



ISSUE: Code of Conduct Policies

BACKGROUND: The North Fork John Day Watershed Council (NFJWC) has school-based educational activities and employs youth in summer work crews each year. Because of these activities in which staff and board leaders are in contact with youth and in accordance with Oregon’s Reporting of Child Abuse Law, policy and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect were developed with assistance from legal counsel.

See attached Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the policy adopted by NFJWC~

BOARD ACTION:

Board / Committee	Date	Action
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NORTH FORK JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT POLICY

I. Purpose/Policy

In accordance with Oregon's Reporting of Child Abuse Law, the North Fork John Day Watershed Council (NFJDWC) has developed program policy and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

NFJDWC declares that the relationship between a child and his/her parent, and/or guardian and NFJDWC staff is of paramount importance. It is our responsibility to intervene based upon information in any and all instances of suspected non-accidental injury, neglect, sexual abuse and cruelty imposed on a child by their parents, and/or guardians, NFJDWC staff or others, and in the suspected instance where a child is deprived of his/her right to conditions of minimal nurture, health and safety.

All suspected child abuse and neglect will be reported to the Civil Welfare Hotline 503.731.3100 Oregon State Law (ORS 419B.005 – 419B.045).

All NFJDWC personnel who become aware of any evidence of such abuse or neglect shall comply with stated policy and this procedure.

The following definitions may assist you to identify reportable situations and if you have questions, talk to the Executive Director.

A. Abuse

- Physical Abuse the non-accidental damage of physical injury or physical maltreatment of a child. Examples may include:
 - Throwing, kicking, burning or cutting a child
 - Striking a child with a closed fist
 - Shaking a child
 - Interfering with a child's breathing
 - Threatening a child with a deadly weapon
 - Doing any act that would cause bodily harm greater than temporary pain or minor temporary marks.
 - Physical discipline that includes excessive or unreasonable force against the child.

- Sexual Abuse committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child. This may include:
 - Any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person;
 - Intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the sexual or other intimate parts of a child (not associated with bathing or diaper changing).
 - This may also include permitting, compelling, encouraging, aiding or other otherwise causing a child to engage in touching the sexual or other intimate parts of another.
 - Sexual abuse may also be committed by a person under the age of 18; when that person is significantly older than the victim or when the perpetrator is in a position of power or control over another child.
 - Examples of signs of child sexual abuse may be torn, stained or bloody underclothing; genital discharge; infection or swelling; physical trauma or irritation of the genital area; pain with urination and difficulty in walking.
- Sexual Exploitation includes but is not limited to such actions as allowing, permitting, compelling, encouraging, aiding, or otherwise causing a child to engage in:
 - Prostitution
 - Sexually explicit, obscene or pornographic activity to be filmed, photographed, or electronically reproduced or transmitted.
 - Sexually explicit, obscene or pornographic activity as part of a live performance.

B. Neglect

- Neglect is an act or a failure of a child's parent, legal custodian, guardian or caregiver that shows a serious disregard of the child's health, welfare and safety. This may include the following examples:
 - Failure to provide food, shelter, clothing, supervision or health care necessary for a child's health, welfare or safety.
 - Actions, failures to act or omissions that result in injury or create a risk of injury to the physical, emotional and/or cognitive development of a child.
 - The ongoing effects of consistent inaction or behavior by a parent, custodian, guardian or caregiver to perform basic parental functions, obligations, or duties when the result is to cause injury or create a risk of injury.

C. Threat of Harm

- Threat of harm includes all activities, conditions and persons that place a child at substantial risk of physical or sexual abuse, neglect, or mental injury. Threat of harm includes all actions, statements, written or non-verbal messages conveying threats of physical or mental injury which are serious enough to unsettle the child's mind and include:
 - Expressions of intention to inflict pain, injury, evil, or punishment on the child.
 - An avowed determination to injure the child presently or in the future.
 - A caretaker regularly telling a child that if she/he tries to make decisions independent of the caretaker, or is too curious, then terrifying consequences, possibly death, will happen to the child.
 - Circumstances that expose children to acts of domestic violence. Violence in the home threatens a child's emotional state as well as physical well-being.

II. Reporting Procedure

- All NFJDWC personnel will immediately report any suspected sign of child abuse or neglect. The person suspecting the abuse will report immediately to the Executive Director and ask for assistance, if needed. (The purpose is to confer on concern, not for approval to report.) In the event the Executive Director is the alleged perpetrator, the verbal report is directed to the **NFJDWC Board Chair**. The person suspecting the abuse will make the report to the Child Welfare Hotline 503.731.3100.
- The Executive Director must notify and inform the NFJDWC Board Chair of the suspected child abuse and/or neglect report.

DO NOT INTERVIEW THE CHILD – LEAVE THAT TO DHS. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY TO THE CHILD.

- Verbal reports will be made to the Child Welfare Hotline.
- The NFJDWC Suspected Child Abuse Report form will be completed by answering all of the following questions:

Name of the class or location of the program and date.

Name of the child, address, birth date and sex.

Name of the parent, custodian or guardian.

Nature and extent of alleged abuse.

Any concerns regarding previous injuries.

Complete form as indicated.

- The Suspected Child Abuse Report form will be sent to the NFJDWC Executive Director, marked “Confidential” within twenty-four (24) hours and no later than 72 hours. All report forms will be retained in a confidential file in a locked cabinet at the NFJDWC office.
- No copies will be made of the forms on any child abuse and/or neglect report.
- Storage of all suspected child abuse or neglect files must remain confidential and under lock and key. The files are to remain readily available for inspection or review by DHS for up to seven (7) years. Thereafter, all files are to be disposed of in a confidential and secure manner.

III. Confidentiality

- Information obtained and/or shared by NFJDWC and DHS personnel in meetings when discussing the details of the suspected abuse shall remain confidential.
- If a case of suspected child abuse or neglect has been reported, do not tell the parents that a report has been made.
- Employees shall not discuss any details of the suspected abuse to a party not entitled to the information; disclosure or discussion of any details of suspected abuse to a party not entitled to the information may be cause for immediate termination.
- All forms relating to the reporting of an abuse or neglect incident will be stamped “CONFIDENTIAL” by the Executive Director.
- If a child is in immediate danger and you notice that the parent shows abnormal behavior, the employee is not to confront the parent, but is to immediately report to the Executive Director and ask for assistance, if needed. (The purpose is to confer on concern, not for approval to report.) The person suspecting the abuse will make the report to the Child Welfare Hotline 503.731.3100.

IV. Employee Orientation

- The NFJDWC Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedure will be reviewed with all employees prior to assuming work duties and no later than the second day of employment.
- Upon completion of the NFJDWC Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedure review, said employee is required to sign and date the suspected child abuse reporting procedure form; said form will be retained in an employee’s personnel file.

V. When NFJDWC Staff are Suspected:

- If the Executive Director is informed by staff, law enforcement and/or DHS personnel of an investigation or incident of suspected child abuse that may have occurred at a NFJDWC site, by a NFJDWC employee, parent volunteer or other children enrolled in a NFJDWC program, such Executive Director shall complete the NFJDWC suspected Child Abuse Report form and document what type of abuse is being alleged or investigated and submit to the NFJDWC Board Chair.
- Any NFJDWC staff person who observes another NFJDWC staff, parent volunteer and/or other children enrolled in a NFJDWC program committing any suspected child abuse as defined in this document, must follow the appropriate reporting procedures for suspected child abuse and neglect.
- In the event the Executive Director is the alleged perpetrator, employee observing the incident must follow the appropriate reporting procedures for suspected child abuse or neglect and will forward the information directly to the NFJDWC Board Chair.

VI. Disciplinary Action

- When a NFJDWC staff person is observed and accused of violating the NFJDWC Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and Discipline Practices, that staff person will be removed from his/her position and suspended with pay. Said removal shall be verified by written correspondence. A staff person accused of child abuse shall be reinstated upon a determination by DHS or the investigative law enforcement entity that the alleged abuse has no supportable factual basis.
- In the event where the situation clearly demonstrates a clear and evident case of child abuse or neglect, as defined, such staff person shall be immediately terminated.

VII. Staff Training

- Staff orientation and ongoing training will be provided on identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Staff will be made aware of their legal responsibilities, NFJDWC program policy and procedures, community resources and any other pertinent information. Training materials from other contact agencies will be incorporated into the training program.

**NORTH FORK JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL
SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT POLICY**

NFJDWC values the participation and contribution of staff, partners, consultants, and volunteers. All staff members, partners, consultants, and volunteers are asked to sign this statement as acknowledgement of having received a copy of and read the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy.

Signature

Date

Employee Name (Printed)

When you have signed this statement, Supervisor will make a copy for you and place the original signed copy in your employee Personnel File.