

Children & Family Services / **EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO CHILD ABUSE**

Abuse is the non-accidental injury of a child. It includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, exploitation and neglect. Last year, we received over 20,000 calls reporting the suspected mistreatment of children in Contra Costa County.

Federal and State Regulations require that we assess all referrals which allege that a child is endangered by abuse, neglect, or exploitation. In addition, the Children & Family Services Bureau has the responsibility to investigate reports of children in immediate danger to ensure their safety.

How to make a referral when you have a suspicion of child abuse

If you suspect that a child you know is being abused or neglected you can make a referral by calling our 24-hour, seven-day a week Hotline **Toll Free at 1-(877) 881-1116**. Your report can be anonymous.

The following information is helpful when making a referral

Identifying information about the child and the parents or person having custody.

- Name and birth date of child
- Your relationship to child
- Current location of child
- Where the incident occurred
- Address and telephone number where the child is
- Name and address of child's school or daycare (if applicable)

What happens after a referral is made?

Children's Protective Services is responsible for investigating the referral once it is made. The investigation may also involve the police or sheriff based upon the nature of the allegation

When abuse has occurred within a family, our emphasis is intervention to assure the safety of the child and then to provide services to keep the family together.

Child Abuse Prevention Council

The Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County maintains a speaker's bureau to educate teachers, childcare providers, and the public about child abuse and how to report it. You can visit their web site at <http://www.capc-coco.org>.