

# How to Report Suspected Child Sexual Abuse

When child sexual abuse is suspected, foster parents should **contact local law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS) within 24-36 hours of the incident**. If a child's safety is threatened, make the report immediately upon learning of the alleged abuse.

**Do not wait for "proof" of abuse before reporting—  
waiting could result in further danger to the child.**

In some states, foster parents are considered **mandatory reporters** of suspected child sexual abuse. Foster parents are encouraged to check with their local agency for laws pertaining to their particular state as well as for the specific process of reporting.

When reporting suspected child sexual abuse to law enforcement or CPS, answer all of their questions with as much information as you know about the situation, specifically **who, what, where, and when**.

A good starting place is to fill out the form below with the information you know about the incident so that when you are speaking with law enforcement or CPS, you will be prepared for their potential questions.

\_\_\_\_\_

**When reporting suspected child sexual abuse, be prepared to provide the following information:**

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Suspected Abuser: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Approx. Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What Happened:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The information in this handout was adapted in part from the Child Welfare Information Gateway ([http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws\\_policies/statutes/manda.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm)) and FosterParentCollege.com® Child Safety and Supervision course (<http://www.fosterparentcollege.com>).

