

## GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

### The Activity Leaders Responsibility

WHEN ....	YOU MUST....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a young person discloses abuse or neglect</li> <li>• you witness an abusive incident</li> <li>• a third-party discloses that a young person is being abused</li> <li>• you suspect abuse or neglect</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look for opportunities to engage the child in dialogue.</li> <li>2. Remain calm. Do not react with shock or disbelief.</li> <li>3. Be honest, up-front and don't make promises: "I can't promise to keep this a secret because we need to get you some help!"</li> <li>4. Reassure the young person: "You've done the right thing by telling. It's not your fault!"</li> <li>5. Determine the need for immediate safety.</li> <li>6. Do not attempt to provide counseling but include the young person in the decision-making process.</li> <li>7. Refer the young person to a parent/guardian (unless they are the alleged perpetrator) or an adult with whom they feel safe, like a relative, friend, or coach.</li> <li>8. Report incidents or suspicions to child protection authorities or police.</li> <li>9. Never confront the perpetrator.</li> <li>10. Fully complete the <i>Incident Report</i>. Documents are very important if there is a criminal investigation.</li> </ol>

You must remember, the person who hears the disclosure or suspects the abuse or neglect **must** report it!

### Your Responsibility to the Organization

WHEN ....	YOU MUST....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a young person has disclosed abuse or neglect, or you suspect abuse or neglect</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete any organizational procedures required of you, for example, filing a formal report to designated individuals in the organization.</li> </ol>

### The Organization's Responsibility

WHEN ....	THE ORGANIZATION MUST...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a young person has disclosed abuse or neglect, or you suspect abuse or neglect</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist police in internal investigations.</li> <li>2. Prevent the young person from having contact with the perpetrator.</li> <li>3. Never attempt to conduct their own investigation without first consulting Child Protection Authorities or police.</li> </ol>

Finally, remember that hearing a disclosure may be emotionally difficult. Maintain confidentiality, but seek support for yourself from trusted friends, family or the organization