

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

How should I respond to a child that has reported an incident of abuse to me?

If a child tells you something that suggests he or she are being abused, understand that this may be the only time the child has built up courage to tell someone what has happened. Stop what you are doing and listen.

YOU SHOULD:

- Make yourself accessible and receptive to the child
- Listen carefully to what the child says and allow the child to relate their story to you at their own pace
- Do not judge what the child is telling you
- Take what you are being told seriously
- Reassure the child that they have a right to tell what has happened to them
- Inform the child that it is your responsibility to pass the information along to the proper authorities
- Make sure that the child is not in imminent danger and is okay
- Make a careful record of what is being said

YOU SHOULD NOT:

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove what the child is telling you
- Make promises to the child that you will keep what they are telling you a secret
- Assume that it is someone else's responsibility to take action
- Contact parents until you have received advice.
- Show any type of shock, anger or horror in your reaction to what you are being told speculate or accuse anyone
- Investigate or probe for information from the child or anyone you believe to be involved
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- Offer your own opinion about what is being said or the persons involved
- Forget to record what is being said!
- Fail to pass the information you are told along to the correct person or agency

List of Social Services Agencies for Child Protection in the OECS

Anguilla

Dep. of Social Development
(264) 497 3930 / 3042

Antigua and Barbuda

Citizens' Welfare Division
citizenswelfare@antigua.gov.ag
(268) 562-1508 / 462-4402

British Virgin Islands

Family, Children and Protective Services Division
childrenandfamilyservicesbvi@gmail.com
(2840) 494 37-01

Dominica

Social Welfare Division
socialwelfare@dominica.gov.dm
(767) 266 3909/3910

Monserrat

Min. of Health and Social Services
mehcs@gov.ms
(664) 491-2880

Grenada

Child Protection Authority
childwelfare@spiceisle.com
(473) 405 6990 (Hot Line), 443 9376 (Carriacou), 435 8380 (Scott St)

Saint Lucia

Division of Human Services
humanservices@health.gov.lc
(758) 452 7204, 468 5361

St Kitts and Nevis

Probation and Child Protection Services
(869) 465 2521

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Division for Family Affairs
socialdevelopment@mail.gov.vc
(784) 456-2949

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Safeguarding Children at Play

A Coaches Guide to Child Protection

