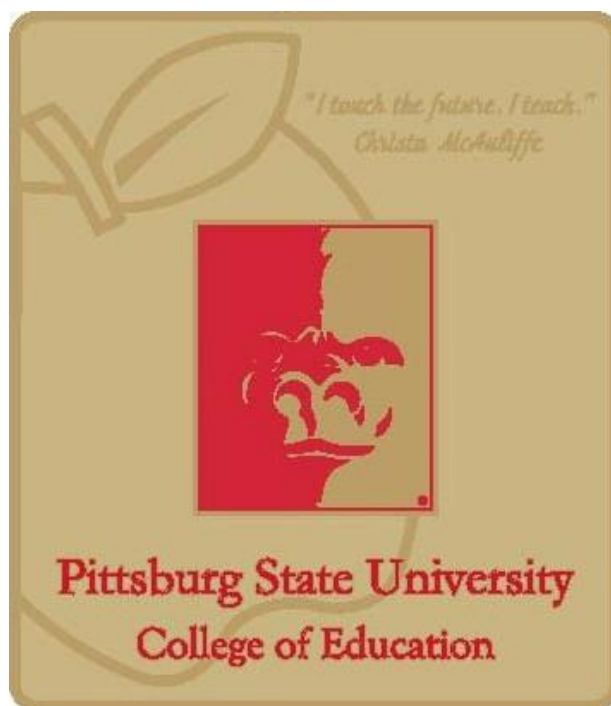


***PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY***

**PROFESSIONAL SEMESTER  
HANDBOOK**

**2025-2026**



**Office of Teacher Education**

**110 Hughes Hall**

**<https://www.pittstate.edu/education/teacher-education/>**

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to your professional semester at Pittsburg State University. This semester is designed to be a culminating experience to help you become a professional educator. As a candidate in teacher education, you have completed all of the requirements that provide the content knowledge and pedagogical skills that you will need in order to begin your professional semester. This semester will provide you with an opportunity to practice, reflect, and build upon your knowledge and skills in a supportive environment. You will have the opportunity to perform many of the duties and to make many of the instructional decisions of a classroom teacher.

You may experience many gratifying, as well as many difficult, days as the semester progresses. The work load will be heavy and intense at times, but the semester has been carefully designed to help you grow into a professional educator. This experience will offer you many opportunities for professional growth if you keep an open mind, positive attitude, and do your best work. You should set realistic goals and strive to meet them. It is our belief that a successful professional semester experience depends on a solid partnership among the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor, so keep the lines of communication open. Do not be afraid to ask questions and seek advice from others.

We are proud of all you have accomplished to date and expect you to be very successful as you work toward your goal of becoming a professional educator.

Sincerely,

The Office of Teacher Education Staff

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***The College of Education reserves the right to amend any policies, rules or regulations as needed to best serve its constituents.***

## **Introduction**

During the professional semester, it is understood that student teachers are trying, applying and expanding on professional knowledge, skills, and understanding gained during initial coursework and learning new knowledge, skills, and understanding under the direction of a licensed/certified and experienced classroom teacher. Teacher candidates come to the professional semester having had diverse experiences in multiple classrooms and working with students in a variety of settings in preparation to be student teachers.

The professional semester is a field-based experience that spans a full semester. Student teachers will be assigned to PK-12 schools in their designated fields with experienced teachers. Cooperating teachers are licensed in the state in which they teach and have a minimum of three years teaching experience. They are identified by the administrator as a teacher who exhibits all the characteristics and skills of a highly qualified, master teacher and who has a desire to mentor a student teacher.

Throughout the professional semester, student teachers are required to report to campus on designated dates. Student teachers participate in seminars and activities on these dates designed to enhance the professional semester.

## **Expectations for Professional Behavior**

Professionalism is described as being ‘distinguished from an amateur’. As a teacher candidate, you are more than a student; you are beginning your teaching career. As a teacher candidate at PSU, you will be interacting with and teaching in school classrooms. It is important to behave professionally at all times as you are making an impression at the school and do not know who will notice and/or remember you. You will be representing PSU, your academic department, and yourself as a future teacher. ***If you choose to not follow the expectations for professional behavior, consequences could be imposed.***

### **Dispositions**

As you move into the role of the professional educator, be aware that there are dispositions that great teachers embody. Some of these dispositions include, but are not limited to: dependability, fairness, consistency, positive demeanor, belief in all students’ ability to learn, ethical behavior, self-evaluation and reflection, effective communication, and respect for all cultures and differences of others. These dispositions are all included in the Professional Knowledge Base and Field Evaluation Instrument (FEI). Your cooperating teacher and university supervisor will evaluate you using the FEI throughout your professional semester. Both documents are included in the appendix.

It is vital to remember that you are a guest in the classroom and the school. You are a guest of the cooperating teacher. You may disagree with a teacher’s and/or principal’s teaching or communication style but, unless someone is hurt by abusive actions, you must refrain from criticism and remain professional and polite at all times. If you have concerns or want tips on how to deal with the issue, talk with your university supervisor. **DO NOT EVER** discuss these concerns with other teachers or staff, family, friends, or on social media. Also, refrain from expressing negative perceptions about a previous experience, clinical supervisor, principal, or school. If you have concerns or information that needs to be shared, consult with your university supervisor or other appropriate College of Education staff.

### **Academic Integrity**

Education at the university level requires intellectual integrity and trust between faculty and students. Professors are obliged to master their subject and present as fair an account of it as possible. For their part, students are obliged to make an honest effort to fulfill both the letter and the spirit of course requirements. Academic dishonesty violates both integrity and trust. It jeopardizes the effectiveness of the educational process and the reliability of publicly reported records of achievement.

Academic dishonesty by a student is defined as unethical activity associated with course work or grades.

It includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations,
- (b) Giving or receiving unauthorized aid in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports, papers or any other assignments,
- (c) Submitting the same work for more than one course without the instructor’s permission, and,

- (d) Plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as using ideas or writings of another and claiming them as one's own. Copying any material directly (be it the work of other students, professors, or colleagues) or copying information from print or electronic sources (including the internet) without explicitly acknowledging the true source of the material is plagiarism. Plagiarism also includes paraphrasing another individuals' ideas or concepts without acknowledging their work, or contribution. To avoid charges of plagiarism, students should follow the citation directions provided by the instructor and/or department in which the class is offered.

Unless otherwise stated by the instructor, exams, quizzes, and out-of-class assignments are meant to be individual, rather than group, work. Hence, copying from other students' quizzes or exams, as well as presenting as one's own work an assignment prepared wholly or in part by another is in violation of academic honesty.

*The above is an excerpt of the university Academic Integrity policy. For the full policy, go to the online university catalog under Student Rights and Responsibilities. (<http://catalog.pittstate.edu/>)*

### Code of Student's Rights and Responsibilities

The PSU Code of Student's Rights and Responsibilities can be found at:

<https://studentlife.pittstate.edu/code-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities.html>

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality in all situations is required. Professional discussions may give you access to student and/or school information. It is important that this information be used with integrity in a professional manner and remain confidential. In other words, do not talk about the students, teachers, or administrators from your cooperating school(s), particularly in any public forum including, but not limited to, restaurants, social media, electronic communication, and the teachers' lounge. Candidates must adhere to Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines at all times.

### Student Teacher as a Substitute

Kansas state regulation (KSDE 91-19-6 e) and Pittsburg State University College of Education policy do not allow student teachers to fill any position except for those duties designated within the Student Teaching Certificate issued by the Office of Teacher Education in conjunction with KSDE. It is imperative that student teachers not be placed in a situation that is contrary to state regulations or puts the school and student teacher in a liable situation. The regulation states "certified student teachers shall be prohibited from serving as regular or substitute teachers in Kansas-accredited or Kansas-approved educational agencies."

Note: This does not mean that you cannot be left alone in your classroom and/or with your students for periods of time.

## Attendance

An important aspect of professional behavior is time management. You are expected to be at the school during your scheduled times. If you are ill or have an emergency, contact your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor to report your absence. Any extracurricular activities, including employment, should not interfere with your scheduled time for your field placement.

### **Excused Absences from Campus Seminars**

1. Weather: snow, ice, flood (if roads are closed)
  2. Death of immediate family member
  3. Illness – Self or others in immediate family – Doctor excuse required
  4. Court appearances/jury duty
  5. Participation in university activities if member of a team or group (track meets, concert tours, etc.)
  6. National conferences if approved by the cooperating teacher, university supervisor and Director of Teacher Education
- \*MAY NOT MISS CAMPUS SEMINARS for parent/teacher conferences, field trips, or other school functions

### **Procedures to Follow if Campus Seminar Must Be Missed**

1. Contact your university supervisor before 8:45 a.m. via their preferred method of contact.
2. If you do not reach the supervisor, provide contact information where you can be reached.
3. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a consequence determined by the Director of Teacher Education.

### **Excused Absences from School**

1. Death of immediate family member
2. Illness – Self or others in immediate family – Doctor excuse required
3. Court appearances/jury duty
4. Participation in university activities (same as above)
5. National conferences if approved by cooperating teacher, university supervisor and Director of Teacher Education

### **Procedure to Follow if School Must Be Missed**

1. Notify the cooperating teacher as early as possible.
2. Call the school office.
3. Notify your university supervisor via their preferred method of contact.

If more than 5 days of absence (excused or unexcused) are accumulated, a consequence determined by the Director of Teacher Education will result.

**Failure to comply with the above procedures will put your professional semester completion in jeopardy.**

## Professional Use of Technology

Appropriate use of technology is another important factor of professional behavior. Because you will be interacting with children who will be curious about you, you must make good, professional choices about the content of personal webpages and social media accounts. By choosing the field of education, you have placed yourself in the public eye. Therefore, awareness of your public persona is important. You should expect a degree of public scrutiny. With this in mind, some basic guidelines have been provided for you.

### *Social media and personal webpages*

- Be aware of your online image and the perception it may give to others (including potential employers).
- Check photos (even the backgrounds) to make sure that all content is appropriate. This includes pictures of yourself that may be posted by others.
- Remember you have a right to privacy; you should exercise this right. Use the privacy settings available to you.
- The students in your assigned classroom (or school) are NOT your friends; do not initiate or confirm any friend requests on Facebook, do not allow students to “follow” you on Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Do NOT post or blog about your cooperating teacher, students, and/or school.
- Do NOT use Facebook or other social media during school hours.

### *Email*

- Do NOT give students or parents your private email address. You should consider creating a separate email address for your professional interactions.
- Do NOT use inappropriate email tags (i.e. sexybaby@hotmail.com).

### *Phones*

- Students should NOT be provided your personal phone number.
- Do NOT use your phone during school visits (texting, internet browsing, using apps, etc.).
- Do NOT take any pictures with your phone while in a school or at a school-related event.



## Dress Code

Your manner of dress will need to reflect appropriateness for your chosen profession. You are being provided with guidelines that will assist your success in the classroom. Remember that there are body parts that should never show (both front and back). Also, undergarments should be worn *under* your clothing. After dressing in the morning, stand in front of your mirror and bend over, squat, raise your arms and bend forward from the waist. If those particular body parts remain covered during this movement, your clothing is likely appropriate. You also need to beware of clothing that clings inappropriately. If there is any doubt, DO NOT WEAR IT! It is better to be safe than sorry!

### ***Professional clothing generally includes:***

#### **Men**

Dress slacks  
Casual dress slacks (khaki or twill)  
Dress shirts, ties, collared polo shirts  
Sweaters, vests, jackets  
Dress and casual shoes

#### **Women**

Dress slacks  
Casual dress slacks (khaki or twill)  
Dresses, skirts  
Blouses  
Sweaters, vests, jackets  
Dress and casual shoes

### **Do Not Wear:**

- Any footwear that may interfere with performing your job, such as flip-flops or high heels
- Denim jeans (jeans of any color or style) unless the school has a special occasion or celebration that calls for wearing jeans
- Shorts of any type (exceptions for Physical Education majors)
- T-shirts (especially with logos)
- Clothing with potentially offensive phrases, political statements, religious statements, or inappropriate advertising
- Shirts (low-cut, short-waisted, or sleeveless) that reveal too much skin, underwear, or tattoos
- Athletic clothes (sweatshirts, hoodies, jogging suits)
- Sagging pants worn low or pants cut with a “low rise” that reveal underwear or too much skin
- Faded, unclean, or wrinkled clothing
- Leggings, tights, and yoga pants; these are not appropriate to be worn as pants

### **Grooming and Hygiene Basics:**

- Regular bathing/showering and deodorant should be used to eliminate body odor.
- Wash and brush your hair regularly.
- Proper dental hygiene should be practiced.
- Hair, beards, and mustaches should be neatly trimmed and clean (or removed if not in accordance with school policies).
- Cologne or perfume, if used at all, should be subtle.
- Body piercing, other than earrings, should be unnoticeable.
- Fingernails should be trimmed and clean.
- Beware of smoking or pet odors.

## **Professional Responsibilities**

Teacher candidates are expected to observe and adhere to the professional requirements for educators. Candidates need to be familiar with each of the following in order to uphold policies and legal requirements for educators. Full documents for each can be found in the Appendix of this handbook.

### **Kansas Educator Code of Conduct**

[http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/TLA/Licensure/KS\\_Ed\\_Code\\_Conduct\\_Brochure031014.pdf](http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/TLA/Licensure/KS_Ed_Code_Conduct_Brochure031014.pdf)

The professional educator shall work in the best interest of their students and honor their responsibilities to their students, school, district, community, state and profession as evidence by:

- Responsibilities to Student
- Responsibilities to District
- Responsibilities to Profession

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Student records and information are protected under this federal law. Teachers must be aware of the requirements in order to appropriately maintain required confidentiality.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/pps/pages/reportchildabuseandneglect.aspx>

All teachers, school administrators or other employees of an educational institution are mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect under the Kansas reporting law (K.S.A. 38-2223). Teacher candidates must be aware of their legal responsibility and the required steps to make such a report.

## **The Professional Semester Team**

Pittsburg State University envisions the professional semester experience as a “partnership” between the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, the district administrators, the university supervisors, and the Office of Teacher Education. The team effort provided, when all parties involved are directed toward a common goal, supports a successful experience for the student teacher. Team members and their roles include:

**Student Teacher:** A teacher candidate who has completed a sequenced course of study that prepares him or her for classroom teaching under the guidance of a cooperating teacher and university supervisor. The focus for the student teacher is the welfare of the students in his or her classroom. While the student teacher is in a learning experience, he or she plans lessons and interacts with students in a professional manner that meets the needs of all students.

**Cooperating Teacher:** An experienced, licensed/certified, highly qualified classroom teacher working in a state accredited school. The administrator appoints the cooperating teacher to guide the student teacher throughout the semester.

**University Supervisor:** University faculty member from the Office of Teacher Education who serves as instructor of the professional semester courses, facilitates the professional semester seminars, and supervises the student teacher’s experience in the classroom. The university supervisor acts as a mentor and provides guidance, feedback, and support.

**Academic Supervisor:** A program representative from the student teacher’s academic department. The academic supervisor provides content specific support to the student teacher throughout the program. During the professional semester, the academic supervisor maintains contact with the student teacher and makes a minimum of one site visit for observation purposes.

**Placement Coordinator:** The coordinator of all teacher candidate field placements. Contract agreements are secured between the university and K-12 school districts for placement of teacher candidates at all levels.

**Director of Teacher Education:** The director provides oversight for all teacher education program functions and candidates. The Office of Teacher Education houses teacher candidate files and records.

**Cooperating Administrators:** The administrator serves as the contact person between the school district and Pittsburg State University Office of Teacher Education. He or she is responsible for selecting experienced, highly qualified, master teachers to serve as cooperating teachers.

## **Preparing for the Professional Semester**

**All student teachers (fall and spring) are required to report to their student teaching sites on the first day of the semester for the assigned district, including opening meetings, professional development and work days.** Be prepared to report to your student teaching site before the PSU semester begins. You will follow the school district calendar, not PSU's calendar, for student contact days and holidays.

There will be designated dates throughout the semester in which required seminars will be conducted on campus. Campus seminars are conducted from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

In the period before you report to the classroom for the professional semester, there are things that you can do to prepare yourself for the experience ahead. First, set personal goals for yourself for the semester. When setting these goals, you should consider both your strengths and weaknesses. Then, determine what you would like to achieve during the experience. You will want to share these goals with both your cooperating teacher(s) and university supervisor. They are members of the professional semester team and will use these goals to help guide your development throughout the semester.

Secondly, you should contact and arrange a meeting with your cooperating teacher(s). For your first contact, call the cooperating teacher rather than sending an email. Prior to the meeting, prepare a list of questions for your cooperating teacher. When making this list, think about the things that are important to know prior to arriving in the classroom on the first day of school. Write each of your questions down so you remember to ask them during your meeting.

Sample questions for the first meeting with your cooperating teacher:

- May I have a tour of the school?
- What type of community is served by the school?
- Where may I eat my lunch?
- Where should I park each day?
- When am I expected to arrive and leave each day?
- May I have a school calendar and a calendar of activities?
- What extra duties will be required of me (e.g. lunchroom supervision, parking lot supervision)?
- What are your expectations of me?
- How and when would you like me to submit lesson plans to you?
- What are your general discipline and classroom policies?

Your cooperating teacher will also have questions of you. Be prepared to share about yourself, your goals, and your expectations for the semester. Use this opportunity to get to know your teacher and relieve anxiety about the unknown aspects of the experience.

You will be expected to dress professionally for this first meeting. Remember, you are making a first impression on your cooperating teacher which will set the tone for the whole semester. Be sure to approach the meeting with confidence and enthusiasm.

As the beginning of the semester approaches, you can reduce anxiety by taking time to prepare yourself mentally for the experience. Use your previously determined goals to set high, but attainable, expectations for your performance. These expectations should be set in terms of progress, or development, of your skills. Do not focus on reaching a particular level of performance but rather on continuous improvement. Be sure to revisit these expectations throughout the semester and adjust them if necessary.

Most importantly, keep a positive attitude. If you need extra support, do not be afraid to seek it.

### Outside Activities/Classes During Professional Semester

The professional semester is considered the beginning of your teaching career, and your energies should be focused on gaining as much practical experience in the classroom as possible. Therefore, outside employment or taking additional coursework is not advised during the professional semester. If employment or additional course work is a necessity, you must petition the Committee for Admission to and Retention in Teacher Education (CARTE) for approval. A maximum number of hours that will be approved for outside employment is 20 hours per week. Activities like coaching or sponsoring a club, while good experience, are considered extracurricular and should not in any way interfere with your student teaching experience. Student athletes are encouraged to complete the professional semester in the off-season of their particular sport. If a student athlete wishes to student teach during his/her regular season, s/he must petition CARTE for approval. If a conflict should become apparent or difficulties arise in any outside activities, you will be expected to reevaluate your obligations and make appropriate changes. The failure to make appropriate changes could affect your status in the professional semester.

## **Professional Semester Phases and Timelines**

The professional semester consists of three basic phases. **Phase one** consists of candidates becoming acquainted with the classroom and beginning to take over routines and procedures such as attendance and small group work. **Phase two** involves assuming responsibility of managing the classroom under the guidance of the cooperating teacher. In **phase three** candidates gradually return the responsibility of the classroom to the cooperating teacher. The specific timeline for assuming full responsibility in the classroom may vary, as the professional semester experience is unique to each candidate. Involvement in classroom activities will depend upon the individual's readiness to perform the tasks assigned. The following timelines are designed to serve as a guide for the sequence and pace of the professional semester. It is not expected that an exact adherence to these guidelines will take place (for example, a student who completed an internship in the previous semester should move more quickly on the timeline). **The ultimate goal is to have the student teacher assume all duties and responsibilities for 3 to 5 weeks during the professional semester.** *There should be no instance in which the candidate immediately assumes total responsibility for the class.*

For **split placements (PE, Art, Music)**, the timeline will be shortened and accelerated. It will be repeated in the second placement. A special consideration for split placements is the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) assignment. Only one TWS is required so candidates can choose to complete the TWS in either the elementary or secondary placement. **The ultimate goal is to have the student teacher assume all duties and responsibilities for 3 weeks at each placement during the professional semester.** *There should be no instance in which the candidate immediately assumes total responsibility for the class.*

Major assignments for the professional semester are listed within the timeline at an approximate time frame. Other activities will be assigned and actual due dates for all assignments will be set by the seminar instructor.

### Suggested Timeline for Full Semester Placements

CT= Cooperating Teacher    US= University Supervisor    TWS= Teacher Work Sample

Phase	Role of the Student Teacher	Weeks	Suggested Student Teacher Activities
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become oriented to the school and classroom</li> <li>Become acquainted with the school's policies, curriculum, culture and personnel</li> <li>Become acquainted with the classroom's instructional equipment, procedures, rules, management plans, and students</li> <li>Become actively involved in assisting the cooperating teacher</li> <li>Begin to work with individuals and small groups or teach specific lessons</li> <li>Meet daily/weekly with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the CT</li> <li>Write a letter of introduction to parents</li> <li>Introduce yourself to school personnel</li> <li>Review curriculum materials</li> <li>Take over at least one routine</li> </ul>
		2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Complete Orientation Assignment</b></li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li>Begin working with individual students</li> <li>Teach 1-2 lessons each day</li> <li><b>Complete contextual factors for TWS assignment</b></li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase involvement in teaching</li> <li>Plan instruction, gather necessary materials, and carry out instruction</li> <li>Write lesson plans and share those with the cooperating teacher and university supervisor</li> <li>Begin to take over beginning with a subject area or class section, adding more subjects and responsibilities gradually until full responsibility has been reached</li> <li>Become fully responsible for the classroom including lesson planning, implementation, and management of the curriculum and students</li> <li>Meet with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach 3-4 lessons each day</li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li><b>Plan/complete Teacher Observations</b></li> </ul>
		5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue adding lessons to teach</li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li><b>Identify topic, objectives and assessments for TWS with CT and US</b></li> </ul>
		7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue adding lessons to teach</li> <li>Attend and participate in parent teacher conferences (as scheduled by school district)</li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li><b>Create lesson plans and instructional procedure for TWS</b></li> </ul>
		9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take over the classroom completely including planning and implementation of lessons</li> <li><b>Teach lesson plans from TWS</b></li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradually begin to phase out of full responsibility by returning the classroom to the cooperating teacher</li> <li>Spend time observing other classrooms</li> <li>Meet as needed with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	13 – 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Analyze TWS learning results</b></li> <li><b>Complete Professional Portfolio</b></li> <li>Begin to return classroom responsibilities to the CT</li> </ul>
		Remaining time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Reflect on TWS</b></li> <li><b>Complete TWS write-up</b></li> <li>Observe in other classrooms/buildings (within the district)</li> </ul>

### Suggested Timeline for Split Placements

CT= Cooperating Teacher    US= University Supervisor    TWS= Teacher Work Sample

Phase	Role of the Student Teacher	Weeks	Suggested Student Teacher Activities
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become oriented to the school and classroom</li> <li>Become acquainted with the school's policies, curriculum, culture and personnel</li> <li>Become acquainted with the classroom's instructional equipment, procedures, rules, management plans, and students</li> <li>Become actively involved in assisting the cooperating teacher</li> <li>Begin to work with individuals and small groups or teach specific lessons</li> <li>Meet daily/weekly with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the CT</li> <li>Introduce yourself to school personnel</li> <li>Review curriculum materials</li> <li>Take over at least one routine</li> <li><b>Complete Orientation Assignment (first placement only)</b></li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li>Begin working with individual students</li> <li><b>Complete contextual factors for TWS assignment (You must choose the placement in which you will complete the TWS.)</b></li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase involvement in teaching</li> <li>Plan instruction, gather necessary materials and carry out instruction</li> <li>Write lesson plans and share those with the cooperating teacher and university supervisor</li> <li>Begin to take over beginning with a subject area or class section, adding more subjects and responsibilities gradually until full responsibility has been reached</li> <li>Become fully responsible for the classroom including lesson planning, implementation, and management of the curriculum and students</li> <li>Meet with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach at least 1/2 day</li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li><b>Plan/complete Teacher Observations</b></li> <li>Continue adding lessons to teach</li> <li><b>Identify topic, objectives and assessments for TWS with CT and US</b></li> </ul>
		5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend and participate in parent teacher conferences (as scheduled by school district)</li> <li>Observe, plan, and evaluate as directed by CT</li> <li><b>Create lesson plans and instructional procedure for TWS</b></li> <li>Take over the classroom completely including planning and implementation of lessons</li> <li><b>Teach lesson plans from TWS</b></li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradually begin to phase out of full responsibility by returning the classroom to the cooperating teacher</li> <li>Spend time observing other classrooms</li> <li>Meet as needed with the cooperating teacher to ask questions, discuss concerns, seek clarifications, celebrate successes, and reflect</li> </ul>	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Analyze TWS learning results</b></li> <li><b>Complete Professional Portfolio</b></li> <li>Begin to return classroom responsibilities to the CT</li> <li><b>Reflect on TWS</b></li> <li><b>Complete TWS write-up</b></li> </ul>



## **Coursework**

The professional semester provides a hands-on application of knowledge and skills learned during your preparation program. It offers experiences related to the realities of teaching and effective management of a classroom. During the semester, you will be enrolled in 15-17 hours of coursework. **The Office of Teacher Education will enroll you in these courses when you have been conditionally admitted to professional semester.**

The following list describes topics that are explored in the professional semester courses and seminars:

- Effective teaching principles including curriculum design, educational trends and issues, lesson planning, instructional techniques, and professionalism
- The educational foundations of the American school including national educational goals, social and ethnic changes in education, school law, school policies and procedures, and the administrative organization of the school system
- The purposes, students, and programs of the elementary or middle and secondary school with emphasis on the theories of learning associated with elementary or secondary education including classroom management, special programs, adolescent characteristics, communication, cultural influences on learning, and effective relationships with students, staff and parents
- The theories and practice of evaluation including the uses of educational tests, assessment system components, test development, parent/student communication and techniques of using evaluative information, as well as teacher self-assessment

## Major Assignments

Each course correlating to the professional semester has its own objectives and requirements; however, the coursework is designed to be integrated with the classroom teaching experience. A number of class requirements may apply to several different course objectives. It should also be noted that changes and/or adjustments may be made at the discretion of the instructor to meet class needs or individual school district schedules. Other activities will be assigned and actual due dates for all assignments will be set by the seminar instructor.

Major assignments include, but are not limited to:

- **Orientation Assignment:** You will complete an orientation assignment at the beginning of the semester. Using the school's policy manual, school report card, and working with your cooperating teacher, service personnel, and administration, the assignment will help you become familiar with: school policies, teacher policies, school curricula, school culture, classroom layout, classroom procedures, teacher routines, classroom rules, and expectations.
- **Lesson Plans:** You are expected to provide your supervisor with a copy of a typed lesson plan for the lesson you are teaching for each visit. **The format will be determined by your supervisor** and will be addressed during the professional semester seminars. Your supervisor may also require copies of class handouts, presentations, or other materials used in your lesson.
- **Teacher Observations:** You will observe teachers in your assigned building, but outside of your assigned classroom, and reflect on their practice using an observation instrument. The teachers should represent a variety of disciplines. These observations will prepare you to reflect on your own teaching by using the same tool to observe a recorded lesson of yourself.
- **Teacher Work Sample (TWS):** The TWS is a state mandated requirement. It is an integrated teaching unit written by you based upon Kansas College and Career Ready Standards and input from the cooperating teacher. The TWS must be grade and age appropriate and lessons from the TWS must be taught in the classroom. The score for this assignment is reported to the Kansas State Department of Education as a part of the license application process.

## **Performance Evaluations**

Student teacher performance is evaluated through observations of experiences in the field, discussion in the professional semester seminars, course assignments, and student teacher self-assessment. Evaluations are completed by the university supervisor and cooperating teacher(s). These performance evaluations are completed using the FEI. The FEI has indicators under the four following categories. A copy of the FEI in its entirety is included in the appendix.

### **THE LEARNER AND LEARNING**

Professional educators must understand that learning and development patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process, and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.

### **CONTENT**

Professional educators must have a deep and flexible understanding of the field and be able to draw upon the central concepts and structures of their discipline as they work with learners. They integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and communication) to help learners apply content to propose solutions, forge new understandings, solve problems, and imagine possibilities. Professional educators connect information to local, state, national, and global issues.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE**

Professional educators understand and integrate assessment, planning, and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways for effective practice. They understand how to design, implement, interpret, and communicate results from a range of assessments.

### **PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Professional educators create and support safe, productive learning environments. They must engage in meaningful and intensive professional learning and self-renewal by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection, and collaboration. Professional educators contribute to accomplishing their school's mission and goals and demonstrate leadership by modeling ethical behavior, contributing to positive changes in practice, and advancing their profession.

## Observation and Evaluation Timeline

University supervisors make one introductory visit and complete three formal evaluations per semester. If necessary, more visits may be scheduled. Secondary and PK-12 student teachers are also observed by an academic supervisor from his or her major department at least one time during the semester. Cooperating teachers make both informal and formal observations in the classroom throughout the semester. Below is a chart that shows the estimated timeline for university supervisor visits.

Visit*	Time Frame	Purpose
1	Weeks 1-2	Introductions & Overview Reviewing procedures Setting professional goals for growth
2	Weeks 4-6	<u>First Formal Written Observation</u> Initial evaluation submitted online Outlining interventions if necessary
3	Weeks 8-10	<u>Second Formal Written Observation</u> Mid evaluation submitted online
4	Weeks 12-16	<u>Final Formal Written Observation</u> Final evaluation submitted to University

\*Please note one visit may be made using video technology.

Following each observation visit, a three-way conference is held between the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor where the evaluations of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor are discussed. Other conferences may be held as needed.

## **Suggestions for Student Teaching Success**

- When preparing to assume responsibility for the classroom, it is vital for you to demonstrate to the cooperating teacher your readiness for this role. Your preparedness will be exemplified through your ability to be reliable, dependable, meet deadlines, prepare thoughtful lesson plans, accept constructive feedback, etc. If the cooperating teacher seems reluctant to relinquish control of the classroom or teaching duties to you, use this opportunity to discuss his or her concerns and what actions you can take to relieve these concerns.
- **Effective communication is essential.** To have a successful student teaching experience, you must be able to clearly and effectively communicate with others. This includes oral and written communication exhibiting correct spelling and grammar as well as appropriate language and tone. It is important for you to be proactive in all communication with all parties involved in the student teaching semester.
- It is vital to prepare well-developed and carefully planned lessons. Each lesson should be submitted to the cooperating teacher for review prior to the presentation of the lesson. You should expect to make revisions to each lesson as you continue to develop this ability.
- A growth mindset will lead to success in the classroom. Constructive criticism should be expected from the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. This feedback is meant to help you grow and develop your abilities as a teacher and therefore should never be viewed as a personal attack. When receiving feedback, *listen* and be sure to remove any emotion from your response. Your cooperating teacher and university supervisor both have a vested interest in your success.
- Practice self-reflection and evaluation. It is vital to learn from your mistakes and make appropriate adjustments to your teaching.
- Always familiarize yourself with the content you are teaching prior to the lesson. It is important that your students see your confidence in the subject matter and understand your commitment to learning.
- Each day of your student teaching semester will present new circumstances in the classroom and/or school. It is important to use professional judgment on how to handle these various circumstances. Occasionally, a student teacher will encounter a serious situation such as suspected child abuse, student injury, threats, etc. If you encounter one of these serious situations, you must immediately notify the appropriate school officials. You should also notify your university supervisor as soon as possible. It is important to be familiar with school policies, state and federal regulations and laws.

## **Dealing with Issues Involving Student Teachers**

The professional semester is a very demanding and stressful experience. Student teachers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the requirements and expectations of their degree program and professional field. The majority of student teachers quickly adapt to be able to function successfully, both professionally and personally.

Each student teacher is unique in the amount of supervision and assistance needed from the cooperating teacher and university supervisor. Most issues which arise between the cooperating teacher and the candidate are resolved through effective communication on a daily basis. Few student teachers encounter difficulties to a degree that requires intervention.

Intervention can occur on several levels. Teacher candidates should not engage in unprofessional conduct or unlawful behaviors. Candidates unable to meet the expectations, as judged by the university and/or cooperating school, may receive a failing grade and/or face possible removal from the placement. The severity of the concern or issue dictates at which level the intervention begins. Interventions are listed below:

**Level 1:** If the cooperating teacher or student teacher is unable to satisfactorily discuss the concern or issue with the other party, he or she is to contact the university supervisor. Working as a team, the university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and student teacher are usually able to correct the problem.

**Level 2:** The university supervisor notifies and discusses the concern or issue with the Director of Teacher Education. A plan of action is developed and an improvement plan may be written specifying action necessary to address the concern or issue. The university supervisor shares ideas with the cooperating teacher and the student teacher to assist in executing the plan. If necessary, the director meets with the student teacher and outlines possible outcomes. The director also gathers information from and communicates with the cooperating teacher and appropriate administrators.

**Level 3:** If at any time a student teacher's conduct causes concern about their presence being detrimental to students, the Office of Teacher Education will consider the following options:

- 1) Leave the student teacher in the present situation; creating an improvement plan that outlines areas that must show marked improvement immediately.
- 2) Place the student teacher at another site; if the new cooperating teacher and administrator agree after being advised of the issue at the original placement.
- 3) Bring the student teacher back to campus for remediation and placement in a later semester.
- 4) Remove the student teacher from the professional semester and the teacher education program.
- 5) Deny licensure application.

Students have the right to appeal any decision to CARTE. After all other options have been exhausted, the final opportunity for appeal is to meet with the Dean of the College of Education.

*If at any time an administrator in a cooperating school advises the Director of Teacher Education that a student teacher must be removed from a placement, **the candidate will be removed immediately. PSU is not obligated to reassign the student teacher to a new placement.***

## **Responsibilities of the Professional Semester Team**

### **The Student Teacher**

The student teacher moves from the role of a student in the university classroom to the facilitator of learning in the school classroom. The professional semester is a vital part of the teacher preparation program. Each student teacher is expected to achieve competence in all skill areas described by the Professional Knowledge Base and FEI.

The following includes suggestions for achieving success during the professional semester:

- Become familiar with rules and regulations established by the school.
- Check with the cooperating teacher about appropriate dress.
- Be prompt arriving at school and do not leave school until the approved time for teachers to leave the building.
- If you must miss school because of an emergency or illness, contact your cooperating teacher AND your university supervisor prior to the beginning of the school day.
- Attend professional development workshops, teacher meetings, committee meetings, school functions and student activities.
- Develop an open and honest working relationship with the cooperating teacher.
- Develop an open and honest relationship with the students ensuring they understand you are a teacher, not their buddy.
- Get to know the school staff. Introduce yourself to the secretary(s), custodian(s), school nurse, school counselor, special services teachers, bus drivers, food service personnel, etc. Learn about the important role every person plays in providing quality educational services.
- Review the curriculum guide(s) for your classroom(s). This will help you to plan lessons that fit within the established curriculum.
- Accept constructive feedback from the cooperating teacher and evaluate your own performance regularly.
- Manage your time effectively. Be sure to include some time in your schedule for fun and exercise.

## Frequent Questions and Answers of Student Teachers

- ? What if the principal of the school requests that I not wear certain jewelry or clothing?
  - Do not wear it! You are required to follow the rules and regulations of the school district including dress codes.
- ? What time should I go to school and how long should I remain?
  - Follow the school schedule. Your hours should be consistent with those of your cooperating teacher.
- ? If my cooperating teacher does not ask me to be involved with classroom activities, what should I do?
  - Take initiative. Volunteer to help with routine activities and share your desire to be involved in the classroom with the cooperating teacher.
- ? What should I focus on during my first few weeks in the classroom?
  - Observe how the teacher manages the classroom, presents lessons, responds to student questions, organizes materials, and relates to students and other staff members. This is a good time to ask “Why?” questions.
- ? Do I need to make daily lesson plans even if the cooperating teacher does not request a copy?
  - Yes. Learning to teach is a process. Planning lessons as you begin to learn the art and science of teaching will help you to think through the details you might otherwise overlook. **The university supervisor will request your lesson plan when observing you in the classroom.** Lesson plans provide structure that leads to successful teaching.
- ? What should I do if I must be absent from school?
  - Contact your cooperating teacher and university supervisor as soon as possible and share the reason for your absence. You should refer to the attendance policy on page 5 for specific information.
- ? If I am injured while at school, does the school district insurance cover me?
  - No. You need to secure your own personal insurance. The school district is not liable for any injuries to you as you are not an employee of the district. There are several options for liability insurance. You may discuss this concern with your university supervisor.
- ? If I have a problem, to whom should I talk?
  - First, speak with your cooperating teacher; if this does not solve the problem, inform the university supervisor (asking for help is not a sign of weakness or bad teaching!). Your supervisor can help you develop an action plan to address the concern or issue. If you do not feel that these steps have been successful, contact the Director of Teacher Education.



? When do I apply for teacher licensure?

- During the final professional semester seminar, you will be guided through the process for applying for your license. **You are not eligible for your license until your degree has been posted** and you have met all other requirements.

? If I need special accommodations, from whom should I seek assistance?

- You should contact the Center for Student Accommodations located in 218 Russ Hall. They can be contacted by phone at 620-235-4309.

## The Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teacher is the person who works the most closely with the student teacher. Cooperating teachers are selected by building principals and district level administrators to serve as mentors. In this most important role, it is the responsibility of the cooperating teacher to acquaint the student teacher to the school setting and provide an environment that facilitates an opportunity for success in the professional semester and beyond.

The cooperating teacher is legally responsible for all that takes place in his or her classroom. While the student teacher is eager to learn and is prepared to perform the duties of a beginning teacher, ultimately, it is the role of the cooperating teacher to monitor the lesson planning, classroom management implementation, teaching technique, and interpersonal interaction of the student teacher.

Upon the arrival of the student teacher, the following steps are suggested to the cooperating teacher for orientation to the school environment:

- ▶ Introduce him or her to the class as a teacher.
- ▶ Take the student teacher on a tour of the building and introduce him or her to personnel.
- ▶ Provide school handbooks and other documents containing school policies.
- ▶ Share your classroom routines and instructional procedures.
- ▶ Show him or her where to find supplies and equipment.
- ▶ Encourage the student teacher to become familiar with services provided in the school, such as library services, school nurse services, counseling services, and special services programs.
- ▶ Help the student teacher build relationships with the students in the classroom. Advise him or her of any specific medical or behavioral problems that might arise with students.
- ▶ Invite the student teacher to co-teach with you after he or she has become familiar with the procedures and strategies you implement in your lessons.
- ▶ Set aside time to discuss steps you take when preparing for class. For example, share how you plan lessons, select materials, present the lesson, evaluate the level of success, etc.

Other tips:

- ▶ Follow the timeline and guidelines provided by the university supervisor for the student teacher to assume teaching duties and for appropriate lesson critiquing strategies.
- ▶ Evaluate the student teacher's performance at three points throughout the semester.

## Frequent Questions and Answers of Cooperating Teachers

- ? How long should the student observe before participating in class?
- Involve your student teacher in the classroom immediately by assigning responsibilities such as taking attendance, working with individuals or small groups, assisting with lab projects, etc.
- ? How soon should the student teacher begin full time teaching responsibilities?
- This varies according to the student teacher and the type of classroom. The university supervisor will discuss this during the “HOWDY” visit. Allow the student teacher to gradually take over classes until he or she is responsible for all classes. **The ultimate goal is to have the student teacher assume all duties and responsibilities for 3 to 5 weeks during the professional semester.** *There should be no instance in which the candidate immediately assumes total responsibility for the class.* During the final two weeks of the semester, allow time for observing and visiting other classrooms in the district.
  - For split placements, the timeline will be shortened and accelerated. **The ultimate goal is to have the student teacher assume all duties and responsibilities for 3 weeks at each placement during the professional semester.** *There should be no instance in which the candidate immediately assumes total responsibility for the class.*
- ? Should the student teacher prepare daily lesson plans?
- The student teacher should develop a lesson plan for each lesson taught consistent with the school’s policy. The cooperating teacher should review the plan and provide constructive feedback.
- ? Should the student teacher make long term lesson plans?
- When preparing for taking over full teaching responsibility, long-term plans should be developed for all lessons. Again, guidance from the cooperating teacher is helpful. Monitor yourself so that you are not doing more of the work than the student teacher. Your support and encouragement are vital to the success of the lessons.
- ? Is it okay for the student teacher to use some of the cooperating teacher’s lesson plans and unit materials?
- During the early stages of teaching, this will provide the student teacher with ideas and structure for making his or her own lesson plans. However, the candidate must create his/her own Teacher Work Sample unit and lessons with your guidance.
- ? If the student teacher makes a mistake in teaching the lesson, should I correct him or her during the lesson in front of the class?
- Avoid criticism of the student teacher in public whether with students or faculty and staff. Conference with the student teacher in private when the need arises. Make notes of mistakes, point them out, and discuss strategies for making improvements. Providing constructive feedback in a non-threatening manner provides the best learning experience.

- ? Should I leave the room while the student teacher is teaching?
- At the beginning of the semester, avoid leaving for any length of time. When the student teacher becomes familiar with your classroom management methods and both you and the student teacher feel comfortable, it is desirable for you to leave the student teacher in control. When the student teacher assumes full responsibility of the class, you will want to provide feedback after observing him or her teaching. However, it is also necessary for most student teachers to have the freedom to teach without another adult in the room. In these times, it is important for the student teacher to know where you are in case of an emergency.
- ? How often should I have conferences with the student teacher?
- Set aside a time **at least once each week** where you can discuss performance and plan for future lessons. The ability to communicate openly and honestly leads to success for everyone in the classroom. This also helps ensure there are no surprises on the final evaluation.
- ? If the teacher across the hall is absent, should I volunteer my student teacher to serve as a substitute since I am close enough to see if problems arise?
- No! The student teacher cannot legally assume the role of substitute teacher. It is in direct violation of their student teaching certificate.
- ? If I need to contact someone at the university, other than the university supervisor, whom do I call?
- Contact the Director of Teacher Education.  
Phone: (620) 235-4489, e-mail: [teachered@pittstate.edu](mailto:teachered@pittstate.edu)

### The University Supervisor

The university supervisor is responsible for guiding the student teacher throughout the semester by monitoring progress and working with the cooperating teacher. While each supervisor's specific style of supervision is unique, they all share common goals. During the "HOWDY" visit, the university supervisor will explain his or her role with the team. During the experience, you can expect, at a minimum, several things from the supervisor. He or she will:

- Keep informed of the student teacher's work through conferences and observations as scheduled with the student teacher.
- Provide support and encouragement to the student teacher and cooperating teacher throughout the semester.
- Complete three formal evaluations of the student teacher's performance.
- Be available for questions or discussion at the request of the student teacher or cooperating teacher.
- Evaluate the student teacher's performance at three points throughout the semester and submit a final evaluation for inclusion in the student teacher's permanent record.

## **Licensing**

Licensure to teach in the state of Kansas requires graduation from a state approved program, successful completion of a *Praxis* Subject Assessment. Additional licensure requirements are mandated by the Kansas State Department of Education. Information specific to licensure will be discussed in seminars during the professional semester. Contact the PSU Licensure Officer for additional licensure information.

Upon successful completion of the PSU teacher education program and the successful completion of all required tests, you will be eligible to apply for licensure in Kansas as well as Missouri and Oklahoma. Specific requirements for licensure or certification in other states may be secured by going to that state's Department of Education website.

Application for licensure cannot be made until all requirements for graduation have been completed. Before license applications can be submitted to the Kansas State Department of Education for processing, degrees must be posted by the PSU Registrar's Office and the content assessment must be successfully passed and reported to PSU.

### **Associated Licensure Fees**

- Licensure Exams
  - Content exams –\$130 - \$220 (A content exam is required for each endorsement sought for a teaching license.)
- License application fee - \$60 - \$70
- KSDE background check fee - \$57
- If licensure is sought in any state other than Kansas, there will be additional application and background check fees for each state.

### **Praxis Subject Assessments Information**

As noted, an academic content exam for each area in which licensure is sought is required to be eligible for a license in the state of Kansas. These exams are a part of the *Praxis* Subject Assessments administered through Educational Testing Service (ETS). To find the appropriate exams for your content area for the state of Kansas, go to: <https://www.ets.org/praxis/ks/requirements>

It should be noted that the *Praxis* exams are offered only in a computer delivered format. Test-takers may take the exams at any Prometric Testing Center across the nation. It is important to list PSU as a designated score recipient so your scores will be officially reported to the Office of Teacher Education.

Please note that testing dates for these exams are determined by Educational Testing Service and are in no way controlled by PSU.

Further information about the exams, including registration and preparation materials, can be found at the *Praxis* website: [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis).

# APPENDIX



**PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE**

**THE LEARNER AND LEARNING**

**Professional educators must understand that learning and development patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.**

1. The candidate knows how learning occurs (how learners construct knowledge, acquire skills and develop disciplined thinking processes) and how to use instructional strategies that promote individual growth.
2. The candidate understands that cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical development influences learning.
3. The candidate understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and designs experiences that incorporate individuals' strengths to promote growth.
4. The candidate understands students with exceptional needs and knows how to use strategies and resources to meet these needs.
5. The candidate knows how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities and how to incorporate languages, experiences, cultures and community resources into practice.
6. The candidate understands how to manage the learning environment by organizing, allocating and coordinating the resources of time and space.
7. The candidate knows how to design experiences using strategies that enhance learner motivation and engagement.
8. The candidate understands the processes needed to foster a respectful learning community.

**CONTENT**

**Professional educators must have a deep and flexible understanding of the field and be able to draw upon the central concepts and structures of their discipline as they work with learners. They integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and communication) to help learners apply content to propose solutions, forge new understandings, solve problems and imagine possibilities. Professional educators connect information to local, state, national and global issues.**

9. The candidate understands that learners should question, analyze and understand concepts from diverse perspectives.
10. The candidate has a deep knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the discipline(s).
11. The candidate knows how to use supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all.
12. The candidate understands how disciplinary knowledge can be applied as a lens to address local and global issues.
13. The candidate realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and best practices in the field.
14. The candidate knows major concepts, assumptions and debates that are central to the discipline.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE**

**Professional educators understand and integrate assessment, planning and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways for effective practice. They understand how to design, implement, interpret and communicate results from a range of assessments.**

15. The candidate knows how to engage learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skills as part of the assessment process.
16. The candidate understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.
17. The candidate knows how to engage learners actively in the assessment process and to develop each learner's capacity to reflect on and communicate about their individual progress.
18. The candidate understands the theories and processes of curriculum design (appropriate sequencing, developmentally appropriate instruction, builds on learners' prior knowledge and experiences).
19. The candidate understands the process for aligning instruction and assessment with learning targets.
20. The candidate understands how theory, research and best practices impact ongoing planning and instructional practice.
21. The candidate knows how to engage learners in using technology tools and a range of skills to access, interpret, evaluate and apply information.
22. The candidate knows how to incorporate a variety of strategies that stimulate the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization and recall).
23. The candidate knows how to apply a variety of developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning targets.
24. The candidate knows how to analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction and to provide meaningful feedback.

## **PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**Professional educators create and support safe, productive learning environments. They must engage in meaningful and intensive professional learning and self-renewal by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection and collaboration. Professional educators contribute to accomplishing their school's mission and goals and demonstrate leadership by modeling ethical behavior, contributing to positive changes in practice and advancing their profession.**

25. The candidate knows how to use information and technology ethically, legally and safely.
26. The candidate understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments.
27. The candidate understands laws related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., IDEA, FERPA, mandated reporting, etc.).
28. The candidate understands schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners.
29. The candidate knows how to contribute to a common culture that supports high expectations for student learning.
30. The candidate understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice and relevant law and policy.
31. The candidate knows how to communicate effectively with all members of the learning community.

# FIELD EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

## Rating Scale

N/A - No opportunity provided for performance, not witnessed

1 - Novice - Candidate shows awareness and beginning skills

2 - Developing - Candidate skills and awareness levels are developing

3 - Effective - Candidate consistently demonstrates competence with minimal assistance or prompting

4 - Advanced - Candidate consistently demonstrates a high degree of competence functioning independently

## A. The Learner and Learning:

#	Indicator
1	Plans and delivers developmentally appropriate instruction
2	Consults a variety of sources (e.g., student records, counselors, resource specialists, parent conferences, test results, and other diagnostic tools) to determine the learning needs and capabilities of individual students
3	Differentiates instruction appropriately for specific needs of learners
4	Persists in helping all students achieve success
5	Designs instruction to build on learners' prior knowledge and experiences
6	Displays consistency in dealing with behavior in the least disruptive manner, utilizing appropriate positive and negative consequences
7	*Demonstrates positive rapport with a diverse student population
8	Understands and respects a diverse student/parent population and helps all students learn respect for the traditions and cultures of others
9	<i>Uses appropriate nonverbal communication</i>
10	Provides a learning environment which includes high time-on-task and active engagement
11	Promotes a classroom environment that is caring and supportive to all students
12	Organizes and maintains the physical environment of the classroom in a pleasant and orderly manner conducive to student learning and safety
13	Monitors students' behaviors and activities in the classroom at all times
14	Handles multiple tasks, intrusions and distractions while maintaining the flow of the lesson
15	Teaches and reinforces classroom expectations, rules, routines and procedures fairly

## B. Content:

#	Indicator
16	Demonstrates content area knowledge
17	Effectively uses multiple representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the discipline, guides learners through learning progressions and promotes each learner's achievements of content standards
18	Engages students in learning experiences in the discipline(s) that encourage learners to understand, question and analyze ideas from diverse perspectives using standards of evidence
19	Creates opportunities for students to learn and practice content language
20	Provides a real world context for lesson content
21	Demonstrates pedagogical knowledge relevant to the discipline

## C. Instructional Practice:

#	Indicator
22	Creates lessons that encourage students to think creatively and critically and to solve problems

## FIELD EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

23	Develops clear lesson plans which include objectives, materials, activities, adaptations/modifications and evaluation techniques based on the curriculum
24	Develops clear long-term instruction plans (e.g. units and/or modules) which include objectives, materials, activities, adaptations/modifications and evaluation techniques based on the curriculum
25	Selects materials and activities consistent with the objectives of the lesson and students' diverse abilities resulting in appropriate adaptations and modifications
26	Applies the appropriate scope and sequence of objectives for teaching the curriculum (national, state and/or local standards)
27	Uses available educational technologies for effective instruction
28	Provides opportunities for all students to successfully apply or practice knowledge and skills learned
29	Designs assessments that align with learning objectives
30	Effectively uses multiple and appropriate types of assessment data to identify each student's learning needs and to develop differentiated learning experiences
31	Makes changes in instruction based on feedback from multiple classroom assessment sources
32	Gives constructive and frequent feedback to students on their learning
33	Balances the use of formative and summative assessment as appropriate to support, verify and document learning
34	Accomplishes smooth and orderly transitions between parts of the lesson
35	Communicates clearly to all students the objective and purpose of each lesson
36	<b><i>*Conducts class with poise, confidence and enthusiasm</i></b>
37	Maximizes instructional learning time by working with students individually as well as in small or whole groups
38	Gives clear directions
39	Provides focus on important points and checks for understanding
40	Uses a variety of effective and appropriate instructional strategies and resources
41	Encourages participation from all students through effective questioning strategies (e.g., equal distribution, level variation, adequate wait time, probing and clue giving, and appropriate correctives and feedback)
42	Presents lessons in a clear, logical and sequential manner

### D. Professional Responsibility:

#	Indicator
43	Models and teaches safe, legal and ethical use of information and technology
44	<b><i>*Demonstrates maturity and accepts constructive criticism in a positive manner</i></b>
45	Knows and follows school policies and shares in the general responsibilities and duties associated with teaching (e.g., attendance, discipline, hall duty)
46	<b><i>Listens carefully to all students then responds in a professional manner</i></b>
47	Keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field
48	<b><i>*Practices self-evaluation and reflection</i></b>
49	Maintains confidentiality at all levels
50	Implements the recommendations from evaluations of professional performance

## FIELD EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

<b>51</b>	*Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills
<b>52</b>	*Maintains a consistently positive and professional demeanor
<b>53</b>	Communicates effectively, appropriately and professionally in all forms and to all audiences

## Kansas Educator Code of Conduct



*The professional educator shall work in the best interest of their students and honor their responsibilities to their students, school, district, community, state and profession as evidenced by:*

- Responsibilities to Student
- Responsibilities to District
- Responsibilities to Profession

### For more information:



Teacher Licensure and Accreditation  
Kansas State Department of Education  
Landon State Office Building  
900 SW Jackson Suite 106  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

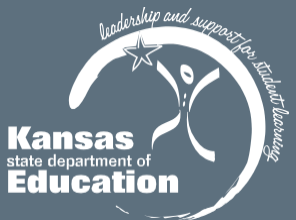
(785) 291-3678

[www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 SW Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201



## Kansas Educator Code of Conduct





# Responsibilities to Student:

- Refrain from disclosing confidential or damaging information that affects the student
- Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health or safety
- Maintain professional relationships with students both inside and outside the classroom
- Restrain from soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical, sexual or romantic relationship with students

## Appropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service
- Creating, supporting and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
- Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact and fairness
- Fulfilling all mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse
- Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy and encouragement for students
- Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
- Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children

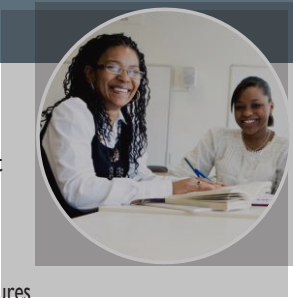
## Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
- Committing any act of child abuse
- Committing any act of cruelty
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act



# Responsibilities to District:

- Adhere to conditions of contractual obligations with professional practice
- Fulfill reporting requirements honestly and accurately
- Appropriately use funds, personnel, property and equipment committed to his or her charge
- Refrain from falsifying any documents related to the employment process
- Conduct school district business through established procedures



## Appropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

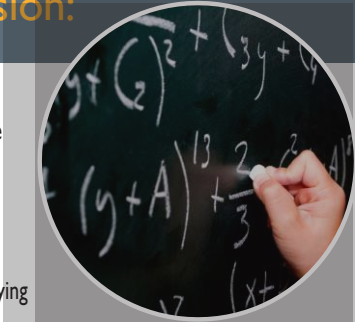
- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property
- Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization

## Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
- Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leave
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
- Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so

# Responsibilities to Profession:

- Demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards
- Fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract
- Maintain appropriate licensure for professional practice and employment
- Provide accurate information to state department
- Abide by all federal, state and local laws and employing school board policies



## Appropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
- Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources
- Follow mandatory reporting requirements

## Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Harassment of colleagues
- Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
- Accepting gifts or favors or offering gratuities that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
- Being under the influence of, possessing, using or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting employment history, professional qualification, criminal history, licensure/re-licensure
- A plea of guilty, nolo contendere or having been otherwise found guilty of: any crime punishable as a felony; any crime involving a minor; any crime involving a theft; any crime involving drug related conduct; any crime defined in any section of article 36 of chapter 21 of the Kansas statutes annotated; or any attempt as defined by K.S.A. 21-3301 and amendments thereto, to commit any crime specified in this subsection

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520





# Reporting Neglect

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Compiled by  
The Kansas Department for Children and Families

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# PREFACE

The first step in helping abused children is learning to recognize the symptoms of child abuse. This booklet is intended to help both concerned citizens and individuals who are required by law to know how and when to report child abuse and neglect. Information in this booklet includes:

- Tips for mandated reporters
- Definitions of types of abuse
- Behavioral and physical indicators
- Common myths and facts of abuse
- Kansas reporting laws
- When to make a report
- What information is needed to make a report
- Where to make a report
- Consequences of failure to report
- How child protection systems play an important role in promoting safe families
- How to prevent child abuse and neglect

*“Every dollar spent on prevention saves \$7 on intervention services”*

**THE HIGH/SCOPE PERRY  
PRESCHOOL STUDY**

Mandated reporters and the general public need to be aware of signs that may indicate child abuse. This booklet can be used to educate communities about child abuse and help prevent it from happening. When it does occur, the proper measures can be taken to protect the child.

Child abuse prevention efforts are one way to combat other social problems concerning all citizens. Prevention helps create a more compassionate society, one which places a high value on the welfare of children. It is important to provide families the tools and resources they need to raise their children in healthy and nurturing homes free from abuse and neglect.

## ACRONYMS

Listed are some of the many acronyms that are commonly used in Child Protection Services work:

AHT	Abusive Head Trauma
CAN	Child Abuse and Neglect
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
PPS	Prevention and Protection Services
CINC	Child in Need of Care
CPS	Child Protective Services
CRB	Citizen’s Review Board
JJA	Juvenile Justice Authority
KCCTF	Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund
PCAA	Prevent Child Abuse America
PCA KS	Prevent Child Abuse Kansas
SBS	Shaken Baby Syndrome
DCF	Department for Children and Families

*“It would be much better to report a case that did not end up being abuse than to overlook one true abusive situation.”*

**- DENTIST**

# DEFINING AND RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is any physical injury, physical neglect, emotional injury, or sexual act inflicted upon a child. Several indicators, including a child's behavior, may indicate the occurrence of child abuse.

Behavioral indicators, as defined in the sections following, have a valid place in decision making. They provide important clues for potential reporters to pursue. However, the presence of a single behavioral indicator does not necessarily prove that child abuse or neglect is occurring. The reporter is alerted to the possibility of child abuse and neglect by the:

- Repeated occurrences of an indicator
- Presence of several behavioral and physical indicators
- Appearance of suspicious serious injury or death

If a child reports he or she is a victim of abuse or neglect, give reassurance that telling you about what happened is okay and safe. Respect the privacy of the child. The child will need to tell the story in detail later to the investigators, so do not press for details, display shock or disapproval of the parents, the child or the situation. Tell the child that you are going to call someone who will help.

## TIPS FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

When getting information to make a report, ask the minimum to get the information you need. You do not need to know all the facts of the situation to make a report. A reporter only needs to have suspicion that a child has been harmed as a result of abuse or neglect. More information on reporting is available on page 9.

It is important to gather enough information to make a report, but be careful not to ask too many questions. Asking questions with too much detail can potentially alter facts of the case unintentionally. Leave it to the professionals at the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) and the law enforcement officers who are trained to interview children.

When working with children that trust you to keep their secret, let them know that you are going to call someone you trust to get them help. It is important that children are not intimidated by you making a report.



# PHYSICAL ABUSE

**Definition:** Infliction of physical harm or the causation of a child's deterioration, and may include, but shall not be limited to, maltreatment or exploiting a child to the extent the child's health is endangered. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

## Indicators of Physical Abuse

Both physical and behavioral indicators of child abuse may be evident. Physical indicators should be considered based on inconsistent medical history, the child's developmental state and the presence of other indicators if known. Listed below are common physical and behavioral indicators of physical abuse. This is a list of common indicators and is not all inclusive as there could be other indicators presented.

### Common Physical Indicators

- Bruises, welts or bite marks
  - Different colors or in various stages of healing
  - Back, buttocks & back of legs
  - Groups, clusters or patterns
  - Not common for age & activity level of child
  - Defense wounds to back of arms and hands
  - Shape of bruise, ie: shape of an object
- Burns
  - Scald and immersion burns
    - Sock-like, glove-like, doughnut shaped on buttocks or genitalia
    - Splash burns
  - Contact burns
    - Cigar, cigarette especially on the soles, palms, back, buttocks
    - Patterned like electric iron, electric burner, fire place tool, etc.
    - Rope burns on arms, legs, neck and torso
- Fractures, scars or internal injuries
- Lacerations, abrasions or unusual bleeding
  - Loop-type lacerations from belts, straps and extension cords
  - Lacerations to the backside of the body (whipping)
  - Series or groups of straight-line lacerations or welts
- Head trauma
  - Black eyes
  - Split lips or loose teeth
  - Lumps on the head
  - Facial bruises or bruising behind the ear

### Common Behavioral Indicators

- Demonstrating behavioral extremes, including very aggressive or demanding conduct
- Appearing frightened of the parent or caretaker
- Being full of rage, passive or withdrawn
- Being apprehensive when other children cry
- Verbally reporting abuse
- Being extremely hyperactive, distractible or irritable
- Demonstrating disorganized thinking, self injuries or suicidal behavior
- Running away from home or engaging in illegal behavior, such as drug abuse, gang activity or cult activity
- Displaying severe depression, flashbacks (including hallucinatory experiences) and dissociative disorders
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Child starts wetting or soiling clothing or bed
- Sleep problems, including nightmares
- Cannot recall how injuries occurred or offers an inconsistent explanation

Please note that these behavioral indicators must be considered with other evidence. Ask yourself these questions when determining whether physical abuse has occurred:

- Is the explanation consistent with physical evidence?
- Are there any other physical or behavior indicators?
- Are there family/environmental stresses that are apparent?



## **ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA** *(formerly known as Shaken Baby Syndrome)*

Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) is an inflicted traumatic brain injury that occurs when a baby is violently shaken or slammed. Shaking has significant impact on children under age two because their neck muscles are generally weak and the head is quite large in comparison with the body. The brain of an infant is not well protected like that of an adult as the skull of an infant is relatively unstable and still developing.

### **Symptoms of AHT are:**

- Altered level of consciousness – sleepy, yet irritable or may have seizures or even be in a coma
- Eyes unable to focus
- Poor sucking or swallowing
- Irritability
- Lethargy
- Difficulty breathing
- Signs of shock: pale, sweating, vomiting, listless
- May have abdominal and/or chest injuries present

## **DISTINGUISHING ABUSE FROM ACCIDENT**

The very nature of childhood invites accidents. Children are curious and fearless. They run, climb, jump and explore. A child's motor skills usually outpace cognitive skills, allowing the child to approach danger without recognizing it. How can you distinguish the accidental injury caused by the exuberance of childhood from the non-accidental injury caused by the abuse of an adult?

### **When observing injury you suspect might be the result of abuse, consider:**

- **Where is the injury?** Certain locations on the body are more likely to sustain accidental injury: knees, elbows, shins and the forehead; all are parts of the body that can be injured during an accidental fall or bump. Protected parts of the body, such as the back, thighs, genital area, buttocks, back of the legs or face, are less likely to accidentally come into contact with objects that could cause injury. It is important to remember to look for other indicators and the history.
- **How many injuries does the child have?** Are there several injuries occurring at one time or over a period of time? The greater the number of injuries, the greater the cause for concern. Unless involved in a serious accident, a child is not likely to sustain a number of different injuries accidentally. Injuries in different stages of healing can suggest a chronological pattern of occurrence.
- **What are the size and shape of the injuries?** Many non-accidental injuries are inflicted with familiar objects: a stick, a board, a belt, a hair brush. The marks that result bear strong resemblance to the object that was used. For example, welts caused by beating a child with an electrical cord might be loop-shaped; a belt might cause bruises in the shape of the buckle. Accidental marks resulting from bumps and falls usually have no defined shape.
- **Does the description of how the injury occurred seem likely?** If an injury is accidental, there should be a reasonable explanation of how it happened consistent with its severity, type and location. When the description of how the injury occurred and the appearance of the injury do not seem related, there is cause for concern.
- **Is the injury consistent with the child's developmental capabilities?** As a child grows and gains new skills, he increases his ability to engage in activities that can cause injury. A toddler trying to run is likely to suffer bruised knees and a bump on the head before the skill is perfected. He is less likely to suffer a broken arm than is an eight-year-old who has discovered the joy of climbing trees. A two-week-old infant does not have the movement capability to self-inflict a bruise.



# SEXUAL ABUSE

**Definition:** Sexual Abuse is any contact or interaction with a child in which the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator, the child or another person. Sexual abuse shall include, but is not limited to, allowing, permitting or encouraging a child to be:

- Photographed, filmed or depicted in obscene or pornographic material; or
- Subjected to aggravated human trafficking, as defined in K.S.A. 2014 Supp. 21-5426(b), and amendments thereto, if committed in whole or in part for the purpose of the sexual gratification of the offender or another, or be subjected to an act which would constitute conduct proscribed by article 55 of chapter 21 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated or K.S.A. 2015 Supp. 21-6419 or 21-6422, and amendments thereto. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

Contact solely between children shall meet the criteria only if the contact also involves force, intimidation, difference in maturity, or coercion. KAR 30-46-10(i).

## Indicators of Sexual Abuse

There are both physical and behavioral indicators of sexual abuse. The following are some physical and behavioral indicators that a child is being sexually abused. This is a list of common indicators and is not all inclusive as there could be other indicators presented.

### Common Physical Indicators

- Sexually transmitted venereal disease or infection, including oral infections
- Pregnancy, especially in early adolescents
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Difficulty or pain in walking and/or sitting
- Foreign matter in the bladder, rectum, urethra, or vagina
- Painful discharge of urine and/or repeated urinary infections
- Bruising, trauma and lesions inside or around the mouth

### Common Behavioral Indicators

- Verbally reporting abuse
- Seductive behavior, advanced sexual knowledge for the child's age, promiscuity
- Expressing fear of a particular person or place
- Excessive masturbation, precocious sex play, excessive curiosity about sex
- Sexually abusing another child
- Delinquency, runaway or truancy
- Self-injurious behaviors, suicide attempts
- Extreme fear of being touched; unwilling to submit to physical examination
- Poor peer relationships

*It is important to note the physical symptoms listed above are not normally seen in young children and are often difficult (impossible in some cases) to explain by any other cause than sexual abuse. Children are not typically physically hurt during sexual abuse; therefore, special attention should be paid to behavioral indicators.*

### **An adult who may be sexually abusing a child may exhibit these behaviors:**

- Acting extremely protective or jealous of the child
- Encouraging the child to engage in prostitution or sexual acts

## Risks for Victimization of Human Trafficking

It is not solely a history of sexual abuse that places a youth at risk for victimization of human trafficking. Youth at a higher risk are vulnerable youth with histories of abuse/neglect; homeless and runaways; youth within the foster care system; and youth lacking a safety net. Any youth may be at risk of victimization of human trafficking including youth of any ethnicity, race, or religion; any socio-economic class; both male and female; any sexual orientation; and youth of all ages, including teenagers.

## SEXUAL ABUSE - MYTHS AND FACTS

***MYTH: You usually can spot a child sexual abuser.***

FACT: Unless you are clinically trained and given the opportunity for diagnostic assessment, it is unlikely that you could identify a child sexual abuser. The perpetrator usually does not suffer from psychosis and is likely to engage in ordinary work and social activities. It is difficult to “avoid” a child sexual abuser. Even the most cautious and vigilant of parents cannot, nor would they want to, keep a 24-hour watch on their child. Besides, the adults who are prone to sexually abuse children often choose work or activities that bring them into contact with children. The best line of defense against sexual abuse is education. The second is communication. Parents are primary teachers of children and are responsible for showing them how to survive and how to cope with life. The first thing parents can do to protect their children is to teach them to protect themselves, to communicate their fears and to talk about their daily activities. Certainly all children should be taught the dangers of the unknown. In most instances of sexual abuse, however, the abuser is someone the child knows and trusts. The abuser may be a member of the family, a relative, a babysitter or a neighbor.

***MYTH: Sexual abuse of children always occurs between adult men who exploit young girls and adult women who exploit youngboys.***

FACT: The majority of cases that are referred to child protection agencies involve adult men and underage girls. When boys are abused or exploited, they usually are the victims of adult males. This is not to say that other types of abuse do not occur, merely that they are not reported at the same rate. Some researchers hold the opinion that sibling incest is by far the most widespread form of incest. The comparatively lower rate of reported mother-son incest may be the result of the lower incidence of accompanying physical injury, a societal perception of its being less harmful or a general disbelief in its existence.

***MYTH: The child sexual abuser relies on physical violence.***

FACT: The child sexual abuser rarely uses physical violence and usually will avoid its use; injury may lead to discovery. The sexual abuser is more likely to use power and authority as an adult (or older child) to coerce the child victim through bribes, threats and the child’s fear of the unknown. Children are taught to obey without question or resistance. The abuser’s most powerful weapons are authority and secrecy.

***MYTH: The sexual abuser can be the victim of the seductive or sexually-promiscuous child.***

FACT: The child is the victim. A seductive or promiscuous child often is the result, but never the cause, of sexual abuse. One characteristic common to sexual abusers is a capacity for rationalizing their actions, mentally justifying an illegal, unacceptable and inappropriate behavior as necessary and right. Perpetrating the myth of the seductive or sexually promiscuous child is one way of doing this. Through this type of reasoning, the abuser shifts the blame onto someone else. In the same manner, incestuous parents often justify their own sexual behavior as a way of teaching children or keeping them off the street. These justifications ignore the abuser’s responsibility as an adult, the child’s vulnerability and dependency on the adult, and the long-term harm to the child.

***MYTH: Using electronic communications (cell phones, videos, email, internet, etc.) does not involve physical contact and therefore is not sexual abuse.***

FACT: Children can be victims of sexual exploitation by use of electronic media. Taking explicit pictures of a child and posting them on the internet could be considered sexual abuse. Having sexually explicit conversations with a child via phone, internet or text for the sexual stimulation of either party, could be considered sexual abuse.

***MYTH: The sexual abuser will abuse a child once and then find another victim.***

FACT: If the sexual abuser is a stranger, this usually is true. This type of perpetrator will abuse many children a single time, generally stopping only if caught. The “stranger abuser” often lures a child by appealing to the child’s helpfulness or by posing as a friend of the parents or other authority figure. When the sexual abuser is known to the child, however, the methods of seduction usually are very different. The abuse frequently will be of long duration, escalating in frequency and intimacy over time. The “known abuser” builds upon a relationship with the child, using the child’s innocence and trust as the main weapons.

***MYTH: The lower the family income and social status, the higher the likelihood of sexual abuse.***

FACT: Socioeconomic status is of no help in identifying sexual abuse. Sexual abuse appears to occur at all levels of income and education. Most of the families present an appearance of respectability. The vast majority of parents hold jobs, function well in the community and are respected by their peers

***MYTH: In the majority of cases, sexually-abused children want to leave their homes permanently.***

FACT: On the contrary, most children do not want their families disrupted; they simply want the abuse to stop.

***MYTH: Sexual touching between children (i.e. siblings, neighbors, cousins) is not abuse and should not be reported.***

FACT: Sexual contact between siblings should always be reported. Contact between non-related children may or may not be abusive. There is normal sexual exploration at certain developmental stages. This should occur between age mates. If the age difference is troubling or if there is power or coercion used, a report should be made.

***MYTH: Sexual contact between children always indicates they are acting out sexual abuse.***

FACT: At certain developmental stages there will be normal exploration of sexuality. This could also be from non-intentional exposure to adult media and literature.

***MYTH: Once incest is brought to the attention of the authorities, the family admits the problem and seeks help.***

FACT: The denial system of the family usually is very strong. Generally, family members will assert that nothing has happened or if confronted with undeniable circumstances, claim that "it will never happen again." In this circumstance, treatment is very difficult. If the victim returns home without intensive intervention in the family system, the old patterns of sexual abuse may continue.

***MYTH: The legal age of consent for sexual contact in Kansas is 16, so once a child is 16 he/she cannot be the victim of sexual abuse.***

FACT: There are many variables which must be considered when determining if a child has been sexually abused.

Whether or not the child is of age to consent is just one. If a 16 or 17-year-old has entered a sexual relationship with someone who has power or control over him/her, such as a teacher or a coach, this may be a sexual abuse situation. If the adult with power or control over the teen is also a relative, sexual abuse is a definite possibility, perhaps a certainty. If someone uses coercion to convince a 16 or 17-year-old to have sex with them, this too may be sexual abuse.

*"Reporting child abuse is important because every child has the right to grow up feeling safe and secure in their surroundings. Intervention is necessary to prevent the repeating pattern of abuse in families."*

**- CHILD CARE PROVIDER**

# EMOTIONAL ABUSE

**Definition:** Infliction of mental or emotional harm or the causing of a deterioration of a child, and may include, but shall not be limited to, maltreatment or exploiting a child to the extent the child's health or emotional wellbeing is endangered. This term may include any act, behavior or omission that impairs or endangers a child's social or intellectual functioning. This term may include the following:

- Terrorizing a child, by creating a climate of fear or engaging in violent or threatening behavior toward the child or toward others in the child's presence that demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the child;
- Emotionally abandoning a child, by being psychologically unavailable to the child, demonstrating no attachment to the child or failing to provide adequate nurturance of the child; and
- Corrupting a child, by teaching or rewarding the child for unlawful, antisocial or sexually-mature behaviors.

Emotional abuse or maltreatment is a consistent, chronic behavior by an adult that has a harmful effect on the child. It involves a pattern of attitudes or acts that are detrimental to the child's development of a sound and healthy personality. Each of us may be guilty of having unkindly snubbed a child or of having criticized him/her too harshly. However, emotional abuse, as defined here, seriously impairs the child's social, emotional or intellectual functioning.

## Indicators of Emotional Abuse

Physical indicators are not commonly associated with emotional abuse; however there are many behavioral indicators that can be presented by the child and the adult abuser. The following are some physical and behavioral indicators that the child and adult may display. This is a list of common indicators and is not all inclusive, as there could be other indicators presented.

### Common Physical Indicators

- Daytime anxiety and unrealistic fears
- Irrational and persistent fears, dreads, or hatreds
- Sleep problems, nightmares
- Behavioral extremes
- Biting, rocking, head-banging or thumb sucking in an older child (habit disorders)
- Substance abuse
- Cutting
- Fire starting
- Loss of interest
- Sudden grade changes
- Changes in behavior, personality or appearance

### Common Behavioral Indicators

- Rejecting or belittling the child (making the child feel he/she can do nothing right)
- Ignoring the child (taking little or no interest in the child)
- Terrorizing the child by blaming the child for things for which the child has no control
- Isolating the child (cutting the child off from normal social experiences)
- Corrupting the child (teaching the child socially-deviant patterns of behavior)
- Repeatedly giving the child contradictory messages that leave the child confused and incapable of pleasing the adult
- Using an inconsistent, unpredictable, erratic and threatening style of discipline

It is important to remember that maltreatment by a caregiver is not the cause of all behavioral, emotional or developmental problems in children. Ask these questions when considering whether or not emotional abuse is occurring:

- Do interactions between adult and child seem primarily negative?
- Are specific instances of emotional abuse or maltreatment frequently observed?

# NEGLECT OF A CHILD

**Physical Neglect:** Acts or omissions by a parent, guardian, or person responsible for the care of a child resulting in harm to a child, or presenting a likelihood of harm, and the acts or omissions are not due solely to the lack of financial means of the child's parents or other custodian. This term may include but shall not be limited to: failure to provide the child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

**Medical Neglect:** Acts or omissions by a parent, guardian, or person responsible for the care of a child resulting in harm to a child, or presenting a likelihood of harm, and the acts or omissions are not due solely to the lack of financial means of the child's parents or other custodian. This term may include the following, but shall not be limited to:

- Failure to use resources available to treat a diagnosed medical condition if such treatment will make a child substantially more comfortable, reduce pain and suffering, or correct or substantially diminish a crippling condition from worsening.
- A parent legitimately practicing religious beliefs who does not provide specified medical treatment for a child because of religious beliefs shall not for that reason be considered a negligent parent. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

**Lack of Supervision:** Acts or omissions by a parent, guardian, or person responsible for the care of a child resulting in harm to a child, or presenting a likelihood of harm, and the acts or omissions are not due solely to the lack of financial means of the child's parents or other custodian. This term may include the following, but shall not be limited to: failure to provide adequate supervision of a child or to remove a child from a situation which requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition or mental abilities and that results in bodily injury or a likelihood of harm to the child. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

Abandonment: to forsake, desert or cease providing care for the child without making appropriate provisions for substitute care. (K.S.A. 38-2202)

## Indicators of Neglect

While physical abuse is usually episodic, physical neglect tends to be chronic. There are physical and behavioral indicators of physical neglect. This is a list of common indicators and is not all inclusive, as there could be other indicators presented.

### Common Physical Indicators

- Constant hunger
- Lack of proper supervision, abandonment or desertion
- Lack of adequate clothing and good hygiene
- Clothing consistently not appropriate for weather conditions
- Lack of medical or dental care
- Lack of adequate nutrition and shelter
- Failure to achieve expected growth patterns
- Physical and speech delays
- Failure to thrive physically or emotionally
- Child states feeling pain in the mouth, jaw or ear
- Diagnosed signs of dental decay, and the child states feeling pain and has difficulty eating

### Common Behavioral Indicators

- Begging, stealing and hoarding food
- Extended stays at school
- Constant fatigue
- Delinquency
- States there is no caretaker
- Runaway behavior
- Conduct disorders
- Behavior extremes
- Develops habits, such as sucking, biting and rocking



# REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

## WHO IS REQUIRED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

**Kansas Reporting Laws:** Mandated reporters are required to report child abuse or neglect under the Kansas reporting law (K.S.A. 38-2223) as follows:

(a) *Persons making reports.* (1) When any of the following persons has reason to suspect that a child has been harmed as a result of physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse, the person shall report the matter promptly as provided in subsections (b) and (c);

(A) the following persons providing medical care or treatment: Persons licensed to practice the healing arts, dentistry and optometry; persons engaged in postgraduate training programs approved by the state board of healing arts; licensed professional or practical nurses; and chief administrative officers of medical care facilities;

(B) the following persons licensed by the state to provide mental health services: Licensed psychologists, licensed masters level psychologists, licensed clinical psychotherapists, licensed social workers, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed clinical marriage and family therapists, licensed behavioral analysts, licensed assistant behavioral analysts, licensed professional counselors, licensed clinical professional counselors and registered alcohol and drug abuse counselors;

(C) teachers, school administrators or other employees of an educational institution which the child is attending and persons licensed by the secretary of health and environment to provide child care services or the employees of persons so licensed at the place where the child care services are being provided to the child;

(D) firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, law enforcement officers, juvenile intake and assessment workers, court services officers and community corrections officers, case managers appointed under K.S.A. 2005 Supp. 23-1001 et seq., and amendments thereto, and mediators appointed under K.S.A. 23-602, and amendments thereto; and

(E) any person employed by or who works as a volunteer for any organization, whether for profit or not-for-profit, that provides social services to pregnant teenagers, including, but not limited to, counseling, adoption services and pregnancy education and maintenance.

(2) In addition to the reports required under subsection (a)(1), any person who has reason to suspect that a child may be a child in need of care may report the matter as provided in subsection (b) and (c).

(b) *Form of report.* (1) The report may be made orally and shall be followed by a written report if requested. Every report shall contain, if known: The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care; the location of the child if not at the child's residence; the child's gender, race and age; the reasons why the reporter suspects the child may be a child in need of care; if abuse or neglect or sexual abuse is suspected, the nature and extent of the harm to the child, including any evidence of previous harm; and any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the harm and the identity of the persons responsible for the harm.

(2) When reporting a suspicion that a child may be in need of care, the reporter shall disclose protected health information freely and cooperate fully with the secretary and law enforcement throughout the investigation and any subsequent legal process.

(c) *To whom made.* Reports made pursuant to this section shall be made to the secretary, except as follows:

(1) When the department of social and rehabilitation services is not open for business, reports shall be made to the appropriate law enforcement agency. On the next day that the department is open for business, the law enforcement agency shall report to the department any report received and any investigation initiated pursuant to K.S.A. 38-2226, and amendments thereto. The reports may be made orally or, on request of the secretary, in writing.

(2) Reports of child abuse or neglect occurring in an institution operated by the secretary of the department of social and rehabilitation services or the commissioner of juvenile justice shall be made to the attorney general. All other reports of child abuse or neglect by persons employed by or of children of persons employed by the department of social and rehabilitation services shall be made to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

(d) *Death of child.* Any person who is required by this section to report a suspicion that a child is in need of care and who knows of information relating to the death of a child shall immediately notify the coroner as provided by K.S.A. 22a-242, and amendments thereto.

(e) *Violations.* (1) Willful and knowing failure to make a report required by this section is a class B misdemeanor. It is not a defense that another mandatory reporter made a report.

(2) Intentionally preventing or interfering with the making of a report required by this section is a class B misdemeanor.

(3) Any person who willfully and knowingly makes a false report pursuant to this section or makes a report that such person knows lacks factual foundation is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

(f) *Immunity from liability.* Anyone who, without malice, participates in the making of a report to the secretary or a law enforcement agency relating to a suspicion a child may be a child in need of care or who participates in any activity or investigation relating to the report or who participates in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report shall have immunity from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Reporting

***Q: What is the legal penalty if a mandated reporter fails to report suspected child abuse?***

A: CLASS B MISDEMEANOR. Failure of a mandated reporter to make a report is a crime that could result in a \$1,000 fine or up to six (6) months in jail. Some agencies may expect staff to discuss abuse situations with their supervisor before reporting. However, if a staff member believes a report of child abuse or neglect needs to be made to DCF or law enforcement, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report, whether or not the supervisor is in agreement. Employers are prohibited from imposing sanctions on employees making report or cooperating in investigations. K.S.A. 38-2224

***Q: Is a reporter liable for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect?***

A: Kansas law provides immunity from liability for reporters of child abuse.

***Q: Would a reporter incur any civil liability if required to participate in court proceedings as a witness?***

A: No.

***Q: On what basis may a report of suspected child abuse be made?***

A: A report must be made by a mandated reporter if there is reason to suspect that a child has been harmed as a result of physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse.

***Q: What does “reason to suspect” mean?***

A: “Reason to suspect” means anytime anyone believes or has a hint or a clue, a child is, or has been, a victim of abuse or neglect. A reporter may have “reason to suspect” when there is a discrepant or inconsistent history in explaining a child’s injury. An example of a discrepant history would be a situation in which a parent or caregiver of a child describes the injury as accidental, but bruises are on multiple areas of the body and in various stages of healing, indicating the child was imposed at different times and there was more than one incident as opposed to a single accidental injury.

Consider whether the description of how the injury occurred seems likely. If the injury is accidental, there should be a reasonable explanation of how it happened that is consistent with the severity, type and location of the injury. When the description of how the injury occurred and the appearance of the injury do not seem related, there is cause for concern (“a reason to suspect”).

A report based on “reason to suspect” also means the law does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred or that the reporter witnessed the incident in question. A reporter’s suspicion may result from an incident the reporter witnessed, a child’s disclosure or third-party information. Once a mandated reporter is aware of any information that causes a “reason to suspect”, the reporter is mandated by law to report the concerns. Further, a reporter is relieved of the need to make a final determination of whether or not child abuse or neglect actually occurred. Reporting is a request for an assessment into the condition of a child.

There have been public reports of children who have been coached to provide false allegations. As a reporter, it is important the public confusion regarding false allegations not discredit the reports of children who have been traumatized by abuse. The determination of whether abuse or neglect has actually occurred is the responsibility of DCF or appropriate law enforcement agencies.

***Q: What if an employer has separate policies for reporting child abuse or neglect?***

A: Often employers have policies separate from the statutes for reporting suspicions or concerns of child abuse or neglect, such as notifying a supervisor first. It is important to note, any local policies or procedures do not supersede a mandated reporter’s statutory requirement to report. As a mandated reporter, you are responsible to report your concerns.

***Q: What if a mandated reporter believes the situation has already been reported; is there still a requirement to report?***

A: Yes, Reference: K.S.A. 38-2223 (e) Violations (1) “It is not a defense that another mandatory reporter made a report.”



***Q: Can a mandated reporter make a report anonymously?***

A: If a mandated reporter chooses to remain anonymous, DCF will not have documentation to support that the person made a report to use as a defense against a failure-to-report charge.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: How to Make a Report**

***Q: How should the report be made?***

A: The report may be made orally and followed by a written report if requested by DCF or law enforcement agencies.

***Q: What type of information should a report contain?***

A: Both mandated reporters and concerned citizens should attempt to include the following information:

- The name and address of the child, the child's parents or other individuals responsible for the child's care
- The child's location
- The child's condition, including the nature and extent of the child's injury
- Whether the alleged perpetrator has access to the child
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in showing the cause of the injuries or the extent to which the child might be in danger.

***Q: To whom should reports of suspected child abuse or neglect be made?***

A: Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect should be made to the Kansas Protection Report Center or if the child has serious injuries or is in immediate danger to the appropriate law enforcement agency. (On the next day that DCF is open for business, the law enforcement agency will report to DCF any report received and any investigation initiated.)

Reports of abuse and neglect in an DCF institution (such as State hospitals) should be made to DCF or the Attorney General's office at 785-296-7968. Reports of DCF employees as alleged perpetrators should be made to local law enforcement agencies. Kansas law requires that these types of cases not be investigated by DCF. A reporter should call the statewide number 1-800-922-5330. The Kansas Protection Report Center can be called 24-hours a day, seven days a week and may be reached from any location. Reports are referred to the appropriate local office to be investigated. If the DCF office is closed, Kansas Protection Report Center staff immediately refer emergencies to local law enforcement agencies.

***Q: Where do I report a suspected incident with a child that lives on an Indian reservation?***

A: The Kansas Protection Report Center accepts reports for all children. The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 was enacted to give Indian tribes more authority over their children, both on and off the reservation. A state court proceeding that may result in the out-of-home placement of an Indian child triggers the Act.

In addition, reports can also be made by

- **Telephone:** 1-800-922-5330
- **Fax:** Sent to Kansas Protection Report Center, 1-866-317-4279
- **Email:** DCF.KSPRC@ks.gov
- **Mail:** Kansas Protection Report Center 500 S.W. Van Buren St., Topeka, KS 66603
- **On-Line Web Intake:** The Kansas Protection Report Center has an option for mandated reporters to report concerns of child and adult abuse or neglect online.

***Mandated reporters may access the online report by*** visiting the DCF website at <http://www.dcf.ks.gov>, select "Report Abuse" under the list of "Quick Links" right of screen. On the Report Abuse page, click on the link "Mandatory Reporters Online Report Form."

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: After Report is Made

***Q: Will the identity of the reporter be disclosed once a report is made?***


A: Kansas law provides the identity of the reporter may not be disclosed to the child's parents, persons having legal responsibility for the child or to such persons' legal representatives. The protection is not absolute, however. If a case is heard in court or if a DCF finding is appealed and heard in a DCF administrative hearing, there is a possibility the identity of a reporter will be discovered.

***Q: What can a reporter know about a case once a report is made?***

A: Kansas law requires confidentiality of all records and reports of child abuse or neglect received by DCF or law enforcement agencies. DCF may inform the reporter of child abuse or neglect the agency's decision to either accept the report for investigation or to not assign for further assessment.

***Q: If an agency receives a court order to disclose confidential information about an individual under investigation, what procedure should be followed?***

A: Under Kansas law, a multidisciplinary team, DCF or law enforcement agency may request disclosure of documents, reports or information by applying to a court for an order to release information. If a subpoena or order is received for a person and/or his/her records, the person will be given an opportunity to notify the court of any objection. A judge will then make a final decision as to what information to disclose.



*"I believe it's an obligation for all people to be concerned and make reports on child abuse."*

**- LAW ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICER**

# INVESTIGATION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Investigation Process

***Q: What does Kansas law require of child protection and law enforcement agencies concerning the investigation of child abuse and neglect?***

A: DCF and law enforcement agencies have the duty to receive and investigate reports of child abuse or neglect for the purpose of determining whether the report is valid and whether action is required to protect the child from further abuse or neglect. If DCF determines no action is necessary to protect the child but that a criminal prosecution should be considered, then DCF may make a report of the case to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

***Q: How quickly are reports of suspected child abuse or neglect investigated?***

A: Based on the age of the child, nature of the allegation, continued access of the perpetrator to the child, and other factors, Kansas Protection Report Center specialists determine the response time assignment for the report. If the Kansas Protection Report Center specialist determines a child is in imminent risk of serious harm, the report is assigned a same-day response time. These reports may require the involvement of law enforcement. If the report does not allege a child is in imminent risk of serious harm, DCF must respond within 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. If the report alleges that a child may be in need of services for reasons not related to maltreatment, DCF may respond within 20 working days, unless criteria is met to assign with a same-day or 72-hour response time.

***Q: Under what circumstances is a joint investigation of child abuse or neglect between child protection agencies and the appropriate law enforcement agencies required under Kansas law?***

A: A joint investigation by DCF and the appropriate law enforcement agency is required when a report of child abuse or neglect indicates the following:

- Serious physical injury or deterioration; or
- Sexual abuse of the child; and
- Reason to believe action may be required to protect the child

In the course of a joint investigation, there should also be a free exchange of information between the agencies. In the event a statement is obtained by either agency, a copy of the statement must be provided to the other agency upon request.

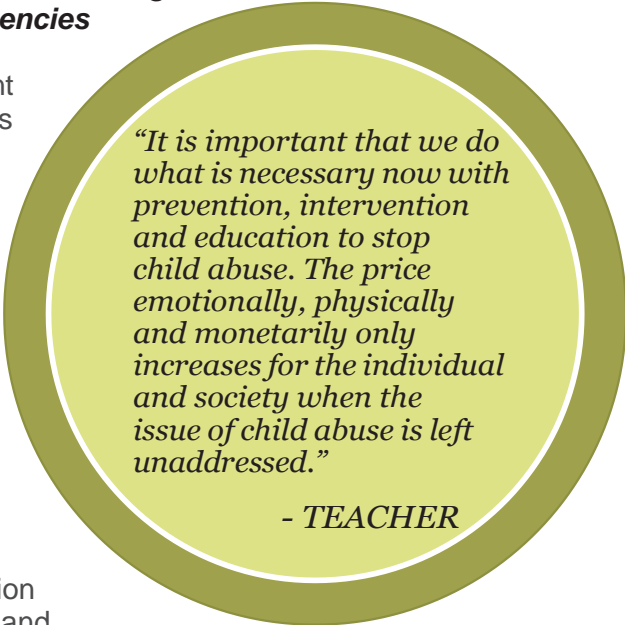
***Q: Does DCF report investigations of licensed facilities to the Department of Health and Environment?***

A: Investigations involving a facility subject to licensing or regulation are promptly reported to either the Kansas Department of Health and Environment or to DCF Foster Care and Residential Facility Licensing.

Child Care facilities and maternity centers are licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Family foster homes and residential facilities for children and youth are licensed by DCF Foster Care and Residential Facility Licensing.

***Q: Is school personnel required to provide DCF access to a child?***

A: School personnel, DCF and law enforcement agencies must cooperate with the investigation of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. Furthermore, administrators of elementary and secondary schools must provide employees of DCF and law enforcement agencies access to a child in a non-threatening environment on school premises determined by school personnel for the purpose of investigating a report of suspected child abuse or neglect. School personnel should only be present during the investigation at the request of law enforcement or DCF.



*“It is important that we do what is necessary now with prevention, intervention and education to stop child abuse. The price emotionally, physically and monetarily only increases for the individual and society when the issue of child abuse is left unaddressed.”*

*- TEACHER*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Child Protective Custody

***Q: When may a law enforcement officer remove the child from his/her home?***

A: A law enforcement officer is authorized to remove the child from the location where the child is found if the officer reasonably believes the child is in imminent danger. DCF may not remove the child from a location without a court order. However, DCF can contact law enforcement agencies if the child is in immediate physical danger.

***Q: What happens when a child is under the protective custody of a law enforcement officer?***

A: When any law enforcement officer takes a child into custody without a court order, the child must be delivered to the custody of the parent or caregiver unless there is reason to believe it would not be in the best interest of the child. If the child is not delivered to the custody of the parent or caregiver, the child must be delivered to a facility or person designated by DCF or to a court-designated shelter or person. A court hearing is required within 72 hours (not including weekends or holidays) to determine if the child can be returned home.

***Q: Are Multidisciplinary Child Protection Teams used in the investigation of and response to reports of child abuse?***

A: Yes. Multidisciplinary Teams may be appointed by the court at the recommendation of DCF or the county or district attorney to assist DCF with the investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect. Teams may be comprised of a standing group of community experts from a variety of disciplines or may be specific to a case, bringing together professionals who have knowledge about the child and family. The team members review the selected case(s) brought to their attention, share knowledge they have about specific children and recommend a plan of action. To determine the existence of a Multidisciplinary Team in a particular area, contact the local DCF office.

***Q: What is the role of the Child Advocacy Center?***

A: A Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is an agency where a team of professions, including DCF, law enforcement, prosecutors, therapists, medical providers and victim advocates come together to respond to cases of suspected or alleged child abuse, especially sexual and serious physical abuse. Children are referred to a CAC by DCF, law enforcement or other designated professionals after a report is made about suspected abuse. At the CAC, forensic interviews take place with children about their experience. Interviews are completed by a trained interviewer and take place in a neutral, child-friendly setting. Victim Advocates at the CAC educate families about the dynamics of abuse, connect children with specialized mental health and medical care, either provided onsite or are referred to a facility in the community, and identify other helpful community resources. The goal of a CAC is to maintain a professional response to child abuse that is child-centered and makes the process easier for abused children and their families.

CACs are required to follow State guidelines defined in K.S.A. 38-2227, and are modeled on a specific set of standards developed by the National Children's Alliance. Many CACs in Kansas are nationally-accredited, and others are working toward securing accreditation. To find out if a CAC is active in your area, go to [www.kscac.org](http://www.kscac.org) and link to "CACs in Kansas" for a current map of CAC service areas.

***Q: What is DCF's response to child abuse and neglect following investigation?***

A: Services for prevention and treatment of child abuse may be provided by DCF and other community resources to children and families such as: intensive in-home services, family preservation services, in-home visits, parenting classes, foster care, referrals to mental health centers, drug and alcohol treatment, and Batterer's Intervention Programs. It is always the goal of DCF to maintain children with their families when this can be done safely.

## ***Allegation of suspected child abuse or neglect is received from a reporter***

Initial Assessment Decision and Response Determination are done by the Kansas Protection Report Center. Reports are initially assessed to determine if they meet statutory criteria for further assessment. The response determination specifies how quickly contact with the alleged victim and/or family shall be initiated.

Investigation, Family Assessment and Finding are made to assess health and safety of child and to determine whether abuse or neglect occurred. Depending on the assessment, the case is referred to...

### ***...Protective Custody:***

If the information shows the child is in imminent danger or harm, DCF may request a law enforcement officer to take the child into protective custody for as long as 72 hours pending court action.

### ***...District/County Attorney***

may file a petition to request the Child in Need of Care. District/County Attorney can become involved on his/her own initiative, but usually at the request of DCF.

### ***...Family Services or Family Preservation***

may include direct services by DCF or a referral to intensive in-home Family Preservation services provided to prevent removal of the child from the home.

### ***...Other Alternatives***

may include referrals to a community mental health center or other community services.

### ***District Court***

The court may release the child to the parents, or if there is evidence that the child is not safe in the home, the court can order temporary custody pending the hearing. The court can find a child to be a Child In Need of Care and grant custody to DCF or another person. The court can order the family to accept family services or can dismiss the case.

### ***Evaluation and Placement***

For children placed in DCF custody by the court, DCF's placement options include: foster care with services to unite the family or adoption, if indicated. While children are in DCF custody, services are provided to the child and family, and progress is reported to court. The court may return custody to the parents, grant custody to a relative or sever parental rights to allow for adoption.

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Strengthening Families is a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family stability, enhance child development and reduce child abuse and neglect. The Strengthening Families Approach, developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, promotes five protective factors that shifts the focus of prevention efforts from risks and deficits to strengths and resiliency. By employing strategies that increase protective factors, all families will be better equipped to deal with stress and diminish factors that place them at risk for abuse and neglect. Kansas is one of more than 30 states using the Strengthening Families framework to establish a strengths-based approach that focuses on families.

### THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS ARE:

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

**For more information, visit the Kansas Strengthening Families Plan online at [bit.do/KSFP](https://bit.do/KSFP).**

### WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE?

It is important that mandated reporters and citizens in the community know what their role is in preventing child abuse. The goal is to prevent abuse before it occurs. To do this, it is important that families receive the support and help they need. Listed are some ways you can help strengthen families:

- **ADVOCATE:** Help change the way our state and nation thinks about prevention by focusing on community activities and public policies that prioritize prevention right from the start. Contact local, state and national lawmakers about the importance of prevention programs.
- **VOLUNTEER:** Serve on a committee or board. We all play a role in raising children, whether we are neighbors, educators, caregivers or family members.
- **EDUCATE:** Contact local school districts and faith communities about sponsoring classes for parents. Be a mentor to a new parent, share your skills with your neighbors. A healthy, nurturing environment for children is one of the best lifelong investments we can make.
- **SUPPORT:** Get to know and support the children and families in your community. With the support of engaged communities and nurturing families, all of our children can thrive. Know the resources available in your community and how to connect families to them. Call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN.
- **REPORT:** Recognize the signs and symptoms of child abuse. If you suspect child abuse and/or neglect, call the Kansas Protection and Report Center at 1-800-922-5330.

**To learn more about child abuse prevention, contact Prevent Child Abuse Kansas.**

**1-800-CHILDREN.**



## CONCLUSION

Child Maltreatment 2014 relies on data states provide through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), with information collected from 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. During FFY 2014, CPS agencies received an estimated 3.6 million referrals. Of these referrals, 60.7 percent were assigned for investigation or assessment. For FFY 2014, approximately 3.2 million children were the subjects of at least one report. Approximately 17.8 percent of children were found to be victims with dispositions of substantiated.

Information provided by Kansas for this national report is compiled from the DCF Family and Child Tracking System (FACTS). DCF received 65,631 reports from July 2014 to June 2015. During this same time period, 36,611 (56 percent) were assigned for further assessment.

Even when child abuse is not fatal, it can have disastrous effects on normal growth and development. It is important to report suspected or known child abuse or neglect to protect the child. Dr. Bruce Perry once said:

*“If 20 million people were infected by a virus that caused anxiety, impulsivity, aggression, sleep problems, depression, respiratory and heart problems, vulnerability to substance abuse, antisocial and criminal behavior, retardation and school failure, we would consider it an urgent public health crisis. Yet in the United States alone, there are more than 20 million abused, neglected and traumatized children vulnerable to these problems. Our society has yet to recognize the epidemic, let alone develop an immunization strategy.”*

The intent is to strengthen children and families by getting them the help they need. We all have a stake in protecting children. The lessons necessary to the development of interpersonal skills may not be taught in an abusive or neglectful environment. The emotional damage that commonly accompanies child abuse or neglect may be vented through self-destructive actions, such as substance abuse, prostitution, suicide or criminal acts against others.

It is our hope that by encouraging the reporting of child abuse and neglect and raising awareness of prevention efforts taking place across the state, the state’s next generation will be productive Kansans capable of rearing their children in a caring, nurturing fashion.

Communities currently offer programs that promote strengthening families and the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Some programs include the *Period of PURPLE Crying®* Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention program; parent support groups; parent education; and early childhood home visitation models, such as Parents As Teachers, Healthy Families, Early Head Start and Head Start.

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# The Parent Helpline

# 1- 800-CHILDREN



***Because  
Kids Don't  
Come With  
Instructions***

The Parent Helpline is a **FREE**, anonymous information and referral service. The Helpline is **available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in English and Spanish**, and can refer you to services anywhere in Kansas. Call the Parent Helpline whenever you have a parenting question or concern.

## **TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:**

Phone: 1-800-922-5330

Fax: 1-866-317-4279

Email: DCF.KSPRC@ks.gov Online: [bit.do/DCFreport](https://bit.ly/DCFreport)

## **TO ORDER ADDITIONAL GUIDES CONTACT:**

Kansas Children's Service  
League 1365 N. Custer  
Wichita, KS 67203  
316-942-4261 • 877-530 5275

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