

Paper on abuse reporting



Paper on Abuse Reporting Paper on Abuse Reporting In many s, it is a legal requirement to report any suspected or actual case of child neglect and abuse to the relevant authorities. Most jurisdictions make it mandatory for such cases to be reported by certain professionals so that every child can have their rights protected. When these professionals have any beliefs, concerns or suspicions that a child is being neglected or abused, they are required by the law to report the matter to the appropriate statutory child protection authority within the jurisdiction. Otherwise, these professionals may be held liable of deliberately failing to report an incident of neglect or abuse on a child. This paper will supply an overview of the child reporting laws of the state of California. This paper will further discuss these laws in relation to my thoughts on confidentiality and the duty to protect others from harm. It will refer to ethical standards of human service s professionals and other codes of ethics.

The Office of Child Abuse and Prevention under the California Department of Social Services, is responsible for executing the child abuse and neglect reporting law. According to a Summit (1983), California enacted its first child abuse reporting law in 1963. Earlier laws mandated that physical abuse should only be reported by physicians. The definition of child abuse has however been expanded by the numerous amendments that have been taking place over the years. Laws have also clarified the procedures for reporting various categories of child abuse (Summit, 1983).

In California, there are certain professionals who are required to report known cases or suspected cases of child abuse. However, other citizens who are not required by law to do so may also be allowed to do so. Mandated reports and practitioners must therefore be kept updated on amendments

made to these laws from time to time so that they can be well informed on what is required of them under all circumstances (Gil, 2001).

The California laws on abuse reporting provide for why reporting is necessary, what should be reported, who should report, when reporting should be done and to whom it should be done. The laws also give ways of identifying incidences that need to be reporting and signs to look out for to know when to report. There are guidelines to determine suspicion of the various forms of abuse such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional abuse among others (Summit, 1983).

In relation to my thoughts on confidentiality and protecting the rights of others, I am of the opinion that it should be mandatory for anyone who notices, witnesses or suspects any form of abuse to report the matter to the authorities so that appropriate legal action can be taken. I do not support the idea that only a few professionals should be mandated to report child abuse. It should be a legal requirement for everyone to report any case of child abuse just like it is to report a crime. One should in fact be held liable if he or she fails to report child abuse.

According to the laws in California, the need for reporting is to protect the child. Child abuse has been defined as physical injury inflicted on a child by another person and may include emotional or sexual abuse and neglect. The law therefore requires that any physical abuse, sexual abuse, cruelty, unjustified punishment, or neglect of a person below the age of 18 years should be reported. There are mandated reporters in the public domain who may include teachers, administrative officers, camp administrators, employees of private or public organizations, residential care officers, social workers, counselors and investigators among many others (Summit, 1983).

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In conclusion, I propose that all members of the public should be made to understand what constitutes child abuse and should be required by the law to report any case or suspicion of child abuse that they notice so that the rights of children can be protected. The California laws compare to the laws of many other jurisdictions such as those in Australia which only make it mandatory for certain professionals to report child abuse cases. The California laws are however a bit different from the laws in the state of Indiana. In Indiana, the law recognizes that children are not in a position to report for themselves when they are abused. Therefore, any person who suspects, sees or believes that a child is being neglected or abused must report the matter to Child Protective Services or to the Police. Failure to do so is taken as breaking the law.

References

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