

Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department
Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse – O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5
Proposed Policy and Implementation Procedure

1. Hold meeting with all Youth Athletic Associations to discuss the mandatory requirement(s) for reporting suspected child abuse, documentation of the same, and plan of action. During such meeting, each Youth Athletic Association will be notified of the mandatory reporter's obligation to report all suspected child abuse to Wayne Maddox, Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department, at wjmaddox@forsythco.com or 770.781.2215. Mr. Maddox's name and contact information must be published and made available to every employee and volunteer of every participating Youth Athletic Association.
2. Place information sheet (copy attached) in regards to Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, on the County website, in the FCPRD Youth Handbook, and as part of the "Coaches Background Check" paperwork (copy attached).
3. Place "Report Form" (copy attached) on the County website, and in the FCPRD Youth Handbook. Include directions that volunteer coaches may fill out the form and forward it directly to the Sheriff's Office, Division of Family and Children Services or to our staff. Contact information for each agency will be provided.
4. Staff will record any suspected child abuse on the "Report Form" and will forward a copy to the Sheriff's Office, or Division of Family and Children Services. The method of delivery (email or fax) will be recorded and attached to a copy of the report form. All documentation will be kept in a locked file to ensure confidentiality of reporting. Confidentiality will not be broken unless required by Sheriff's Office, Division of Family and Children Services, or court of law.

Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department
Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse – O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5
Acknowledgement of Receipt of Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting Information Sheet

I have received the Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting Information Sheet and acknowledge my responsibilities for adhering to the mandatory child abuse reporting requirements found at O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 by affixing my signature below:

Print Name

Signature

Park or Youth Athletic Association

Date

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORT FORM

Today's Date: _____ Name and Title of Reporter: _____

How did this come to the attention of the mandated reporter:

Reporter's Contact information (phone/email): _____

Child's Name and Birthdate: _____

Type of suspected abuse: Physical _____ Mental _____
(check all that apply) Sexual _____ Neglect _____
 Other _____ If "other, please specify below:

Parent's Name, Address & Phone: _____

FCPRD Staff Member Contacted: _____

Incident information: _____

Reporter's Signature: _____

For FCPRD USE
Staff Member that received report: _____
(Signature)

Action taken by the FCPRD Staff: _____

PROTECTING CHILDREN

How to Report Abuse or Neglect

The job of protecting children starts in the community. While certain people are required by law to report child mistreatment, anyone can make a report of suspected abuse. The sooner the authorities know about a child, the faster they can move to help.

Things to Look For

Children who are maltreated are

- often left home alone
- in the neighborhood for long periods without supervision
- frequently hungry
- dressed inadequately for the weather
- absent from school frequently
- bruised or have other marks of physical violence
- withdrawn or overly aggressive
- not receiving needed medical attention

If a relative, friend or neighbor sees one or more of these signs or suspects that the children are in danger, the situation should be reported to the county Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS).

How to Report

If a child is in immediate danger (obviously being beaten or left alone overnight, for example), the police should be called immediately. In all other cases, reports should be made to the DFCS office in the county where the child lives.

People who call to report suspected abuse do not have to be sure maltreatment has occurred. They simply report what they have seen or heard. The authorities will investigate and confirm whether or not abuse has occurred. People who call are asked to give the name and location of the child and the name of the suspected perpetrator. Reports are confidential and those who call do

not have to give their name. However, it is most helpful to the child in the long run if the reporter is willing to give his or her name and address and, if necessary, testify in court.

What Will Happen Next

If a child is under age 18 and appears to have been abused or neglected by a parent or caretaker, DFCS will begin investigating immediately.

If the child is not in imminent danger, a caseworker will visit the family within 5 days.

If the person who makes the original report wants to know what DFCS did, he or she can call the department and find out whether the maltreatment was confirmed.

Who is Required to Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect?

Georgia law requires people in certain professions to report. Mandated reporters include

- physicians, nurses and hospital personnel
- school and day care personnel
- social workers and counselors
- dentists



Division of Family and Children Services
