

## **GUIDELINES FOR MANDATED REPORTERS**

Mandated reporters must report the following to the DCF Hotline:

Any reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child:

- is being abused or neglected, according to the standard child abuse and neglect definitions as found in Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-120, or
- is placed at imminent risk of serious harm.

Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-120 defines “neglected” and “abused” as follows:

1) Neglected:

- a) Has been abandoned,
- b) Is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally or morally,
- c) Is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child or youth, or
- d) Has been abused.

2) Abused:

- a) Has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means,
- b) Has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or
- c) Is in a condition that is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

### ***Reporting Sexual Activity Involving Minors***

Based on the above definitions, the Department of Children and Families has set some criteria for reporting to the DCF Hotline when sexual activity involving minors has occurred or is suspected. It should be noted that these criteria were designed to serve as examples of situations that should be reported and are not meant to serve as an exhaustive list. The relative ages of the child and the sexual partner should always be considered when determining whether or not a report is warranted. All determinations made by mandated reporters regarding when to report must be based on whether or not they reasonably believe that a child is at imminent risk of serious harm or has been abused or neglected as defined in Connecticut General Statutes § 46b-120.

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The suggested criteria for reporting sexual activity involving all minors, regardless of gender, is as follows:

- 1) Children under 13 years of age who are engaging in sexual intercourse, have a sexually transmitted disease, are pregnant or who are engaging in sexual activity that is developmentally inappropriate,
- 2) Children of any age who are engaging in sexual activity with a member of their family regardless of the age of the individuals,
- 3) Children of any age that are in a condition that is the result of sexual molestation or exploitation, and/or
- 4) Children of any age who are engaging in sexual activity and:
  - a) the relationship is non-consensual, hostile, contains the use of force or threatening, or the child is being exploited, degraded or humiliated,
  - b) the child has emotional, psychological, or intellectual disabilities that may preclude him/her from consenting or understanding the consequences of consenting regardless of the child's age, and/or
  - c) the child is under the age of 16 years and the partner is 21 years of age or older.