

<i>TITLE</i>	<i>PAGE</i>
Child Abuse and Neglect	Page 1 of 1

<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>SECTION</i>
Programs and Student Services	Students

<b><i>BOARD APPROVED: Southwest Regional School Board February 23, 1999</i></b>
<b><i>REVISED:</i></b>
<b><i>REF: AP #902</i></b>
<b><i>MONITORING DATE: Every Five Years</i></b>
<b><i>RELATED POLICIES &amp; DOCUMENTS:</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Family and Children's Services Act (1990)</li> <li>• SSRSB Policy #795: Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights</li> <li>• SSRSB Policy #935: Police Investigations</li> </ul>

*This policy and procedures replace SWRSB Policy 703.14.*

The Southwest South Shore Regional School Board recognizes that, under the *Children and Family and Children's Services Act (1990)* teachers have the responsibility to discharge their duty and obligations in cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect every school community member who has information that a child may be suffering, or be at substantial risk of suffering, from abuse or neglect must immediately report this to the Department of Community Services, Child Welfare Division, whether or not the information reported is confidential or privileged.

The Southwest South Shore Regional School Board recognizes and supports the joint protocols between the Southwest South Shore Regional School Board and the Child Protection Agencies, Western Region Department of Community Services, Child Welfare Divisions of Queens and Lunenburg Counties, and Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services to ensure an effective and coordinated response to protecting children from harm.

**An integrated and cooperative approach**

The protection of children is a shared responsibility. It is recognized that the safety and well-being of children are of paramount concern and that a cooperative and collaborative approach in response to any allegation of child abuse or neglect is essential. School community members who have regular contact with children and are trained observers of children's behavior have a significant role in identifying and reporting situations that are indicative of child abuse and neglect. The cooperation of school community members is essential for an integrated, coordinated, and effective response to protecting children from harm.

Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency.

Attached to this policy are the following Procedures:

Appendix A—Pertinent sections of the Family and Children's Services Act (1990)

Appendix B—Protocol for Investigation  
Appendix C—Referral Form  
Appendix D—Pertinent Telephone and Fax Numbers

**Approved by the Southwest South Shore Regional School Board  
On February 23, 1999**

*(as a replacement for the former Policy #703.14)*

### **Appendix “A”**

## **Pertinent Sections of the Children and Family and Children’s Services Act (1990)**

### **REGIONAL CHILD ABUSE PROTOCOL**

**Definitions** for professional staff of the Southwest South Shore Regional School Board and the Child Welfare Agencies of the Western Region Department of Community Services, Child Welfare Divisions Services (Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens and Lunenburg Counties) and Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services) as outlined in the Children and Family Services Act 1990.

**Child:** Section 3 (1)(e): means a person under sixteen years of age unless the context otherwise requires.

**Substantial Risk of Abuse:** Section 22

- (1) Means a real chance of danger that is apparent on the evidence.
- (2) A child is in need of protective services where
  - (A) the child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by a parent or guardian of the child or caused by the failure of a parent or guardian to supervise and protect the child adequately;
  - (B) there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer physical harm inflicted or caused in clause (A);
  - (C) the child has been sexually abused by a parent or guardian of the child, or by another person where a parent or guardian of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse and fails to protect the child;
  - (D) there is substantial risk that the child will be sexually abused as described in clause (c);
  - (E) a child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child’s parent or guardian does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or is unable to consent to, the treatment;
  - (F) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self destructive or aggressive behaviour and the child’s parent or guardian does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;
  - (G) there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer emotional harm of the kind described in clause (F), and the parent or guardian does not provide or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;
  - (H) the child suffers from a mental, emotional or development condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child’s development and the child’s parent or guardian does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition;
  - (I) the child has suffered physical or emotional harm caused by being exposed to repeated domestic violence by or towards a parent or guardian of the child, and the child’s parent or guardian fails or refuses to obtain services or treatment or remedy or alleviate the violence;
  - (J) the child has suffered physical harm caused by chronic and serious neglect by a parent or guardian of the child, and the parent or guardian does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;
  - (Ja) there is substantial risk that the child will suffer physical harm inflicted or caused as described in clause (J);

- ~~(K) the child has been abandoned, the child's only parent or guardian has died or is unavailable to exercise custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provisions for the child's care and custody, or the child is in the care of an agency or another person and the parent or guardian of the child refuses or is unable or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;~~
- ~~(L) the child is under twelve years of age and has killed or seriously injured another person or caused serious damage to another person's property, and services or treatments are necessary to prevent a recurrence and a parent or guardian of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, the necessary services or treatment;~~
- ~~(M) the child is under twelve years of age and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of a parent or guardian of the child or because of the parent or guardian's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately~~

~~Duty to Report: Section 23~~

- ~~(1) Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency. All staff of the Southwest **South Shore** Regional School Board are responsible to report suspicions of abuse using the attached form (Appendix C).~~

~~Restriction on Civil Action:~~

- ~~(2) No action lies against a person by reason of that person reporting information pursuant to subsection (1), unless the reporting of that information is done falsely and maliciously.~~

~~Offence and Penalty:~~

- ~~(3) Every person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both.~~

~~Limitation Period:~~

- ~~(4) No proceedings shall be instituted pursuant to subsection (3) more than two years after the contravention occurred.~~

~~Offence and Penalty:~~

- ~~(5) Every person who falsely and maliciously reports information to an agency indicating that a child is in need of protective services is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both.~~

~~"Suffer Abuse" defined: Section 24~~

- ~~(1) "Suffer abuse", when used in reference to a child, means be in need of protective services within the meaning of clause (A), (C), (E), (F), (H), (I) or (J) of subsection (2) of Section 22.~~

~~Duty of Professionals and Officials to Report:~~

- ~~(2) Notwithstanding any other Act, every person who performs professional or official duties with respect of a child, including:~~
  - ~~(A) a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, dentist, pharmacist or psychologist;~~
  - ~~(B) a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counsellor, member of the clergy, operator or employee of a day care facility;~~
  - ~~(C) a peace officer or a medical examiner;~~
  - ~~(D) an operator or employee of a child caring facility or child care service;~~
  - ~~(E) a youth or recreation worker,~~~~who, in the course of that person's professional or official duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to an agency.~~

~~Interpretation of Section: Section 25~~

- ~~(1) In this section, "abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian: means that a child~~
  - ~~(A) has suffered physical harm, inflicted by a person by a person other than a parent or guardian of the child or caused by the failure of a person other than a parent or guardian of the child to protect the child adequately;~~

- ~~(B) has been sexually abused by a person other than a parent or guardian or by another person where the person, not being the parent or guardian, with the care of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse and fails to protect the child;~~
- ~~(C) has suffered serious emotional harm, demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, caused by the intentional conduct of a person other than a parent or guardian.~~

~~Duty to Report Third Party Abuse~~

- ~~(2) Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian shall forthwith report the information to an agency.~~

~~Offence and Penalty:~~

- ~~(3) Every person who contravenes subsection (2) is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both.~~

~~Limitation Period:~~

- ~~(4) No proceedings shall be instituted pursuant to subsection (3) more than two years after the contravention occurred.~~

~~Restriction on Civil Action:~~

- ~~(5) No action lies against a person by reason of that person reporting information pursuant to subsection (2) unless the reporting of that information is done falsely or maliciously.~~

~~Offence and Penalty~~

- ~~(6) Every person who contravenes subsection (2) is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or to both.~~

<i>TITLE</i>	<i>PAGE</i>
Child Abuse and Neglect	Page 1 of 2

<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>SECTION</i>
Programs and Student Services	Students

<b><i>BOARD APPROVED: Southwest Regional School Board February 23, 1999</i></b>
<b><i>REVISED:</i></b>
<b><i>REF: BP #902</i></b>
<b><i>MONITORING DATE: Every Five Years</i></b>
<b><i>RELATED POLICIES &amp; DOCUMENTS:</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and Children’s Services Act (1990)</li> <li>• South Shore Regional School Board, RCH Policy # 795</li> <li>• Police Investigations in School Policy #935</li> </ul>

*This policy and procedures replace SWRSB Policy 703.14.*

### **Reporting and Investigative Procedures**

The primary responsibility and mandate for child protection investigations rests with the Department of Community Services or Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services of Nova Scotia with the assistance of police where appropriate. **These responsibilities cannot and must not be assumed by school community members.** It is in the child’s best interest to be interviewed by the responsible authorities who are trained and authorized to conduct investigations.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

It is important that for teachers to know what to look for and that they become aware of the exact procedures to be followed (refer to section 22, Children and Family and Children’s Services Act – 1990). The school principal shall periodically provide information to acquaint the teaching staff with procedures and information related to child abuse.

1. **All staff** employed by the South Shore Regional Board ~~Teachers~~ who have reason to believe that a student is being abused, and/or neglected, and/or exposed to family violence shall, **upon receipt of information, immediately** make a report to the jurisdictional district office of the Department of Community Services or Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services of Nova Scotia. ~~shall inform their school principal or designate.~~ **All persons aware of child abuse and neglect have a legal responsibility to ensure it is reported to Child Welfare Authorities Services.**
2. **All staff** employed by the South Shore Regional Board must immediately inform the principal, or designate, prior to a referral being made to the Department of Community Services – Child Welfare or Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services of Nova Scotia.
- ~~2. If the teacher and/or school principal suspect that the child is being abused and/or neglected, the concern is to report immediately to the child welfare agency in the community. If the principal and teacher do not agree and the teacher still feels that there is reasonable and~~

~~probable cause, the teacher must report the suspicions to the child welfare agency. Doubt should be resolved in the favour of the child.~~

3. The ~~school~~ principal shall be responsible for immediately filing a written report on each case of suspected abuse and/or neglect with the Superintendent of Schools, or designate. The principal will provide the teacher who initiated the referral with an opportunity to review the report before submitting it, ~~as that person could later be asked if the report accurately reflects the circumstances and/or events which caused the report~~ to ensure accuracy.
4. Staff members of the Southwest South Shore Regional School Board are not to inform parents/guardians that a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been brought to the attention of the child welfare agency as this may place a child at risk of harm. This information will be conveyed to the parents/guardians by the agency.
5. ~~The school principal shall periodically provide information to acquaint the teaching staff with procedures and information related to child abuse.~~
6. A social worker may request further information from the referral source to determine if there are grounds pursuant to the Children and Family Services Act to initiate a child protection investigation. As well, if new information is received related to the referral, this must be reported to the Department of Community Services.
7. Referral sources may request confidentiality. When requested, all attempts will be made to protect confidentiality. Exemptions to this are when matters proceed to Family Court and the agency is required to provide full disclosure of their file. Referral sources can sometimes be identified on the basis of the information. Discuss with the social worker if this is a concern.
8. Once a referral is made, the agency will respond in writing to the person making the referral to indicate whether or not the matter will be investigated and/or referred to another agency. The referral source may contact agencies for follow-up information.
9. Knowledge of suspected abuse or neglect of a child is confidential and is to be restricted to the person initiating the report and the principal or designate. Other school staff such as a resource teacher or guidance counsellor may be informed at the discretion of the principal on a need to know basis.

~~It is the responsibility of the Social Worker, not the school officials, to interview the child. Social Workers are not required to contact parents prior to an investigation; however, they may choose to do so at their discretion.~~

## Appendix "A"

### INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES Procedure for Investigation

The Children and Family Services Act (1994), Sections 9 (a) and (d), provides a mandate to protect children from harm and to investigate allegations or evidence that children may be in need of protective services.

- ~~1. Gather information in the course of conducting an investigation;~~
- ~~2. review the case and contact other agencies when appropriate (i.e. school, policing authority);~~
- ~~3. Once a referral is made, the agency will respond in writing to the person making the referral to indicate whether or not the matter will be investigated and/or referred to another agency. The referral source may contact agencies for follow up information.~~

1. Upon receipt of a referral, the agency will determine whether the described circumstances fall within the legal definitions of a child in need of protective services pursuant to the Children and Family Services Act, Section 22 (2) and 25 (1).
2. If there are insufficient grounds, the referral will not be investigated. However, the information will be retained for future reference should other referrals be received.
3. If there is sufficient evidence to warrant an investigation, a plan will be developed to determine whether or not the child is in need of protection and if further intervention is necessary for the future protection of the child.
4. The social worker will assess the need for any service(s) required by the child and their family to remedy the situation that led to a child to be in need of, or at risk of, harm. The file will be closed if abuse or neglect of the child is unable to be substantiated on the basis of the evidence gathered during the investigation.
5. The school provides a safe, neutral environment for the child being interviewed. **Social workers and police often need access to a student at school to conduct an interview.** ~~If the matter is investigated, the Social Worker may interview the child at the school, showing the appropriate identification to the principal. At that point, the principal has the right to ask for some information (as much as the Social Worker is able to provide) as to the nature of the case. The general rule of thumb is that the interview will be conducted between the Social Worker and the child, alone. In some cases, police may be accompanying the social worker. ~~Police~~ **Social workers** have the right to interview a child without notifying the parents/guardians when the child is an alleged victim of abuse or neglect. (If a child is an alleged perpetrator, the principal should practice existing School Board procedures).~~
6. Investigators are expected to consider the convenience of the school and student when arranging an interview and attempt to minimize possible stigmatization of the student as a result of the interview.
7. All requests for access to students for the purpose of arranging an interview are to be directed to the school principal, or designate, upon confirmation of appropriate identification. In most cases, the principal will be notified in advance of the visit by the social worker.  
~~When the interview has concluded, the principal should ask the Social Worker, "Will you be calling the parent before you leave my school? My office is available." It is the responsibility of the Social Worker to make sure every effort is made to contact the parents the same day. This contact is the responsibility of the Social Worker.~~
8. Information that may impact upon the school community as a result of the interview/investigation will be shared with the school Principal, or designate.
9. The child may be removed from the **a** school by the social worker under one of the two following conditions:
  - a) When the parent/guardian has given verbal permission to the social worker to transport the child to another location for interviewing (e.g. Mental Health Office, RCMP station).

- b) When the agency has taken the child into care and served a Notice of Taking into Care on to the principal. At that point, the agency becomes the legal guardian of the child.
10. The agency may remain involved with a family beyond the initial investigation and may need to have periodic interviews with the child to ensure the child's safety. If a social worker wants to interview a child at the school, the social worker ~~will need to~~ must contact the principal and arrange a visit and show identification upon arrival at the school.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

1. The responsibility for notifying parents/guardians about an investigation rests with the investigator(s) – social worker or police. It is the policy of the Department of Community Services that the parent/guardian is notified of the child interview and nature of the investigation as soon as possible following the initial contact with the child. It is not the responsibility of the school to contact home.
2. If the child is brought into care from the school, or their return to the parental home is delayed because of the investigation, the social worker will make all attempts to notify the parent/guardian prior to the child's planned return home from school.
3. If the principal is contacted by the parent/guardian because the child has not returned home, the principal should only provide the social worker's name and telephone number. No other information can be shared.

### **PRESENCE OF EMPLOYEES DURING A CHILD INTERVIEW**

1. An effective initial interview with a victim of alleged abuse or neglect should occur under circumstances that will encourage the child to speak freely and openly to the investigators about sensitive personal matters.
2. It is most appropriate for investigators to interview the child alone in the interest of a full and undistorted disclosure, and to recognize and preserve the family's right to privacy and confidentiality.
3. A student may request or require the supportive but non-participating presence of a familiar person (employee). The investigators and employee will determine the appropriateness of this presence during the interview.
4. If an employee is present during the interview, they may be required to provide evidence under oath at a future Court proceeding.

### **INFORMATION SHARING AND INTERVIEW OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

1. Investigators may interview school community members who have regular contact with the student, or who may have other specific information relevant to the child welfare investigation, whether or not the referral originated from the school community. Information requested may include attendance records, provision of lunches, physical presentation, student behaviours, observations related to interaction with peers, and/or contact with parents/guardians.
2. The principal will assist the investigator(s) by facilitating these contacts.
3. School community members will provide all pertinent information to the investigator(s).
4. School community members may be required to provide this information under oath at a Court proceeding. School community members should summarize in writing any information provided to the investigator(s) immediately following the interview. This is to be done on the attached report form. This documentation should be retained by the school community member in a confidential manner for future reference.



## Appendix “A”

### **Definitions:**

Child abuse is often difficult to recognize. Teachers and other School Board staff, as individuals who perform professional duties with respect to children, are in an excellent position to identify probable child abuse because the physical and behavioral symptoms tend to reveal themselves over a period of time and often manifest in one form of misbehavior or another.

The following information is provided to assist teachers and South Shore Regional School Board staff in identifying whether to decide if abuse is occurring and to assist them in deciding whether if a report to Child Protection is required to protect a child from harm.

Some of the indicators listed in the following tables are only identifiable through medical examinations. Please note that Teachers and other School Board staff are not to undertake any physical examinations in order to clarify their beliefs.

### **Recognition of a Physically Abused Child**

How do I recognize an abused child? It's not easy. But it's important to try. However, one important clue is that the Symptoms of abuse are likely to be repeated or to continue over time and will seem to affect the child's behavior. Obvious indications that a child has been physically abused are: unexplained bruises, cuts, burns or other apparent injuries. These are things that the observant teacher can notice.

Perhaps more difficult to identify are behavioral indicators. Indicators that a child is being physically abused may include:

#### Physical Indicators

- Bruises or welts on facial areas and other areas of the body, including back, bottom, legs, arms, and inner thighs. Any bruises or welts in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury, for example, fingerprints or hand prints, buckles, iron, teeth.
- Burns that show the shape of the object used to make them, such as an iron, grill, cigarette; or burns from boiling water, oil or flames.
- Fractures of the skull, jaw, nose and limbs, especially those not consistent with the explanation offered or with the type of injury probable/possible at the child's age and development.
- Cuts and grazes to the mouth, lips, gums, eye area, ears, external genitalia.
- Human bite marks.
- Bald patches where hair has been pulled out.
- Multiple injuries, old and new.
- Poisoning.
- Internal injuries.

#### Behavioral Indicators

- Extreme wariness of parents/guardians or adults in general.
- Wariness of physical contact, especially when initiated by an adult.
- Resistance to being touched.
- Extreme watchfulness.
- Apprehensive or fearful when other children cry or shout.

- Fear of going home
- Unexplained prolonged absence (guardian may keep child at home while injury heals).
- Unlikely or inconsistent explanations for bruises injuries.
- Denial that bruises exist.
- Inability to remember the cause of the injury.
- Extreme aggressiveness, extreme withdrawal.
- Extreme fearfulness or fearlessness (recklessness).
- Extreme attention seeking or attention avoidance.
- Extreme fearfulness, tearlessness, no expectation of comfort.
- Wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions (such as long sleeved tops) to hide injuries.
- None or Little or no emotion when hurt.
- Little or no fear when threatened.
- Overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive, and uncommunicative.
- Fearfulness when other children cry or shout.
- Unusually nervous or hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive, and destructive to self and/or others.
- Excessively friendly with strangers.
- Regressive behavior, such as bed wetting or soiling.
- Poor sleeping patterns, fear of dark, nightmares.
- Sadness and frequent crying.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Poor memory and concentration.
- Suicide attempts.

### **Recognition of a Sexually Abused Child**

How do I recognize a sexually abused child? Sexually maltreated children are especially likely to display the symptoms of wariness, watchfulness, and extremes of behavior described in relation to physical abuse, and/or any of the symptoms of emotional maladjustment. Indicators that a child is being sexually abused may include:

#### **Physical Indicators**

- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal areas
- Venereal diseases, especially in pre-teens
- Pregnancy
- Injury to the genital or rectal area, such as bruising or bleeding.
- Vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge.
- Discomfort in urinating or defecating.
- Presence of foreign bodies in vagina and/or rectum.
- Inflammation and infection of genital area.
- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Pregnancy, especially in very young adolescents.
- Bruising and other injury to breasts, buttocks and thighs.
- Anxiety related illnesses, such as anorexia or bulimia.

- Frequent urinary tract infections.

Behavioral Indicators, while more subtle, are more likely to be evident. These include:

- Excessive wariness and/or watchfulness.
- Apparent fear of parent/guardian.
- Sexually intrusive or aggressive behaviour
- Wariness of physical contact, especially when initiated by an adult.
- Excessive affectionate behavior.
- Fear of the night and/or the dark.
- Sophisticated or bizarre sexual behaviour or knowledge
- Seductive behaviour or approval
- Unwillingness to change for physical education, or to participate in active sports or games.
- Speech disorders (may relate to forced oral sex).
- Reports sexual contact with parent/guardian.
- Disclosure of abuse.
- Persistent and age-inappropriate sexual activity, including excessive masturbation, masturbation with objects; rubbing genitals against adults; playing games that act out a sexually abusive event.
- Drawings or descriptions in stories that are sexually explicit and not age appropriate.
- A fear of home, a specific place, a particular adult; excessive fear of men or of women.
- Poor or deteriorating relationships with adults and peers.
- Poor self-care/personal hygiene.
- Arriving early at school and leaving late.
- Complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea without physiological basis.
- Frequent rocking, sucking and biting.
- Sleeping difficulties.
- Regressive behavior, such as bedwetting or speech loss.
- Sudden accumulation of money or gifts.
- Truancy or running away from home.
- Delinquent or aggressive behavior.
- Depression.
- Self-injurious behavior, including drug/alcohol abuse, prostitution, self-mutilation, attempted suicide.
- Sudden decline in academic performance, poor memory and concentration.
- Wearing of provocative clothing, or layers of clothes to hide injuries.
- Promiscuity.

### **Recognition of an Emotionally Abused Child**

How do I recognize a child who is or has been emotionally abused? Teachers, as individuals who perform professional duties with respect to children, are in an excellent position to identify emotionally abused children because the behavioral symptoms tend to reveal themselves over a period of time. This condition invariably manifests itself in one form of misbehavior or another. Common behavioral indicators include: Indicators that a child is being emotionally abused may include:

#### Physical Indicators

- Speech disorders.
- Delays in physical development.
- Failure to thrive without an organic cause.

### Behavioral Indicators

- Mental of emotional developmental lags – physical, mental or emotional.
- Habit disorders, sucking, biting, rocking, etc.
- Conduct disorders, sleep disorders, inhibition of play.
- ~~Extreme passivity, extreme aggressiveness~~
- ~~Extreme infantile behaviour~~
- Extreme adult behavior, appearing to “take over” and care for parents/guardians.
- Hysteria, obsession, phobias, hypochondria.
- ~~Extreme depression, attempted suicide~~
- Overly compliant, passive and undemanding behavior.
- Extremely demanding, aggressive, attention-seeking behavior.
- Antisocial, destructive behavior.
- Low tolerance for frustration.
- Poor self-image.
- Unexplained mood swings.
- Fear of failure, overly high standards, and excessive neatness.
- Depression, suicidal thoughts or actions.
- Running away.
- Violent drawing or writing.
- Contact with other children forbidden.

### **Recognition of a Neglected Child**

How do I recognize a neglected child? Neglect is even harder to pinpoint. The indicators are less dramatic and the effects appear to be less damaging. But the effects, over time, can be just as harmful to the child. Sometimes, as teachers, we can tend to see the neglectful parent/guardian as acting more out of ignorance than maliciousness. We must not fall into this trap—even in these situations the child is at risk. The child must be our first concern. Physical Indicators that a child is suffering from neglect may include:

### Physical Indicators

- Consistent hunger, malnutrition, underweight, dehydration.
- ~~Poor hygiene, dirtiness, lice, skin disorders associated with improper hygiene~~
- ~~Inappropriate dress, exposure symptoms, e.g. Sunburn, frostbite, recurrent colds, pneumonia~~
- Consistent fatigue, listlessness.
- Unattended health problems and lack of routine medical care.
- Inadequate supervisions, child left in the care of another child too young to protect him/her.
- Abandonment by parents/guardians.
- Consistently dirty and unwashed.
- Consistently inappropriately dressed for weather conditions.
- Consistently without adequate supervision and at risk of injury or harm.
- Inadequate shelter and unsafe or unsanitary conditions.

- Failure to thrive.

Behavioral Indicators of neglect include:

- Begging, stealing food.
- Theft, in general.
- Verbal evidence that there is of no caretaker, no one at home, arriving early, staying late at school.
- Falling asleep in class.
- Delinquency, drug or alcohol use.
- ~~Begging or stealing food.~~
- Gorging when food is available.
- Inability to eat when extremely hungry.
- Alienated from peers.
- Withdrawn, listless, pale, and thin.
- Aggressive behavior.
- Little positive interaction with parent, care-giver or /guardian.
- Appearing miserable or irritable.
- Poor socializing habits.
- Excessively friendly with strangers.
- Indiscriminate with affection.
- Poor, irregular, or non-attendance at school or kindergarten or child care.
- ~~Staying at school for long hours.~~
- Self-destructive.
- Withdrawal from school.
- Taking on an adult role of caring for a parent.

**Recognition of Student Exposed to Domestic Violence**

As defined by the Deputy Ministers' Leadership Committee on Family Violence, "Domestic Violence is deliberate and purposeful violence, abuse and intimidation perpetrated by one person against another in an intimate relationship. It occurs between two persons where one has power over another, causing fear, physical and/or psychological harm. It may be a single act or a series of acts forming a pattern of abuse. Domestic violence can occur in any relationship, however, women are primarily the victims and men are primarily the perpetrators. Children and young people may experience harm by being exposed to violence in adult relationships, being the direct victims of violence, or a combination of the two." Indicators that a child has been exposed to domestic violence may include:

Physical Indicators

- Speech disorders.
- Delays in physical development.
- Failure to thrive without an organic cause.
- Bruises or welts on facial areas and other areas of the body, including back, bottom, legs, arms and inner thighs. Any bruises or welts in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury, for example, fingerprints or hand prints, buckles, iron or teeth.
- Fractures of the skull, jaw, nose limbs, especially those not consistent with the explanation offered or with the type of injury probable/possible at the child's age and development.

- Multiple injuries, old and new.
- Internal injuries.
- Physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches).

### Behavioral Indicators

- Overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive, and uncommunicative
- Extremely demanding, aggressive, attention-seeking behavior
- Antisocial, destructive behavior.
- Low tolerance for frustration.
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults.
- Demonstrated fear of parents, ~~care givers or~~ /guardians and of going home.
- Becoming very passive and compliant.
- Anxiety.
- Criminal activity.
- Disclosing incidents of family violence.
- Separation anxiety (beyond what you would normally expect for the age of the child).
- Sleep difficulties (fear of falling asleep).
- Constant worry about possible danger.
- Seemingly loss of previous learned skills (toileting, naming colors).
- Lack of interest in or feelings about anything.
- Excessive worry about the safety of loved ones.
- Difficulty choosing or completing an activity.
- Distracted and has a decreased ability to learn.
- Very high activity level (fidgeting and/or trouble concentrating at levels atypical for the child's age and stage of development).
- Self-blame as they believe they caused the violence.
- Nightmares and are anxious about being hurt.
- Learned male and female roles associated with violence.
- ~~Have~~ a greater possibility for bullying or being bullied.
- Will make an effort to get involved to stop the violence.
- Try to escape by spending more time away from home.
- Poor communication and relationship skills.
- Use drugs or alcohol.
- ~~Have~~ trouble developing and maintaining healthy relationships.

Procedures for School Staff Making Referrals: (Southwest Regional School Board Policy # 703.14)

~~School staff are required to follow Policy Number 703.14~~

**Appendix “BC”**  
**Southwest South Shore Regional School Board Protocol for Investigation**  
**Investigating Of Abuse Respecting Employees and Volunteers**

In the event of an allegation where an employee or volunteer of the Southwest South Shore Regional School Board is suspected of having physically, sexually, or emotionally abused a child, the following protocol will be followed.

**1. Reporting**

**A. If a school community member has reason to believe that a student is being abused by a South Shore Regional School Board Employee or volunteer, they are to make a report immediately to the school principal. The school principal shall inform the Director of Human Resources of the suspicion as soon as possible.**

**B. The reporting employee will immediately report this to the jurisdictional district office of the Department of Community Services or Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services of Nova Scotia and to the Superintendent.**

~~A. Pursuant to section 23 (1) of the Children and Family Services Act, “Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency.” And pursuant to section 24 (2) every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child, such as a teacher or school principal, “who, in the course of that person’s professional or official duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to an agency.” The person having the knowledge needs to report directly to Department of Community~~

~~B. Section 24 (2) of the Children and Family Services Act: Notwithstanding any other Act, every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child, including (a) a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, pharmacist or psychologist; (b) a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counselor, member of the clergy, operator or employee of a day care facility; (c) a peace officer or a medical examiner; (d) an operator or employee of a child caring facility or child care service; (e) a youth or recreation worker, who, in the course of that person’s professional or official duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to an agency.~~

~~C. Section 25 (1) of the Children and Family Services Act: In this section, “abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian” means that a child (a) has suffered physical harm, inflicted by a person other than the parent or guardian of the child or caused by the failure of a person other than the parent or guardian of the child to supervise and protect the child adequately; (b) has been sexually abused by a person other than a parent or guardian or by another person where the person, not being a parent or guardian, with the care of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse fails to protect the child; (c) has suffered serious emotional harm, demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, caused by the intentional conduct of a person other than a parent or guardian.~~

## Investigating

1. Upon receipt of a referral of alleged abuse of a child by ~~the~~ a School Board employee or volunteer, the Child Protection Agency in the County where the child lives will risk assess the referral to determine if it warrants investigation under Section 25 (1) of the Children and Family Services Act. That section refers to “abuse by a person other than a parent/guardian or guardian” and deals specifically with the child having suffered physical harm, sexual abuse or emotional harm.
2. If the Agency determines that the referral information does not warrant investigation under Section 25 (1), the file will be closed and the information referred to the Director of Human Resources ~~of the SSRSB, Southwest South Shore Regional School Board~~. It will then be the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources to determine what, if any, follow-up is required with the employee or volunteer.
3. ~~Should~~ If the Agency accepts the referral for investigation, contact will be made with the Director of Human Resources to advise as to the allegations having been made and that the matter is being investigated. The Director of Human Resources will then advise the ~~School Board~~ ~~SSRSB~~ Superintendent of the allegations and investigation, and ~~will~~ meet with the appropriate ~~School~~ principal to determine what immediate action may need to be taken by the ~~School Board~~ ~~SSRSB~~.
4. The Director of Human Resources and principal will advise the employee or volunteer that an allegation has been made and that they are under investigation. The alleged offender will not be advised as to the specifics of the allegations ~~nor~~ or the name of the alleged victim at this point. ~~The alleged offender usually will~~ ~~may~~ be placed on paid leave pending outcome of the investigation.
5. In the case of alleged physical and sexual abuse, the Child Protection Agency shall refer the matter to the appropriate police detachment for joint ~~investigation, as per their established protocol~~. In the case of emotional abuse, the Child Protection Agency will conduct the investigation.
6. Recognizing that other children could be at risk, given a school setting, it is of utmost importance that cases of alleged abuse by an ~~School Board~~ ~~SSRSB~~ employee or volunteer be given priority for investigation. It is also important ~~that there be to have~~ good communication between the Child Protection Agency and the ~~School Board~~ ~~SSRSB~~ as to ~~regarding~~ the status of the investigation so as to allow the ~~School Board~~ ~~SSRSB~~ adequate and timely information ~~to be able to make decisions as to~~ ~~about~~ the alleged offenders’ contact with children.
7. Once the Child Protection Agency and the Police, as applicable, have concluded their investigation, ~~the Agency~~ ~~they~~ will contact the Director of Human Resources to advise ~~as to~~ ~~of~~ the outcome of the investigation.
8. The allegations may be found ~~to have been~~ unsubstantial or inconclusive and ~~the Agency will~~ close the file ~~will be closed~~. ~~Should~~ If the allegations of abuse be substantiated, criminal charges could be laid by ~~2-9~~ police and the Agency could also make a decision to apply to have the ~~employee or volunteer’s~~ ~~offender’s~~ name placed on the Child Abuse Register, as per Section 63 (3) (2) of the Children and Family Services Act (1990).

### ~~1. Reasonable Conclusions and outcomes could also include:~~

- ~~• Complete exoneration of the employee or volunteer~~
- ~~• Requirement to undergo a teaching appraisal process~~
- ~~• A meeting with the employee, principal, student, and parents to discuss the issues~~
- ~~• Professional development for the employee to rectify performance issues~~
- ~~• Reprimand and/or suspension~~
- ~~• Transfer of the employee~~

### Dismissal of the employee



**Appendix "CD"**  
**Child Abuse and Neglect Referral Form**

*To be completed by the teacher and principal, for cases of suspected Child Abuse and Neglect*

Full Name of Child's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address and Phone Number (if different than that of child): Same \_\_\_\_\_

Other siblings in the family and their ages (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Present School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of School Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person making the report referral: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of other members of school staff involved or who may be aware of issues related to this referral problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason you are making Specific account of the concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Being as specific as possible, include notation of specific symptoms observed and dates of observance:  
(add separate sheet if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

Please add other relevant information you think might be helpful to establish the cause of injuries or behaviours: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature	Date	School Principal	Date
--------------------	------	------------------	------

**Appendix “DE”  
Pertinent Telephone and Fax Numbers**

<b><u>Child Protection Agencies</u></b>	<b><u>Telephone</u></b>	<b><u>Fax</u></b>
Child Protection Agency <b>Welfare Services</b> , Lunenburg County (Bridgewater)	543-4554	543-6186
Child Protection Agency Welfare Services, Queens County (Liverpool)	354-3525	354-7460
<del>Child Protection Agency, Shelburne County (Barrington)</del>	<del>637-2337</del>	<del>637-2137</del>
<del>Child Protection Agency, Yarmouth County (Yarmouth)</del>	<del>742-0700</del>	<del>742-8945</del>
<del>Child Protection Agency, Digby County (Digby)</del>	<del>245-5811</del>	<del>245-4121</del>
Mi’kmaq Family and Children’s Services, Nova Scotia	758-3553 1-800-263-8686	758-2390
<b><u>Southwest <b>South Shore</b> Regional School Board</u></b>		
Southwest <b>South Shore</b> Regional School Board, Regional Office	5413-2468	541-3051