

Bob Jones University

Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Abuse Reporting Policy and Procedure

BJU (including Bob Jones Academy and BJU Press) is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive educational environment conducive to growing Christlike character, including a zero tolerance policy in regard to any form of abuse. This commitment is in accord with biblical principles and the University's mission, as well as state and federal law. Because of this commitment, BJU places great importance on sustaining a safe and secure environment for children. Therefore, the University has adopted the following child abuse reporting policies and procedures.

Definitions

"Child" means a person under the age of eighteen. (For policies and procedures regarding the reporting of abuse and/or assault when an individual is 18 years of age or older, consult BJU's Policy Manual, Vol. II: Community Policies 2.1.1 through 2.1.1.3.3 on the BJU intranet.)

"Abuse and Neglect" may take many forms and may be sexual, mental, physical, or emotional. Child abuse may also take the form of bullying, neglect and other forms of maltreatment. Mental or physical abuse or neglect can include such things as physical injury; failure to provide necessities such as food, shelter, clothing or education for a child or other dependent person; abandonment; and even encouraging, condoning or approving delinquent acts. (Specific definitions of abuse and neglect as prescribed by the South Carolina Code of Laws are available at S.C. Code 63-7-20.)

"Sexual Abuse" is any tricked, forced, manipulated or coerced sexual activity for the pleasure of the abuser. (Specific definitions of child sexual abuse as prescribed by the South Carolina Code of Laws are available at S.C. Code 16-3-655.)

Policy

While South Carolina law designates only certain types of individuals (e.g., people working in the medical field, teachers, principals, child care workers and law enforcement officials) as mandatory reporters, it is the policy of BJU to require all university employees and volunteers, regardless of their status as a mandatory reporter as defined by South Carolina law, who have received information which gives them reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused, neglected or sexually abused to make a report as outlined in this policy. This duty cannot be delegated to any other person.

If an employee or volunteer knows or suspects that a child is a victim of abuse, neglect or sexual abuse, he or she must act. In deciding whether to report a suspected incident, an employee or volunteer is not required to have proof that abuse occurred--all actual or suspected abuse must be reported.

The reporting obligation does not apply to abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse that occurred during childhood if it is discovered after the person has become an adult, unless there is reasonable cause to believe other children are or may be at risk of abuse, neglect or sexual abuse. If other children are at

risk, the reporting requirement does apply and a report must be made. If there is otherwise no obligation to report abuse or neglect discovered after the child has become an adult, an employee may assist the victim in making a report with the consent of the victim.

Procedures

1. If a child is in immediate danger, contact police at 911 to obtain immediate protection for the child.
2. If a child is not in immediate danger, within 24 hours of discovery, make a report orally or in writing to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
 - If the incident occurred on campus or within Greenville city limits, report to the Greenville Police Department at 864-467-5325.
 - If it occurred outside the city limits of Greenville, but in Greenville County, report to the Greenville County Sheriff's Office at 864-271-5201 or 800-828-1206.
 - If it occurred outside of Greenville County, report to a law enforcement agency in the city/county where the abused child resides or is found.
3. If the alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian or person responsible for a child's welfare, you may report either to law enforcement or to the Department of Social Services—but you must report. In Greenville County, DSS may be reached at (864) 467-7750.
4. After making a report to a law enforcement agency or to Social Services, the employee or volunteer is to then make a report to his or her supervisor or cabinet officer.

The report should include all available information regarding the known or suspected abuse, neglect or sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, the reason for reporting, the child's name and name of other siblings living in the household, present location of the child, the suspected perpetrator's name (if known), a description of what you have seen or heard including the date of occurrence, your observations and witnesses to the abuse, any agencies that you know that are already involved with the family, your name and phone number (can be anonymous).

DO NOT directly question or solicit information from the child or from the person suspected of improper behavior.

DO NOT delay making a report in order to gather evidence; the law enforcement agency to whom the report is made will determine whether such an investigation is warranted. It is better to report without all relevant information than to delay a report to collect information.

University Response

BJU will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or regulatory agency investigation. If the matter has an impact on the continued safety of others or could impact the services provided by BJU, BJU also will conduct its own investigation. If an investigation (external or internal) indicates that any employee, volunteer or student abused, neglected or sexually abused a child or otherwise acted contrary to the best interests of an alleged victim, BJU will impose disciplinary penalties including, but not limited to, termination of the individual's relationship with BJU.

Confidentiality

All reports of suspected child abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and the circumstances of the situation will be kept strictly confidential pursuant to South Carolina law. Reporting employees and volunteers shall not share the information with others beyond investigatory agencies, law enforcement or their university supervisor or cabinet officer.

Liability and Retaliation

Under South Carolina law, a person acting in good faith who makes a report of child abuse, whether required to report or not, or who participates in an investigation or judicial proceedings resulting from the report, is immune from civil and criminal liability. (SC Code 63-7-390)

University policy prohibits retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of child abuse, neglect, or child sexual abuse or who cooperates with or participates in any investigation of such allegations. Retaliation means taking adverse action against an individual because he or she acted in accordance with this policy.

Failure to Report

Under South Carolina law, a person required by law to report a case of child abuse or neglect who knowingly fails to do so, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both. (SC Code 63-7-410)

According to university policy, if any university employee or volunteer negligently, recklessly, or willfully fails to report a case of suspected child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse, that individual is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Training

To equip employees and students to identify and properly report child abuse, child sexual abuse and neglect, BJU will provide mandatory training to all new employees and students, and periodic supplemental training to all employees and students.

Employees or students who fail to meet the training requirements will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Support

A counselor in the Student Care Office trained to assist abuse victims is available to counsel university students. University students who have been abused in the past are strongly urged to seek assistance and counseling, whether through the Student Care Office or an off-campus provider.

Contact Information

Greenville Police Department
(864)467-5325

Greenville County Sheriff's Office
(864)271-5210 or 1(800)828-1206

Department of Social Services
(864)467-7750