

FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISION

TITLE - **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

POLICY - **JLF**

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Child abuse is a grave, growing and often self-perpetuating problem, which knows no social barriers. Violence in the family is often physically and always emotionally deviating, not only to the child but to the entire family.

Its identification, treatment and prevention require the close collaboration of child caring agencies, law enforcement units, health care workers, educators, and all whose concerns, whether professional or non-professional touch upon and affect the lives of children.

Expressing a strong commitment to assisting in the provision of a speedy, effective and broad range of services to children and families at risk, the Ministers of Community Services, Health, Education and Attorney General jointly issue these Guidelines on Child Abuse. Their purpose is to provide a procedural and legal framework for the investigation, detection and management of child abuse cases to the growing community of professionals and lay persons providing services to children and their families.

Definitions: The following definitions apply for the purpose of these guidelines which are primarily intended for child abuse within the family:

1. “**Abuse**” means an act or omission by the parent or person in charge of the child, which act or omission results in harm to the child. It includes, but is not necessarily restricted to: physical beating, sexual abuse, and failure to provide reasonable protection for the child from physical harm.
2. “**Sexual abuse**” means any exploitation of a child whether consensual or not for the sexual gratification or a parent or person in charge of a child and includes, but is not necessarily restricted to: sexual molestation, sexual assault, and the exploitation of the child for purposes of pornography or prostitution. Sexual abuse includes "incest." Incest is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. Therefore the involvement and participation of the local police force is essential in all incest investigations. Sexual activity between children may constitute sexual abuse if the differences in ages between the children is so significant that the older is clearly taking sexual advantage of the younger.

3. "**Emotional Abuse**" means acts or omissions on the part of the parent or the person in charge of a child, which acts or omissions include but are not restricted to:
- a) any unwillingness or inability to provide appropriate care, control, affection or stimulation for a child;
 - b) making inappropriate demands upon a child;
 - c) exposing a child to frequent family violence tending to produce permanent or long-term emotional disability, including:
 - non-organic failure to thrive
 - developmental retardation
 - serious anxiety, depression or withdrawal
 - serious behavioural disturbances

Emotional abuse remains a major concern but does not require police intervention. Nevertheless, a multi-disciplinary team approach may be essential in certain emotional abuse cases.

4. "**A person in charge of a child**" means a person responsible for a child's welfare and includes a guardian or person within the context of a family relationship or foster parent.
5. "**Third party assault**" means abuse which occurs outside the family and technically does not fall within the guidelines but, nevertheless, is subject to:
- a) police investigation
 - b) referral to an appropriate agency for service, and
 - c) reporting of the incident to the central abuse registry.
6. "**Child**" means a person under the age of majority (In Manitoba the age of majority is eighteen).
7. "**Child caring agency**" means:
- i) a children's aid society, or
 - ii) a regional office of the Department of Community Services, or
 - iii) a child welfare committee appointed under Section 7 of the Child Welfare Act.

