

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

TITLE: CHILD PROTECTION
CATEGORY: HEALTH AND SAFETY
NUMBER: 3050

I. Rationale:

Student safety is a top priority for our district. Research shows that best practice for schools should include explicit teaching of a Personal Safety curriculum by trained staff on an annual basis.

II. Personal Safety Education Programs:

A. With the assistance of the Ministry, provincial and national safety organizations (i.e. Lower Mainland Child Abuse Prevention Education and/or Canadian Centre for Child Protection), and school counsellors, the District will select instructional programs to make students aware of personal safety.

B. As these programs are part of the curriculum, parent consent is not required, but best practice would be for the school and family to work collaboratively about this sensitive topic. It is recommended that schools inform parents prior to instruction so that support can be available to students at home after the instruction has occurred.

C. It is strongly recommended that these programs be delivered prior to May 15th of each school year.

III. Obligation to Report:

A. When employees or volunteers have reason to believe that a child is being, or has been abused, or is suffering neglect, they shall promptly follow the guidelines set out in the B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect (2017) (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_serviceprovider.pdf). The principal of the school shall also be informed in all cases, unless otherwise directed by the Handbook and also has a duty to report.

Immediate reporting to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is required by the employee or volunteer who has any knowledge of the alleged abuse and/or neglect. The toll free number is 1-800-663-9122. The Gibsons office contact number is 604-886-5525. The Sechelt office contact number is 604-740-8900.

B. If an employee or volunteer is given a hypothetical situation or other indirect disclosure in which an individual's name is mentioned, the employee or volunteer also has a duty to report to a social worker.

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- C. If the child is in immediate danger, the employee or volunteer shall call the police first, and then the MCFD.
- D. An employee making a report regarding abuse or neglect shall keep the matter strictly confidential.
- E. The reporter may be asked to provide as much of the following information as is known:
 - 1. The reporter's name and school;
 - 2. The student's full name, date of birth, grade, parents' or guardians' full names, home address(s) and telephone number(s), office telephone number(s) of parents or guardians;
 - 3. The full name and address and telephone number of the alleged offender and any other information which might help locate or identify the offender;
 - 4. Any immediate concerns about the child's safety;
 - 5. The hours of operation of the school;
 - 6. The student's bus schedule; and
 - 7. Any special concerns about the student.
- F. The student shall not be interviewed to obtain this information.
- G. An employee's duty to report overrides one's professional duty of obligation or obligations to speak with a colleague.
- H. The report of an employee or volunteer to a principal or counselor does not replace his/her duty to report to a social worker.
- I. The duty to report is covered under section 14 of the Child and Family Community Services Act and is a legal obligation.
- J. Principals, with support from the school counsellor, will ensure that staff receive annual training using the District PowerPoint "Report with Support" at a staff meeting.

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References: BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect (2017)

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/public-safety/protecting-children/childabusepreventionhandbook_serviceprovider.pdf