it is a grease fire, use water if a fire extinguisher is not available. You can also smother fires by taking away their source of oxygen. Do not fan fires! In the case of a grease fire, first take away heat source, take away oxygen source, then cover with baking soda. If the fire is too large to be contained or is in danger of causing an explosion, get out. Get everyone else out, too. Then call 9-1-1. Know your location. As soon as possible, make sure appropriate leadership is made aware of the incident, including the Executive Director.

Dangerous Weapon

If a dangerous weapon is noticed on a job site, bring it to the attention of the leader. Do not point it out to others. The leader of the project will determine what to do with the information, including but not limited to recognizing that a weapon is present, asking the homeowner about the weapon, asking that the weapon be removed before work commences or continues, or asking all staff and volunteers to leave the site. At all times remaining calm and quiet will be most helpful. If the dangerous weapon is discovered on our campus, contact the Executive Director immediately and follow all given directions precisely.

Crime

In the event of a crime such as a burglary, discovery of drugs, etc. Remove yourself and all with you from danger as quickly and quietly as possible. If there is any danger to yourself or others, do not attempt to stop a crime as it is occurring. Use your senses and carefully gather as many details as possible while getting to safety. Discern whether this is a situation best handled immediately by the police (such as a burglary discovered while it is occurring) or best handled

by notifying the Executive Director (such as the discovery of a suspected illegal substance). Take appropriate action. Do not put yourself in imminent danger!

Flooding

First discern your best course of action. If you or others are in danger because of the volume of water, get to higher ground immediately. If you or others are in danger due to electrical problems caused by the water, remove yourself and any others immediately. If there is no imminent danger to life or limb, deal with the problem. Shut off water supplies. Remove standing water. Contact leadership as soon as possible. Give all details regarding the incident and follow all instructions.

Electrical

In the event of electrical sparking or arcing, assess the situation. Remove all people from imminent danger. If possible, stop the electrical supply. Do not touch exposed wires or get near electrical emergencies. Call a leader or 9-1-1 as appropriate. Be sure to contact the Executive Director as soon as possible.

Death

In the event of a death contact the Executive Director and site leaders immediately. The Executive Director and/or other leader will contact appropriate authorities and the individual's contact. As always, keep volunteers as insulated from the incident as possible.