

# MANDATED REPORTING

2018-2019

ETOWAH HIGH SCHOOL

# WHAT IS MANDATED REPORTING?

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- According to Georgia State Law (OCGA § 19-7-5): The purpose of this Code section is to provide for the protection of children. It is intended that mandatory reporting will cause the protective services of the state to be brought to bear on the situation in an effort to prevent abuses, to protect and enhance the welfare of children, and to preserve family life wherever possible.

# TOP 5 REASONS CHILDREN ENTERED DFCS CUSTODY (SFY2015):

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- Neglect 4,525
  - Drug Abuse 2,892
  - Inadequate Housing 1,906
  - Abandonment 1,011
  - Incarceration 1,004
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- 11,551 was the approximate number of children in DFCS custody as of 9/30/15
  - 843 children transitioned from state custody into adoptive families in 2015 (26 finalized adoptions in Cherokee County)

<http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/sites/dfcs.georgia.gov/files/Adoptions%20Page%20-%202016.pdf>

# CHEROKEE COUNTY DFCS STATISTICS DECEMBER 2016-NOVEMBER 2017

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- Maltreatment Reports – 2,222
- Maltreatment Investigations – 720
- Victim Reports – 104
- Victim Reports of Neglect – 87
- Victim Reports of Physical Abuse – 9
- Victim Reports of Sexual Abuse – 8
- Victims Removed to Foster Care – 54/104
- Median Days from report to removal – 255

<http://fosteringcourtimprovement.org/ga/County/Cherokee/>

# CHEROKEE CHILDREN REMOVED TO FOSTER CARE APRIL 2017-MARCH 2018

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- Total Removals to Foster Care – 329
- Average Monthly Removals – 27.4
- Reentries to Foster Care – 56/329
- Removals for Neglect – 130
- Removals for Caretaker Substance Abuse – 171
- Removals for Physical Abuse – 30
- Removals for Caretaker Inability to Cope – 19
- Removals for Inadequate Housing – 59
- Removals for Incarceration – 32
- Removals for Child Behavior – 43
- Removals for Abandonment – 9
- Removals for Sexual Abuse – 5
- Discharged within 1 month of removal – 39/283

<http://fosteringcourtimprovement.org/ga/County/Cherokee/>

# ETOWAH AND MANDATED REPORTING: (OCGA § 19-7-5)

- EHS had 44 mandated reporting incidents in 2017-2018.
- Concerns most often reported:
  - Negligence (Food, Clothing, Shelter)
  - Mental or emotional abuse at home
  - Possible physical abuse
  - Caretaker Substance Abuse

# WHAT DOES THE MANDATED REPORTER LAW REQUIRE? (OCGA § 19-7-5)

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The following concerns must be reported to an administrator or counselor:

- Physical abuse concerns
- Sexual abuse concerns
- Neglect concerns
- Emotional concerns

Any concerns must be reported immediately but within 24 hours to an administrator or counselor.

# WHO IS REQUIRED TO BE A MANDATED REPORTER?

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- All school employees regardless of position or responsibilities
- All community coaches
- All club sponsors who are community volunteers
- All community volunteers and parents who participate in a group/organization
- This includes those who volunteer for day trips or to help out in the classroom
- Anyone who provides any service to students (trainer, shelter, or other)



# PROTECTING THE REPORTER

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- You are required by law to report any potential case of abuse or neglect you believe is occurring in good faith.
- You must have reasonable suspicion that a student is subject to abuse.
- You have qualified immunity from prosecution or legal action if you report such issues in good faith.
- You will remain anonymous to the student and the family of the student reported.
- Failure to report suspected cases of child abuse/neglect can result in being charged with a misdemeanor and disciplinary action relative to professionalism and communication.

## FOUR MAJOR CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

- Physical Abuse-non-accidental physical injury to a student
- Negligence- failure to provide for a child's basic needs.  
Includes but is not limited to:
  - Lack of adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care
  - Not meeting emotional or physiological needs
  - Educational/cognitive neglect
  - Lack of supervision
- Sexual Abuse-exploitation of a child for sexual gratification of an adult or older child
- Emotional Abuse-excessive/aggressive behavior that places unreasonable demands on a child

# PHYSICAL ABUSE

<b>Type of Abuse</b>	<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>
Physical Abuse-non-accidental physical injury to a student	<p>Unexplained bruises and/or welts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On face or body</li><li>• Various stages of healing</li><li>• Clustered</li><li>• Belt or electrical cord imprint</li><li>• Appear after absences frequently</li><li>• Cigar or cigarette burns</li><li>• Unexplained or poorly explained injuries</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feels deserving of punishment</li><li>• Wary of contact with adults</li><li>• Afraid of parents or home</li><li>• Reports injury by parents</li><li>• Self-destructive behavior</li><li>• Withdrawn or behavioral extremes</li><li>• Uncomfortable with contact</li><li>• Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather to cover bruises</li></ul>

# NEGLECT

Type of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<p>Negligence-includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care</li><li>• Not meeting emotional or physiological needs</li><li>• Educational/cognitive neglect</li><li>• Lack of supervision</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistent hunger</li><li>• Poor hygiene</li><li>• Inappropriate dress</li><li>• Consistent lack of supervision</li><li>• Unattended medical or physical needs</li><li>• Underweight</li><li>• Poor growth pattern</li><li>• Failure to thrive</li><li>• Lice, distended stomach, emaciation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-destructive behavior</li><li>• Stealing or begging for food</li><li>• Extended stay at school</li><li>• Constant fatigue</li><li>• Assuming adult concerns/responsibilities</li><li>• States there is no caretaker</li><li>• Frequently absent or tardy</li></ul>

# SEXUAL ABUSE

Type of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Sexual Abuse-exploitation of a child for sexual gratification of an adult or older child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulty walking or sitting</li><li>• Torn, stained, or bloody clothing</li><li>• Pain, swelling, itching in genital area</li><li>• Painful urination</li><li>• Bleeding, bruises or lacerations on the genital area</li><li>• Presence of STD</li><li>• Frequent urinary or yeast infection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inappropriate sex play or advances sexual knowledge</li><li>• Lack of emotional control</li><li>• Sudden school difficulties</li><li>• Withdrawn/depressed</li><li>• Excessive worry about siblings</li><li>• Difficult peer relationships</li><li>• Self-imposed social isolation</li><li>• Avoid physical contact or close proximity</li><li>• Sudden weight change</li></ul>

# EMOTIONAL

Type of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Emotional Abuse- excessive/aggressive behavior that places unreasonable demands on a child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speech or other communicative disorders</li><li>• Delayed physical development</li><li>• Exacerbation of existing medical conditions</li><li>• Substance abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speech or communicative disorders (thumb sucking)</li><li>• Anti-social or destructive behavior</li><li>• Neurotic activity (sleep disorder)</li><li>• Behavioral extremes (within close proximity)</li><li>• Developmental delay</li></ul>

# TYPES OF DISCLOSURE

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- Students will often use indirect methods of reporting or reaching out. Some examples include:
  - Indirect hints: “I don’t like when my uncle comes over”
  - Disguised disclosure: “I know someone who is being beaten at home”
  - Disclosure with caveats: “I have a serious problem, but if I tell you, please promise you won’t tell anyone
  - Reaching out via proxy: Use of a friend or social media to reach out for help

# BEST PRACTICES IN RECOGNIZING ABUSE

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## Know

Know your students! Strong relationships and understanding with your students enable detection faster

## Vigilance

Maintain vigilance for warning signs

## Listen and engage

Listen and engage students who show worry over peers who may be abused. Get those names to counseling or admin



# WHO DO I REPORT TO?

- During the school day report any concerns to the counseling office or any administrator.
- After school, contact an administrator using the following number (DO NOT SHARE)
  - Mr. Justin Sanderson: 404-576-7520
  - Mr. Brett Pinckard: 404-809-8296
  - Ms. Jennifer Jones: 404-807-5185
  - Mr. Ken Nix: 770-843-1306
  - Ms. Cassandra Mathious: 678-910-2527