

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If you become aware of an instance of child abuse or have any suspicion that abuse is occurring to a member of your Scout unit, this must be reported ***at once*** to the Scout Executive, Jeff Hotchkiss.

The Council Service Center number is: 508-752-3769

Call Mr. Hotchkiss at 508 752-3769 Ext. 26 or his cell phone at (774) 312-1944

Your Scout Executive will provide advice on what should be done next and which agency will follow up on the report.

Make some notes to assist yourself in remembering what was reported to you and when. These may be helpful later. Keep information about the victim and the suspected subject confidential. Follow the advice of the Scout Executive.

### **CONTACTING THE MOHEGAN COUNCIL, BSA**

The Boy Scouts of America requires immediate notification of the Scout Executive whenever information about possible child abuse in the Scouting program is uncovered. The current policy for after hour's notification is to wait until the next business day and call the Mohegan Council Service Center at 508-752-3769.

The Mohegan Council will ensure that all Massachusetts reporting requirements are met and will take measures to protect the youth participating in Scouting.

If an immediate report is necessary due to extreme urgency, contact the local Police Department or the office of Child Abuse and Neglect 1-800-922-8169. The council should be contacted by leaving a message at extension 26. The "Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Form" must be completed and submitted to the Mohegan Council Service Center - Attention: Jeff Hotchkiss for all reports made to other agencies. (*Including reporting form with this letter or available on the council website [www.mohegancouncilbsa.org](http://www.mohegancouncilbsa.org) .*).

### **WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD REPORTS**

When children tell an adult that they have been sexually/physically assaulted, it is often difficult and painful for the adult to listen. The following are some hints on what to do.

1. Believe the child, it is difficult enough to tell you the story, you not believing will only make it harder for them to talk.
2. Get information. Don't sidestep the description of the assault, many times adults wish to skip over the more difficult aspects of the assault. Children are perceptive and will pick up on your discomfort. They may avoid giving a detailed account in an effort to avoid upsetting you. As the child's advocate you must be able to hear the events he/she has lived through. Don't push if the child doesn't want to give details.
3. Stay calm. Shock, anger, disbelief, fear, guilt are all normal reactions, especially if the offender is someone known to you. But right now the child needs you to stay calm.

4. Reassure the child. Tell the child that you are glad he/she told you. Let the child know that it must have been hard to tell and emphasize that whatever happened, it wasn't the child's fault. Reassure the child that you still care about him/her and that you will do everything possible to protect him/her. Don't make promises you can't keep.

### **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE IN MASSACHUSETTS**

The law says any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report this information immediately to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS).

The Department of Social Services operates a toll-free, 24 hour a day, 7 days a week hotline 1-800-792-5200 to receive reports of Child abuse and neglect. Calls received at DSS during normal working hours are immediately referred to the appropriate district office.

DSS accepts all allegations of child abuse or neglect by telephone and in person from all sources, including unidentified sources, news media, and anonymous sources, sources that have incomplete information, and referrals from the child or parent themselves.

Upon receiving a report of child abuse or neglect, a DSS caseworker shall investigate the allegations and take such action as is necessary to ensure the safety of the child.

### **IMMUNITY FROM CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY**

Any person who, pursuant to the law, reports abuse and neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.

### **PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO REPORT**

Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is subject to prosecution and may be subject to a fine up to \$1,000 or up to 6 months imprisonment, or both.

Mohegan Council, Inc., Boy Scouts of America  
*"On My Honor... Timeless Values"*  
**SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM**

Please print clearly

The following information was provided to:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Agency \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time \_\_\_\_\_

Name of suspected abuser \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Scouting position known \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pack/Troop/Crew/Post & Number

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth or age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Physical indicators observed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Behavioral indicators observed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other indicators observed/known \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Reported by:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Return in an envelope marked CONFIDENTIAL to: Jeff Hotchkiss, Scout Executive  
 Mohegan Council, BSA  
 19 Harvard Street  
 Worcester, MA 01609

Additional resources available at our council website [www.mohegancouncilbsa.org](http://www.mohegancouncilbsa.org)