

INTRODUCING

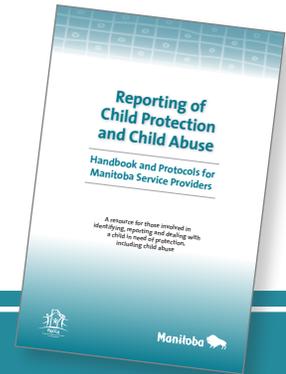
Reporting of Child Protection and Child Abuse

The new handbook and protocols for Manitoba service providers

Reporting of Child Protection and Child Abuse has been developed to help you protect Manitoba children. The handbook provides detailed guidelines on how to recognize and report child abuse and children in need of protection.

This handbook includes helpful information, such as:

- how to recognize different types of child abuse
- information about legislation
- how to take action if you suspect that a child under 18 is being abused or needs protection



Access the handbook online
at www.pacca.mb.ca
or www.manitoba.ca

Reporting is mandatory

Under Manitoba's *Child and Family Services Act* (the CFS act), people can be fined or imprisoned for failing to report suspected child abuse.

The handbook stresses that all people who work with children, no matter what their professional discipline, must report suspected cases of child abuse. Specific protocols have been developed to help you fulfill this legal obligation.

What is child abuse?

According to the CFS act, **abuse** means an act or omission of any person, where the act or omission results in:

- physical injury to the child
- emotional disability of a permanent nature in the child or is likely to result in such a disability
- sexual exploitation of the child with or without the child's consent

Remember:
A child is anyone under 18 years of age.

Child neglect is the failure of a child's primary caregiver to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision and/or medical care. Child neglect is an act of omission by a parent or guardian, resulting in (or likely to result in) harm or risk of harm to a child.

In Manitoba, it is everyone's legal obligation to report suspected child abuse.

If, in your honest judgment, you believe that a child may not be safe, you are legally required to report it. This also applies if information is obtained through a professional, confidential relationship.

- You do not have to prove or be sure that the abuse is occurring.
- The obligation to report also applies to allegations of past abuse.
- Even if you think someone else is reporting the situation, you must still report it.
- All reports will be followed up by a CFS agency.
- The CFS agency response will vary: community supports, protective services, supports in the home or removal of the child(ren).
- Where applicable, follow your workplace guidelines or procedures for reporting suspected child abuse.
- Your individual obligation to report abuse supersedes all internal organizational policies and procedures.
- Reporting does not require staff consensus or the approval of your supervisor.
- No retaliatory action can be taken against a person who, in good faith, reports information about suspected child abuse.
- You cannot be dismissed, suspended, demoted, disciplined, harassed or disadvantaged.
- Your identity is protected and kept confidential, except as required in the course of judicial proceedings or with your written consent.

Report your concern to your local child and family services (CFS) agency.

For a list of CFS designated intake agencies, go to: www.gov.mb.ca/intakeagencies

*If you do not know the number of your local CFS agency, or after working hours, call the province-wide emergency services toll free line: **1-866-345-9241***

If you think the child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police station.

We all share a responsibility to protect children from harm.

By working together, we can enhance child safety in Manitoba.