Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection

1. Definition of abuse or neglect

Child abuse or neglect is defined in law as "an act or omission which seriously threatens the health or welfare of a child." Specifically, this refers to:

a. Evidence of skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling or death and such condition or death which is not justifiably explained or where the history given concerning such condition or death is at variance with the condition or the circumstances indicate that the condition may not be the product of an accidental occurrence.

b. Any case in which a child is subject to unlawful sexual behavior as defined in state law.

c. Any case in which a child is in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardians or custodians fail to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision that a prudent parent would take.

d. Any case in which a child is subjected to emotional abuse which means an identifiable and substantial impairment of the child's intellectual or psychological functioning or development or a substantial risk or impairment of the child's intellectual or psychological functioning or development.

e. Any act or omission described as neglect in state law as follows:

i) A parent, guardian or legal custodian has abandoned the child or has subjected him or her to mistreatment or abuse or allowed another to mistreat or abuse the child without taking lawful means to stop such mistreatment or abuse and prevent it from recurring.

ii) The child lacks proper parental care through the actions or omissions of the parent, guardian or legal custodian.

iii) The child's environment is injurious to his or her welfare.

iv) A parent, guardian or legal custodian fails or refuses to provide the child with proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care or any other care necessary for his or her health, guidance or well-being.

v) The child is homeless, without proper care or not domiciled with his or her parent, guardian or legal custodian through no fault of such parent, guardian or legal custodian.

vi) The child has run away from home or is otherwise beyond the control of his or her parent, guardian or legal custodian.

vii) A parent, guardian or legal custodian has subjected another child or children to an identifiable pattern of habitual abuse and the parent, guardian or legal custodian has been the respondent in another proceeding in which a court has adjudicated another child to be neglected or dependent based upon allegations of sexual or physical abuse or has determined that such parent's, guardian's or legal custodian's abuse or neglect caused the death of another child; and the pattern of habitual abuse and the type of abuse pose a current threat to the child.

2. Reporting requirements

Any school employee who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child is subjected to abuse or to conditions that might result in abuse or neglect must