Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect (policy SAAP 10-2)

In 2011 Gov. Scott Walker signed Executive Order #54, which states that all University of Wisconsin System employees must report incidents of child abuse and neglect. As a UW-Milwaukee (UWM) employee, you are required by Executive Order #54 to report child abuse or neglect immediately if in the course of your UWM employment:

• You observe an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect.
• You learn of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur.

All UWM employees, regardless of appointment type or method of compensation, are required to report. Volunteers and independent contractors are strongly encouraged to report, as well.

Please understand that no UWM employee making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in good faith may be discharged from employment, disciplined or otherwise discriminated against in regard to employment, or threatened with any such treatment, for so doing.

Online training is now available to all employees at http://www.wcpdps.wisc.edu/mandatedreporter/index.html. A UWM policy and supplementary materials are also available. For immediate questions about the EO #54 or your obligations as a mandatory reporter (Wis. Stat. § 48.981[2][a]), contact Legal Affairs at 414-229-4278.

To review additional EO #54 materials visit: https://uwm.edu/hr/toolkits/ced54/
Definition and Signs of Sexual Abuse
Sexual intercourse with or sexual touching of a child; recording or displaying of a child engaged in sexually explicit conduct; forcing a child to view or listen to sexual activity; exposing genitals or pubic area to a child or exposing a child’s genitals or pubic area for purposes of sexual gratification; or permitting, allowing or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution.

Sign of sexual abuse
• Pain, swelling or itching in genital area
• Bruises, bleeding, discharge in genital area
• Difficulty walking or sitting, frequent urination, pain
• Stained or bloody underclothing
• Venereal disease
• Refusal to take part in gym or other exercises
• Poor peer relationships
• Unusual interest in sex for age
• Drastic change in school achievement
• Runaway or delinquent
• Regressive or childlike behavior

Abuse as Manufacturing of Methamphetamines
It is child abuse to manufacture methamphetamines with a child present, or in a child’s home or under any other circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that the manufacture would be seen, heard or smelled by a child.

Definition of Emotional Abuse
“Emotional damage” for which the child’s parent, guardian or legal custodian has neglected, refused or been unable for reasons other than poverty to obtain the necessary treatment or take steps to ameliorate the symptoms.

Definition and Signs of Emotional Damage
Harm to a child’s psychological or intellectual functioning, which is exhibited by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal or aggression. Emotional damage may be demonstrated by substantial and observable changes in behavior, emotional response or learning that are incompatible with the child’s age or stage of development.

Signs of emotional damage
• Low self-esteem
• Aggression
• Self-denigration
• Withdrawal
• Severe depression
• Severe anxiety

Definition and Signs of Neglect
When a parent—or caretaker—fails, refuses or is unable, for reasons other than poverty, to provide the necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care, or shelter, which seriously endangers the physical health of the child.

Signs of neglect
• Poor hygiene, odor
• Inappropriately dressed for weather
• Needs medical or dental care
• Left alone, unsupervised, for long periods
• Failure to thrive, malnutrition
• Constant hunger, begs or steals food
• Extreme willingness to please
• Frequent absence from school
• Arrives early and stays late at school or play areas or other people’s homes

Reporting Child Abuse
How to Report
In Milwaukee County, child protective services (CPS) are provided by the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare. If you suspect child maltreatment, contact local law enforcement or the bureau immediately.

What to Report
Explain, as well as you can, what happened or is happening to the child. Describe the nature of the abuse or neglect and the involved parties. Be as specific as possible. Be prepared to give the name, address and telephone number of the child and also the name of the parent or caretaker if known. Even if you do not know all of this information, report what you do know. Tell all you know about the situation.

What Happens After You Report
The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and/or law enforcement will screen the case and determine whether abuse/neglect has occurred, and they determine what action to take.

Where to Go for Help
If you see or hear something you are concerned about relating to possible child abuse or neglect, but are not sure what to do, contact the UWM Office of Equity/Diversity Services at 414-229-5923.

Things to Remember
• If there is an emergency or a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
• If you observe an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learn of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect and have reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred, you are required to report it to law enforcement or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare.
• You are reporting with reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect is occurring. You do not need proof.
• Reports must be given immediately by telephone or in person to law enforcement or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (no voicemail or email).
• If you learn that an adult or a UWM student experienced abuse or neglect when they were a child, contact UWM’s Office of Legal Affairs at 414-229-4278 prior to making a report. Making such a report may raise issues relating to state and federal privacy laws and professional ethics.