Mandated Reporter Training - Types of Maltreatment Video

Video Transcript

Welcome to Mandated Reporter Training - Types of Maltreatment.

This Minnesota Department of Human Services training is for individuals mandated to report child maltreatment. There are several types of maltreatment that you are required to report. This video will provide you with a broad overview of each type of maltreatment to help you better understand what and when to report. There are five types of maltreatment that are reportable: Neglect, Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Mental injury and Threatened injury.

The majority of reports concern neglect, followed by physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental injury and medical neglect.

- Neglect reports (61%)
- Physical abuse reports (41%)
- Sexual abuse reports (12%)
- Mental injury reports (2%)
- Medical neglect reports (1%)

Further details regarding maltreatment types are included in relevant statutes and in the Minnesota Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines.

Neglect encompasses a wide range of circumstances. Neglect is defined in Minnesota Statute 626.556 subdivision 2.

Neglect is the commission or omission of a parent or other caretaker to provide basic needs or care of a child.

This may include the lack of food, clothing, shelter, education, supervision and medical care.

Neglect can include failure to provide food, which results in malnutrition, developmental lags, patterned weakness, inability to concentrate or a significant growth delay or a diagnosis of inorganic failure to thrive.

Neglect can include failure to provide clothing that is necessary for the weather conditions which would seriously endanger the child.

Neglect can include failure to provide education which includes 7 unexcused absences for a child under age 12.

Neglect can include failure to provide shelter, which includes dangerous living conditions in which the parent or caregiver has control over. Examples include, but are not limited to: inadequate heat, water and/or electrical
service, environmental hazards including missing windows or open electrical sockets - unsanitary conditions that would be a health hazard for children.

Neglect can include failure or refusal to provide medical care. This may include, but is not limited to refusal or failure to seek/obtain, or follow through with necessary medical care when there is a serious risk to the child. This does not include a parent’s choice to rely on spiritual or prayer means if it is not life threatening to the child.

Failure to Thrive diagnosis. Failure to provide for a child’s special needs.

Neglect can include lack of supervision. Children under the age of eight should never be left unsupervised. The following guidelines can be used for older children: Ages 8-10 can be left unsupervised up to 3 hours, Ages 11-13 can be left unsupervised up to 12 hours, Ages 14-15 can be left unsupervised up to 24 hours, Ages 16-17 can be left unsupervised over 24 hours.

In these circumstances, a plan must be in place for the child, which must include an adult to contact, and a method for contact in the event of an identified need.

Other factors weigh into whether a child may be left unsupervised. They include, but are not limited to: development, including mental ability or disabilities, maturity level, mental health or behavioral concerns, a child’s ability to respond in an emergency, a child’s confidence in being left home alone, access to an adult by phone or other means and access to hazards in the home. These factors should also be considered when older children are babysitting for younger children.

When considering whether a child should be providing care and supervision to younger children the factors just discussed should be considered. In addition, Children under 11 should not provide childcare. For older children, ages 11-17, apply the time limits listed.

Neglect can include a parent using a controlled substance for non-medical purposes or excessive use of alcohol when pregnant.

Prenatal exposure may be diagnosed through: Toxicology screens or tests, withdrawal symptoms at delivery or developmental delays detected in the first year of life due to pre-natal exposure.

At times conditions such as poverty create circumstance in which a child may be neglected due to the parent’s lack of financial resources. Under these circumstances, local child welfare agencies work to assist parents in correcting the conditions of neglect and to meet the protective needs of their children.

Physical abuse differs from child neglect, although the results of abuse and neglect may be similar. Both can lead to physical injury, emotional harm and even death.

The definition of physical abuse is a non-accidental injury inflicted by a person responsible for the child’s care, includes, but is not limited to marks or bruises, burns, broken bones, internal injuries., unexplained injuries, striking a child with a closed fist, shaking a child under age 3, striking a child under 18 months, interference with a child’s breathing, unreasonable physical confinement and poisoning.
A current visible injury is not necessary to make a report.

What is not physical abuse? Reasonable and moderate physical discipline that does not result in an injury. Accidental injuries not associated with abuse or neglect.

Mental injury is an injury to the psychological or emotional stability of a child as evidenced by an observable or substantial impairment in the child’s ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior, with due regard to a child’s culture.

Examples of mental injury includes, but is not limited to extreme regressive behavior or psychosomatic symptoms related to high conflict situations or parent-child attachment concerns, Symptoms of hypervigilance, disassociation, re-experiencing, avoidance, no affect, self-harm, extreme aggression, or problems with eating, sleeping, or toileting that indicate prolonged psychological distress, and significant fear of their caregiver, or shares verbal, emotional, or psychological violence they’ve experienced.

Threatened Injury. There are situations when actual harm to a child has not occurred but the situation or conditions puts the child at substantial risk of being harmed. This is called threatened injury, which can include threatened physical or sexual injury. Threatened injury is a statement, overt act, condition or status that represents a substantial risk of physical or sexual abuse or mental injury including, but not limited to: exposure to dangerous persons or situations, threats of violence toward a child, a person threatening to engage in sexual behavior with a child, a parent or household member with the status of predatory offender, possession of child pornography, purposefully exposing a child to sexual activity and children with sexually transmitted diseases.

Predatory offenders. If a parent or household member is registered or required to register as a predatory offender it must be reported. This includes parents that do not reside in a child’s primary household.

Sexual abuse means the subjection of a child to sexual contact by a person responsible for a child’s care, a person with a significant relationship to the child, or a person in a position of authority.

Sexual contact includes fondling, touching intimate parts and sexual intercourse. Sexual abuse also includes the use of a child in prostitution or in the production of sexually explicit works. Sexual abuse also includes threatened sexual abuse and sex trafficking.

Sexual abuse includes sex trafficking. Sex trafficking is: A type of commercial sexual exploitation that involves the prostitution of an individual in which a third person, not the buyer or the victim, facilitate or profits. Any act of sex trafficking should be reported.

In sex trafficking, the alleged offender does not need to be in a caregiving role, a family member or a household member in order to report and for the local child welfare agency to respond.

Sexual exploitation is broader in definition than sex trafficking. Sexual exploitation includes: When a youth who is alleged to have engaged in conduct which would, if committed by an adult, violate any federal, state, or local law relating to offering to be hired or agreeing to be hired by another individual to engage in sexual penetration or sexual conduct, the promise of anything of value is given to a person by any means in exchange for any type of sexual activity and a third party may or may not be involved.
Sex trafficking and sexual exploitation laws are new and if you would like more information or training contact your local child welfare agency who can give you the number of your safe harbor regional navigator.

Incidents of domestic violence are reportable when they meet the statutory threshold for physical abuse, mental injury, threatened injury, sexual abuse, or neglect to a child. There are times when domestic violence and child maltreatment co-occur. In most cases, a child must be directly involved in, a witness to or otherwise situated in a location that puts them at risk during incidents of domestic violence.

Some conditions of domestic violence may meet the definition of threatened injury or mental harm and may include, but is not limited to: injuries to a parent, caregiver or offender that are potentially life threatening, permanent or serious injuries such as broken bones or teeth, burns etcetera, weapons were used or threatened, objects are used as weapons in the course of domestic violence, a child intervenes in the course of domestic violence, such as making a 9 1 1 call, a child inserts themselves as a shield to protect the parent, is physically restrained from leaving, an alleged offender does not allow the protective parent and child access to basic needs, impacting their health and safety, a child is exhibiting observable behavioral, emotional or psychological effects due to violence, threats of kidnapping, an alleged offender has killed, substantially harmed, or is making believable threats to do so to anyone in the family including extended family members and pets or a child is in fear for their life, their parent, or someone in relation to the incident.

**Safe Place for Newborns.**

The Safe Place for Newborns law allows a mother or someone with the mother’s permission may leave her infant at a safe place within seven days of giving birth and remain anonymous. Newborns left at a safe place must have been born within seven days, as determined within a reasonable degree of medical certainty, present unharmed at the time received by medical personnel and be left by the mother or a person with the mother’s permission. While this is not a type of maltreatment, it is important to know the requirements for reporters under this law.

The law defines a safe place as a hospital licensed under Minnesota Statutes, sections 144.50 to 144.56. Or a health care clinic that provides urgent care medical services or an ambulance service dispatched in response to a 911 telephone call from a mother, or a person with the mother’s permission, to relinquish a newborn.

When a person is leaving a newborn under the Safe Place law, the safe place provider receiving the newborn must not inquire as to the identity of the mother or of a person leaving a newborn, or call the police, provided the newborn is unharmed when presented to a safe place provider. A safe place provider may ask the person leaving a newborn about the medical history of the mother or newborn, but they are not required to provide information. The safe place provider may give a person leaving a newborn information about how to contact relevant social service agencies.

Within 24 hours of receiving a newborn, medical staff must inform the responsible social service agency that a newborn has been surrendered under the Safe Place law, but must not do so until the person leaving the newborn leaves the premises.
This has been Mandated Reporter Training - Types of Maltreatment. Please see the Mandated Reporter guide available online for more information. Please proceed to the next Mandated Reporter Training video Child Protection Response.