



Some tips on reporting sexual abuse for Parish employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Fargo

When you believe there is a need to report sexual abuse to your local County Social Services:

- Refer to the reporting procedures found in section V of the *Diocese of Fargo's Statement of Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct*.
- Clarify what you are hearing by asking questions.
- Consult with supervisors. Volunteers and employees may discuss with their pastors and directors if there are questions about filing. This should not preclude anyone from contacting child protection services if they feel compelled to do so.
- Prepare to give specific information such as the name, address, age of the child, what you observed, what you were told, did anyone witness, who, were there any injuries, where is the child, where can the child be contacted, etc.

Keep in mind:

- If there are questions concerning the safety of children, consultation can be sought by contacting your local child protection agency.
- The role of County Social Services is to review safety for children from a holistic approach rather than incident based.
- Most people that abuse or neglect children involve family members or other individuals known to the child.
- Abuse may include psychological, physical, or sexual action directed at a child by a care giver. There are instances of non caregiver abuse that if reported will be referred to the appropriate agency to address.
- Areas of neglect may include failure to provide basic necessities of food, appropriate/safe shelter, clothing, health care, supervision, or education.