

CHILD ABUSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, Inc. as a private nonprofit agency which administers the Head Start/Oregon Head Start Pre-Kindergarten Program, Early Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral, WIC, Healthy Start, FSC, CASA, and the USDA Child Care Food Program comes under Oregon 's Mandatory Reporting Law (ORS 419B.005 to 419B.045). According to ORS 419B.010, any employees having reasonable cause to believe that any child with whom the official comes in contact has suffered abuse, or that any person with whom the official comes in contact has abused a child shall report or cause a report to be made . The report is a request for an assessment into the condition of a child.

Parents will be informed of the agency 's child abuse policy and that staff are mandated reporters at Recruitment, at Enrollment, at home visits and throughout the year.

All staff hired receives a copy of "What You Can Do About Child Abuse" and training on Agency Child Abuse Policy and Procedures during the new staff orientation. The Parent Policy Council receives training on Agency Child Abuse Policy and Procedures during the October meeting. Additional training for program staff on Child Abuse is scheduled as needed during the program year.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE BY UMCHS STAFF

POLICY:

All agency staff are mandatory reporters under Oregon Statutes and must report all suspected instances of child abuse.

PROCEDURE:

- 1 Any program staff that suspects abuse involving a child connected with any of UMCHS programs will follow these procedures for reporting the incident.
 - a. Contact DHS, during the workday, or law enforcement, after hours, by phone immediately and report the suspected incident or situation. Program staff should also at this time request the name of the individual taking the report.
 - b. The report of the suspected child abuse should contain the following information, if known:
 - (1) Name and address of child and parents or persons responsible for child's care.
 - (2) Child's age and birth date
 - (3) Nature and extent of the suspected abuse including any evidence of previous abuse.
 - (4) Explanation given for the suspected abuse
 - (5) Any other information that might be helpful in establishing cause of the abuse and identity of the abuser.
 - c. Report the incident to the Center Team Leader, WIC Director, Healthy Start Supervisor, or Center Manager and notify the Mental Health Director.
 - d. Fill out the suspected Child Abuse Report with the same information reported to DHS or law enforcement.
 - e. Staff will send the original of the report to DHS and a copy to the Mental Health Director. A copy of the report is placed in the child's (family's) file and the incident noted in the Progress Notes under Social Services Emergent Concerns.
 - f. DHS will complete the bottom of the Suspected Child Abuse form and return it to UMCHS with recommendations for any follow-up by the agency. The Child &/or Family Advocate will document in the child's (family's) file any follow-up based on recommendations made by DHS.
 - g. If no immediate action is deemed necessary by DHS, but the staff feels further explanation/follow-up is necessary, they should contact the Mental Health Manager to discuss the situation. If necessary, the Mental Health Director will set up a meeting with DHS, the staff making the report and other appropriate staff to discuss the situation.

- 2 If the suspected incident of abuse involves a child that is not connected to any UMCHS programs, staff will report the incident to either DHS or law enforcement. No further follow-up is necessary.
- 3 If the suspected incident of child abuse involves a staff member the following procedures will be followed.
 - a. Follow the same reporting procedures in #1 above except that the Mental Health Manager and the Executive Director will be notified immediately.
 - b. If the incident occurs in licensed facility, a report will also be made to the State Child Care Division.
 - c. Depending on the severity and nature of the suspected abuse incident, staff may be suspended from work or denied access to any setting involving children pending the outcome of the investigation of DHS or law enforcement.
 - d. DHS or law enforcement will be ask to provide information necessary to assist the agency Executive Director and the administrative team in determining outcome actions.
 - e. Corrective action will be determined by the outcome of the investigation.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE BY VOLUNTEERS AND SUBSTITUTES

POLICY:

All substitutes and volunteers in the classroom are expected to report any suspected incidents of child abuse.

PROCEDURE:

- 1 The same procedure for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse will be the same as for staff of UMCHS with the following exceptions:
 - a. Prior to making the telephone report to DHS, the substitute or volunteer will discuss the situation with the Teacher, CFA, Teacher, Program Manager, or other appropriate staff.
 - b. A staff person will be present when they contact DHS to make the child abuse report.
 - c. Any follow-up from the child abuse report will be the responsibility of the staff who is working with the family.
 - d. If the alleged incident involves a UMCHS staff, the substitute or volunteer will discuss the situation with the staff person=s supervisor as soon as possible, but prior to contacting DHS.
 - e. If the volunteer or substitute is a mandated reporter under Oregon=s mandatory reporting law, the requirements of the law takes precedence.

INTERVIEWING A CHILD IN THE CENTER REGARDING SUSPECTED ABUSE

POLICY

If requested by DHS or law enforcement, a Head Start child can be interviewed at the Head Start Center.

PROCEDURES

- 1 DHS will make every effort to inform the Center Team Leader, Teacher, or Child & Family Advocate in advance of the need to interview the child and schedule an appropriate time and private place within the Center to hold the interview.
- 2 If the child is in immediate danger and must be interviewed immediately, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the investigator while still providing appropriate support for the child.
- 3 If the DHS or law enforcement investigator asks, a Head Start staff may accompany the child during the interview to support the child. The presence of a Head Start staff during the interview is completely at the discretion of the investigator.
- 4 If DHS or law enforcement decides to remove the child from the classroom, they and the Teacher, Child & Family Advocate or Team Leader will comply with the policy and procedures for removing the child from the Head Start Center.
- 5 After every interview at Head Start, DHS or law enforcement will, as soon as possible, inform the child's parents/guardians that the interview occurred. If the parents contact the Head Start Center before notification, the investigator's name and phone number will be given to the parent/guardian. They will be told that they must contact the investigator to obtain any information

REMOVAL OF A CHILD FROM THE HEAD START CLASSROOM

POLICY:

Under ORS 419.569, law enforcement, juvenile court counselors, and DHS have the authority to take a child into protective custody if the child's condition or surroundings jeopardize the child's welfare.

PROCEDURES

- 1 If a child is to be removed from a Head Start classroom and placed in protective custody, the Center Team Leader, Teacher, or Child & Family Advocate will be made aware of this decision and appropriate information concerning the alleged abuse will be shared. The Team Leader, Teacher, or Child & Family Advocate will have the authorized DHS or law enforcement investigator sign the UMCHS removal of child from the classroom form. A copy of this completed form will be given to the DHS or law enforcement investigator and a copy placed in the child's file.
- 2 The DHS or law enforcement investigator taking the child into custody will notify the parents that the child is being removed before the end of class for the day.
- 3 After the removal form is completed, staff will release the child to DHS or law enforcement, and document the information in the child's Progress Notes.
- 4 If a child is to be removed from the classroom after an investigation has been completed and a court order has been issued for protective custody, the classroom Team Leader, Teacher, or Child & Family Advocate will request a copy of the court order and have the authorized DHS or law enforcement staff complete the removal of the child form. The investigator will notify parents/guardians of the child's removal by the end of class that day.
- 5 DHS will be asked to advise the Head Start Center Team Leader, Teacher, or Child & Family Advocate and the Mental Health Director of the child's placement within 24 hours so the child can continue to receive Head Start services.
- 6 The Mental Health Services Director will be notified that a child has been removed from the class and a copy of the paperwork will be forwarded to him.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CHILDREN WHEN THEIR PARENTS CAN'T BE LOCATED

Prior to contacting DHS, staff will have attempted to contact the parent(s) and all individuals listed on the Emergency Notification Form. Additionally, for children that we transport, we will have attempted a second drop off at the end of the bus route.

- 1 During the day (8:00am-5:00pm) contact the local DHS office to make a child abuse report. After hours contact law enforcement and tell them to have the DHS worker on call contact you. You need to contact the DHS office in the county that the child resides if it is different that the county in which the center is located.
- 2 DHS will want the following information:
 - a. What has been done to attempt to contact the parent and emergency contacts.
 - b. The child's name, birthday and age.
 - c. The parent's name, address, and phone number.
 - d. If the parent works, the name of their employer.
 - e. The name, address, and phone number of all individuals listed on our emergency contact form.
 - f. If we know of other relatives in the community, their name, address and phone number.
 - g. Any other information that would be of help to DHS in developing a plan.
- 3 During the day the case will be assigned to an available worker to develop a plan to deal with the situation immediately. After hours the on-call worker will develop the plan.
- 4 If law enforcement needs to be involved it will be the responsibility of DHS to contacting them.
- 5 The staff calling DHS to make the child abuse report will complete the suspected Child Abuse report form and follow all other agency procedures for reporting abuse.

RELEASING A CHILD TO AN IMPAIRED ADULT

POLICY

The well-being of all children in our program is of primary importance. It is our responsibility to see that the children are safely supervised at our sites and when arriving or leaving. When an adult appears to be "under the influence," intoxicated and/or otherwise impaired in his/her ability to get his/her children safely home, staff will institute the steps listed below.

PROCEDURE

- 1 If the adult is not the child's parent or legal guardian, UMCHS staff will contact the parent to make alternative arrangement for getting the child.
- 2 Staff will assist in making alternate arrangements for getting both the adult family member and the children home.
- 3 If the person(s) is aggressive or threatening, UMCHS staff will call 911 and institute their center emergency plan (see OM07 – [Emergency Preparedness Plan](#)).
- 4 If the individual insists on taking the child, staff will contact local law enforcement to report the person.
- 5 If staff contacts law enforcement to report the situation, they need to complete a Child Abuse Report form indicating that the report was made to law enforcement.
- 6 Staff will document the incident in the child's file and notify his/her supervisor when an incident has occurred.
- 7 The program will offer support, training and/or resources to staff in dealing with incidents.

PROTOCOL FOR INFORMATION SHARING WITH DHS

Umatilla Morrow County Head Start, Inc. has an interagency agreement with Child Welfare Services, Oregon Department of Human Services. This agreement, which has been signed by the Branch Managers for the counties in the UMCHS service area, sets forth a protocol for information sharing in order to jointly work in the best interests of all children.

WHEN THE CHILD ABUSE REPORT IS MADE BY UMCHS STAFF:

When the child abuse report is made by UMCHS, appropriate staff can provide additional information about the child and family and the report or further concerns of abuse with DHS needed to complete their assessment. Staff will send a copy of the written report to the Mental Health Director. The Mental Health Director will be contacted if UMCHS staff has concerns about DHS. The Mental Health Director will arrange a meeting of all parties to resolve any concerns.

All child abuse reports are made to the local office of the Department of Human Services or law enforcement. Below is a list of the local offices for the counties we serve.

DHS OFFICES BY COUNTY:

Umatilla:	Pendleton Office Department of Human Services 700 SE Emigrant Pendleton, Oregon 97801 276-9220	Sherman:	Department of Human Services 700 Union Street, Room 230 The Dalles, OR 97058 298-5136
	Hermiston Office Department of Human Services 950 SE Columbia Drive, Suite C Hermiston, Oregon 97838 To Make a Report 1-800-547-3897	Wallowa:	Department of Human Services 502 South River Street PO Box A (mailing address) Enterprise, OR 97828 426-4558
Wheeler:	Department of Human Services 425 North Washington PO Box 96 (mailing address) Condon, OR 97823 384-4252	Grant:	Department of Human Services 725 W. Main, Suite C John Day, OR 97845 575-0728
Gilliam:	Department of Human Services 425 North Washington PO Box 96 (mailing address) Condon, OR 97823 384-4252	Morrow:	Department of Human Services 101 SW Kinkade PO Box 498 (mailing address) Boardman, OR 97818 481-9482

If the child is Native American, you still make the report to the appropriate county DHS office. They will be responsible for contacting any appropriate Tribal authorities if required.

WHEN CHILD ABUSE REPORT HAS NOT BEEN MADE BY UMCHS:

There may be occasions when DHS requests information from UMCHS regarding a child or family where the report was **not** made by UMCHS.

If the child is in the custody of DHS

Have the DHS worker sign a release of Information as the legal guardian and then release the information as you would to any agency.

If the child is not in the custody of DHS

If there is a signed Release of Information, the request will be handled in the same manner that we would handle a request from any agency.

If the worker does not have a signed Release of Information they are to be referred to the Mental Health Director. The Mental Health Director will discuss the situation with DHS and the reason the information is needed. The Mental Health Director will contact the Team Leader or Program Director for the center/program informing them of the situation and how the particular situation will be handled. UMCHS staff will document any follow up regarding this situation in the child's (family=s) file and any plan for the family.

One exception: DHS or law enforcement may have deemed the child is in eminent risk and be in the process of gathering information to remove the child from the home immediately. The Team Leader, Program Manager, or CFA should provide the DHS worker the information necessary to locate the child and if necessary meet with the child at the Center. Should the child be removed from the center, the Team Leader or Child & Family Advocate will have the DHS worker or law enforcement sign the agency form showing that the child is being removed from the site. Remind the individual removing the child that they need contact the parents immediately in order to explain why the child will not be returned home by Head Start. The Team Leader or Child & Family Advocate will document the situation in file and immediately notify Mental Health Director.

RESOLVING CONCERNS

The Mental Health Director will be responsible for setting up meetings with DHS regarding any concerns raised by either DHS or UMCHS.