

Children Need Schools to Continue Reporting Abuse

Empowering teachers, counselors, nutrition staff, and others in their role as mandated reporters during the COVID-19 crisis

Students not being in school creates a barrier to reporting abuse

In times of crisis and economic instability, child abuse and neglect rates increase. However, reports of child abuse and neglect in San Joaquin County have declined dramatically. The ability to speak up for kids' safety is crucial at this time.

Making a report is asking for help and services for the child

If you reasonably suspect a child is unsafe - report. You do not need proof. You are not making an accusation. You are asking for a professional to help a child and their family.

You may be the only person to act

If something does not look safe, sound safe, or feel safe - report.

HOW TO REPORT

Child Protective Services
Abuse Hotline

(24-hours/seven days a week)

(209) 468-1333



**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

Ways You Can Protect Children

Continue to let students know you remain a supportive, caring adult in their lives:

- Check in regularly with students and/or caregivers. Provide encouraging messages.
- Ask questions to engage children. Ex: "Give me one word that describes how you feel today?" "How is learning from home different from learning at school?"
- Teachers should encourage students to participate in video conferences so they can actually see the students and observe their affect and demeanor or see if they have any injuries.

Signs of concerns:

- If a child communicates they feel unsafe, you see a child in a dangerous environment, or you notice a significant change in a child's mood/behavior.

Make an extra effort with children who:

- Have a history of emotional, sexual, or physical abuse; neglect; drug use; or discussing/attempting suicide.
- Are responsible for the care of other children or live in a highly stressful family situation with limited support systems.
- Require assistance due to physical, mental, behavioral, or medical disabilities or delays.

Legal Responsibilities and Protections:

- School personnel are mandated reporters. If you have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, you must directly report it immediately to law enforcement or the hotline: (209) 468-1333.
- No administrator or supervisor may impede or inhibit any report.
- When you make a report in good faith, you are protected against civil/criminal penalty or adverse employment action.

Adapted from Parent Child Abuse Missouri and Missouri KidsFirst.