

## Chapter 5 Programs and Services

### 5.2 Reporting Child Abuse

#### Policy Statement

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) acknowledges its responsibility to report suspected child abuse.

Any employee of APSEA who has reason to believe that a student is being abused is obligated to report that information to a child welfare agency, Health/Community Services.

#### Definitions

Child Abuse - Behaviour that renders a minor student a "child in need of protection" under the *Children's and Family Services Act* of Nova Scotia; the *Family Services Act* of New Brunswick; the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* of Newfoundland and Labrador; or the *Child's Protection Act* of Prince Edward Island.

For the purposes of this policy "abuse" will include:

- *Physical Abuse* - The intentional use of force on any part of a child's body that results in injury.
- *Emotional Abuse* - Anything that causes serious mental or emotional harm to a child.
- *Sexual Abuse* - The improper exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behaviour.
- *Neglect* - Any lack of care that may cause significant harm to a child's development or endanger a child in any way.

#### Policy Objectives

- (i) To ensure all employees of APSEA understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to reporting child abuse.
- (ii) To provide APSEA staff with clear guidelines on what to do in the case of suspected child abuse.

#### Policy Directives

- Employees of APSEA are required to report and respond to suspected child abuse in the course of their work as per provincial legislation.
- Everyone has the duty to immediately report to a child welfare agency, even a suspicion that a child under 16 may be in need of protective services. Reports may be made anonymously. Once a report is made, child protection social workers assess the information provided to determine an appropriate response.

- The APSEA Board acknowledges that child protection workers have authority under the Children and Family Services Act (1990) to interview students at the APSEA Centre without the prior knowledge and/or consent of parent(s)/guardian(s).

### **Application**

This policy applies to all part-time, full-time and casual employees of APSEA.

### **Accountability, Monitoring and Review**

- The Superintendent of APSEA or his/her designate will review this policy annually.
- The Superintendent of APSEA is accountable to the APSEA Board of Directors for compliance with this policy.

### **References**

New Brunswick: Family Services Act, N.N.B. 1980, c. F-2.2 (Section 30(3));  
Newfoundland and Labrador: Child, Youth and Family Services Act, S.N.L 1998, c. C-12.1 (Section 15.1).  
Nova Scotia: The Children and Family Services Act (CFSA (Section 23); and  
Prince Edward Island: Child's Protection Act, RSPEI 1988, c. C5.1 Section 22(1)

### **Approval Dates**

This policy replaces Policy 316 Investigating Abuse.

Approved: 19 June 2015

Revised:

### **Communication/Enquiries**

For information about this policy, please contact the Superintendent (902/424-8500, [apsea@apsea.ca](mailto:apsea@apsea.ca)).