

Archives
Closed

L.D.
175
.A40k
Th
510

TEACHER AWARENESS OF CHILD ABUSE
" "
IN A SOUTHERN SCHOOL SYSTEM

by

Nancy Taylor Schupp

Approved by

Joyce V. Lawrence

Chairperson, Thesis Committee

Sam C. St. John

Committee Member

Robert S. Jones

Committee Member

Larry W. Woodrow

Chairperson, Department of
Elementary Education

Ron Smith

Dean of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

Teacher Awareness of Child Abuse
in a Southern School System

by

Nancy Taylor Schupp

Thesis Chairperson: Dr. Joyce Lawrence
Department: Elementary Education

An assessment was made among elementary teachers in a southern school system to determine if they were limited in their knowledge concerning child abuse. A 19 item multiple choice type questionnaire was developed by the researcher to aid in gathering the necessary information.

Permission was obtained through the school superintendent to proceed with the study and questionnaires were sent from his office to all the elementary schools in the district. Principals of schools involved were contacted either in person or by phone to see if any assistance was needed. The distribution and collection of questionnaires within their own school was left up to each principal's discretion.

The questionnaires involved all elementary teachers within the school that came in contact with children. Of the 428 questionnaires distributed, 368 were returned (86%).

Results of the questionnaire indicate that the majority of elementary teachers lacked knowledge of the state's abuse law and procedures

established by the law. The majority of elementary teachers were aware of an existing county policy, but there were varied opinions as to who was to initiate reports. The majority of teachers characterized abusers as having had poor-parenting role models.

Recommendations include educating teachers as well as administrators so that they will be aware of the significance of the problem and better understand their responsibilities concerning child abuse. Similar research is recommended to other school districts within the area where this study was done and in other states as well.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to all those who made the completion of this study possible. To members of my thesis committee and to Dr. Joyce Lawrence, my committee chairman, who was always helpful, encouraging, and enduringly patient . . . , "thank you." To colleagues at the Citadel for their perseverance in helping to compute the data for this study, to special friends, and especially Bill, for their help and support, and to the superintendents, social workers, principals and teachers who graciously participated in the study, I would like to say, "It could not have been done without you!"

To friend Sally, a CPA graduate, I am indeed indebted for her typing skills and willing spirit.

Nancy T. Schupp

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.	ii
LIST OF TABLES.	v
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM.	1
General Background Information	1
Statement of the Problem	4
Purpose and Objectives	4
Definition	5
Limitations and Assumptions.	5
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
Historical Overview.	7
Extent of Abuse.	10
School's Role and Responsibilities	11
III. PROCEDURES	14
Population and Sample.	14
Description of Research Design	14
Data-gathering Instrument.	15
Statistical Treatment and Analysis	16
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	17
Reporting Laws and Procedures.	17
Reported and Suspected Cases	21
Sources of Information	22
School Policy.	23
Characteristics of Abusers	24
Solving the Problem.	27
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	28
Summary.	28
Conclusion	29
Recommendations.	30

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

	Page
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	34
APPENDICES.	37
Appendix A - Questionnaire	38
Appendix B - First Letter of Transmittal to the Superintendent.	44
Appendix C - Final Letter of Transmittal to the Superintendent, Principals and Faculty	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE SUSPECTED AND REPORTED CASES OF CHILD ABUSE.	21
2. SOURCES OF TEACHER INFORMATION ON CHILD ABUSE.	22
3. TEACHER RESPONSES WHEN ASKED IF THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT HAD A CHILD ABUSE POLICY.	23
4. PERSONS TEACHERS BELIEVE RESPONSIBLE TO INITIATE REPORTS OF ABUSE.	24
5. HOME SITUATIONS WHERE TEACHERS BELIEVE ABUSE IS LIKELY TO OCCUR.	25
6. CHARACTERISTICS TEACHERS ATTRIBUTE TO ABUSIVE FATHERS AND MOTHERS.	26
7. QUALITIES TEACHERS SELECTED FOR NON-ABUSIVE BABYSITTERS.	27

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The phenomenon of child abuse dates back to the beginning of humankind. It has been accepted by cultures as a natural way of child rearing, and overlooked by other cultures who preferred not to acknowledge its existence. Within the past two decades in this country, social consciousness has been raised and we have acknowledged the fact that child abuse does exist. Recognition of the problem has led to the passage of laws and to the specifications of certain professions to help in aiding a child in distress. Because schools are the most comprehensive resource for the total development of a child, educators, and more specifically, teachers, have had to further their responsibility to the child and his/her welfare (Education Commission of the States, 1978c).

General Background Information

"Child abuse is a 'disease' believed to be the largest killer of children in the United States today" (Shanas, 1975, p. 479). Brenton (1977) has stated that "in this country alone one thousand children die annually as a result of child abuse, and an additional estimated one million or more suffer because of it" (p. 51). Child abuse is so widespread that every state in the union has passed or updated laws mandating certain persons to report suspected child abuse cases to constituted authorities (Shanas, 1975). In many of the states, the laws are reinforced with civil and criminal penalties for failure to comply. For those reporting suspected cases in good faith all 50 states have guaranteed immunity from civil suits or criminal prosecution (DeFrancis & Lucht, 1974).

Professional medical personnel were the first to be required to report suspected cases of child abuse. The trend in the law now is to broaden the class of persons mandated to make reports. Persons such as dentists, interns, pharmacists, attorneys, social workers, nurses, and law enforcement personnel are listed as groups likely to come in contact with abused children and are responsible to report such cases. Forty-two states also include school personnel in the class of mandatory reporters because of their strategic position for case-finding (Education Commission of the States, 1978b). Due to the compulsory attendance law, school personnel come in daily contact with half of the abuse population. Gil (1969) found 47.6 per cent of reported cases of abuse were among children of school age and Lebsack (1976) supported this finding (Education Commission of the States, 1977a). Gil therefore believes "the classroom teacher should become the most important link in the preventive and protective chain, since his daily contacts put him in a strategic position to observe early identification of abuse" (1969, p. 2).

Fontana states "that the teacher may well be the first line of defense for the child against abuse" (Shanas, 1975, p. 480). "Teacher observation can lead to protective intervention before a situation becomes irreversible" (Gil, 1969, p. 2). Involving the schools and their personnel in the battle against child abuse seems amply justified for a number of reasons:

1. Teachers are trained observers of child growth and development and should be aware of behavior that interferes with academic achievement.

2. Most abused children demonstrate educational and/or psychological problems in the school environment. It seems logical that a teacher should make a formal request for an investigation of the child's environment if abuse is suspected. A teacher following such procedures should be viewed as making a professionally normal response.
3. Federal Law 94-142 (insuring schools provide for the handicapped) and federal programs such as Homestart and Headstart make it possible for a greater number of children to benefit from professional observation at even earlier ages (Education Commission of the States, 1977a).

A well conceived, clearly written school policy is an essential first step toward fulfilling education's potential. Public education has made dramatic progress in adopting policies on child abuse, yet "the school system fails some children because it ignores the child's out-of-school environment" (Nordston, 1974, p. 257). Schools have been reluctant to become involved because they have seen the problem as "outside their area of concern or viewed it as yet another imposition on an already overburdened staff" (Broadhurst, 1978, p. 22).

A check with the local Department of Social Services in the selected school district where this study was undertaken reveals teachers are not actively participating in the referral process. Percentages are not obtainable but social service personnel state that teachers reporting suspected cases are minimal. According to Riddle (1975), one of the major reasons for teacher non-involvement is their lack of training and knowledge concerning child abuse. If teachers are to aid society in

preventing child abuse, they will need to recognize child abuse symptoms and characteristics, and know state and local laws pertaining to child abuse (Wall, 1975).

Statement of the Problem

The problem is that teachers may be limited in their knowledge concerning child abuse. Teachers may not be aware of the state law or county policy on child abuse, or procedures established by them.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to assess the extent of elementary teachers' awareness in a particular southern school system as to their knowledge of child abuse, reporting laws and procedures. The study will seek to determine what percentage of elementary teachers sampled:

1. have suspected and reported a case of child abuse;
2. have derived their information on abuse from fellow teachers, friends, television and educational television, radio, magazines, newspapers, workshops, lectures;
3. have knowledge of a school policy on child abuse and know who is responsible for initiating a report;
4. know of their responsibilities to report, conditions that warrant a report, and procedures for reporting as prescribed by law;
5. are aware of penalties prescribed by law to persons who fail to report, or immunities for those reporting in good faith;
6. are aware of when the proper agency must take action after a report is made;

7. know when state laws were established and what those laws hope to achieve for the abused child and his/her family;
8. know characteristics of abusers or abusive situations; and
9. are knowledgeable of means that could more readily solve the problem of child abuse.

A lack of teacher knowledge on any aspect of the state's child abuse law or school policy might inhibit teachers from reporting abuse. Because teachers are required by law to report a suspected case of abuse, they cannot ignore the problem. Shanas (1975) believes that it is the teachers' responsibility to be equipped to spot potential cases, and by failing to report they are contributing to the statistics of child abuse.

Definition

According to Public Law 93-247, as established by the state where the study was done, child abuse is defined as meaning a child (any person under the age of 18) whose physical and mental health or welfare, is harmed or threatened with harm by the acts or omissions of his/her parent, guardian, or other person responsible for his/her welfare.

Limitations and Assumptions

The questionnaire that was developed to help carry out this research remained anonymous in regard to the teachers and to the schools which participated. It is therefore assumed that the answers revealed the beliefs and opinions of those sampled. However, conditions may have existed which might have contributed to the limitations of the study. If principals at any of the participating schools alerted teachers of the impending questionnaire, teachers might have prepared

themselves for it. Also, teachers may have felt obliged to answer a question the way they believed the researcher wanted it answered.

Other possible limitations exist in regard to the generalization of the results of the study. It is unlikely that the results could be generalized to school districts in other geographic regions of the country. Within the southeast the results could be generalized only to school districts that maintain similar laws and policies.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In order to more readily understand the magnitude of the problem of child abuse, a review of literature is presented in an historical context. This review will primarily focus on the historical development of the phenomena, beginnings of present day interest, statistical data on the extent of abuse, and the educator's role concerning child abuse.

Historical Overview

Cruelty to children has been recorded throughout every phase of man's history (Radbill, 1974). By present day attitudes early history reveals high levels of severe child abuse. Pages of historical books and documents speak of infanticide, child abandonment, child labor, sexual abuse, and the maiming and flogging of children. This treatment of children was characteristic of the times (DeMause, 1975).

In antiquity infanticide, the killing of newborn infants, was practiced in many cultures. According to Bakan (1971) the justification was that infanticide was a way of controlling the population, eliminating weak or deformed infants, and appeasing angry gods (ten Bensel & Berdie, 1976). Kline (1977) states that "scholars of the classical period reflected the attitude of their times, and Plato, Aristotle, and Seneca all maintained that killing defective children was a wise custom" (p. 9).

It was always taken for granted that parents and guardians of children had every right to treat their children as they saw fit. Laws such as the Roman Patrias Potestas supported and instructed abusive treatment of children since the Roman father had the right "to sell, abandon, devour, kill, offer in sacrifice, or dispose of his offspring" (Radbill, 1974; p. 6). When the Theodosian code (ca. 322 A.D.) was established, discouraging the practice of infanticide, parents found a different means of disposing of children which was by suffocation or "overlaying" (Osborn, 1975).

Religious teachings embraced the practice of severe physical punishment of children. This was considered necessary if the child was to be disciplined and possess a strong moral character. The philosophy of "spare the rod and spoil the child" appears throughout The Bible. This and similar teachings, found in The Old Testament, were brought to this country by our forefathers and used as "stringent measures for governing children." Two states, Massachusetts (1646) and Connecticut (1651), "adopted the old Mosaic law which imposed the death penalty on unruly children" (Kline, 1977; p. 9).

The practice of "baby farming" (disposing of infants) and the indenture and slavery systems (children were real property of owner) were other means of inhuman treatment. The Industrial Revolution provided another way of exploiting children with its long hours, insufficient pay, and deplorable working conditions (Osborn, 1975). Spargo (1970) states that children working in factories was the child-labor evil. It existed only for the sordid gain of profit seekers, and it was not until 1938 that the United States passed the first enforceable work law for the protection of minor children (Osborn, 1975).

Since the beginning of time, abandonment has been a means of disposing of children and from the earliest days of Christianity foundlings were numerous. In the time of Napoleon foundlings were cared for by the Sisters of Charity to be nurtured for the armies of France. In the United States during the early nineteenth century, foundlings were taken to almshouses. Gradually, out of concern for the neglected and abused children, institutional conditions improved, and in 1854 the Nursery and Children's Hospital of New York was established for the purpose of providing care for children (Radbill, 1974).

The first reported case of maltreatment in the United States was in 1874 when the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was successful in removing a little girl, Mary Ellen, from a home where she was maltreated. The Society argued that the child was part of the animal kingdom, since she was treated as an animal, and therefore entitled to the same justice as a common animal. One year later in New York City, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was organized by private individuals who were concerned about methods of child care (Simmons, 1975). By the early 1900's state government was entering the field of child welfare, and in 1930 a Children's Charter was adopted which promised full time public welfare services for protection of the abused (Radbill, 1974).

The mid 1940's was known as the modern period of the recognition of child abuse when articles in medical journals (Caffey, 1946a, 1946b) suggested intentional parental injury. Seven years passed before Silverman cited parents as a specific cause of injuries to children (Kline, 1977). In the early sixties Dr. Henry Kempe and his colleagues, alarmed by the large number of children suffering from non-accidental

injuries, coined the phrase "the battered child syndrome" which was a term used to describe physical abuse as a childhood disease in its own right (Radbill, 1974; Kline, 1977). Dr. Kempe's article "The Battered Child Syndrome" brought public attention to the problem of abuse and laws began to reflect the right of children and the responsibility of societal systems to uphold those rights (Nordstrom, 1974). Through the efforts of those concerned with the health and welfare of children, state legislatures started to pass child abuse reporting laws, and by 1968 all 50 states had statutes (Murdock, 1970). In 1974 the United States Congress passed Public Law 93-247 which was cited as the Child Abuse Prevention Act. This law established the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect and specifies updating of state laws (NCCAN, 1978). The passage of these humane laws expresses regard for child life which in the past could generally be presumed to be non-existent (Spargo, 1970).

Extent of Abuse

As stated by Gil (1970), although public awareness of child abuse and interest and concern for children has increased, the problem of child abuse is still a cause of serious concern. The actual incidences of abuse are not known due to "inaccuracies in existing data" (ten Bensel & Berdie, 1976; p. 455). Shanas (1975) states that according to the best estimates, some 10,000 children are severely battered each year; 50,000 to 75,000 are sexually abused; and 200,000 are otherwise neglected. Sixty thousand cases were reported in the nation in 1974. Some authorities estimate that there are a minimum of 25 actual cases for every one reported. Two children per day are known

to be dying of child abuse--more than 700 deaths a year. However, the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates that approximately 200,000 children are physically attacked annually, 60,000 to 100,000 are sexually abused, and every year 2,000 children die in circumstances suggestive of maltreatment (National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1978).

The Education Commission of the States cited 60,000 as the number of children actually physically abused, a number also used by Senator Walter F. Mondale in the hearings on the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Cohen & Sussman, 1975; NCCAN, 1978). A new sociological study on married couples and their children estimates that at some time in their children's lives, parents had kicked, bitten or punched between 3.1 and 4.0 million of them, and had literally beaten up between 1.4 and 2.3 million of them. These estimates are based on the total of 46 million children, age three to 17, who lived with both parents in 1975 (Brenton, 1977).

The only conclusion that can be made is that accurate information indicating the incidence of child abuse in the United States simply does not exist (Cohen & Sussman, 1975; p. 441).

School's Role and Responsibilities

It is uncertain how many cases of abuse go unreported each year and "though it may sound cruel, thousands of teachers across the country--people who have dedicated themselves to providing for the welfare of children--are contributing to the injury and death statistics by failing to report cases and refusing to get involved in the problem" (Shanas, 1975; p. 479). Child abuse is a societal problem with

educational implications (Wall, 1975). Since most abuse actually occurs in the school-age child, the public school system must be responsive to the rights of children (Martin, 1973; Nordstrom, 1974).

"There is evidence where schools have taken an active role in discovering and preventing child abuse, the result has been help for hundreds of families and children at risk" (Broadhurst, 1978, p. 36). After teachers were informed of their legal responsibilities and immunities in Syracuse, New York, the school system became the greatest single source of uncovering problems of abuse (Murdock, 1970). PROJECT PROTECTION in Montgomery County, Maryland, has brought about a steady increase in child abuse referrals and Brooklyn, New York's SCAN produced over 170 referrals in the first month of operation. In the first 25 days of operation of a school policy in Jefferson County, Colorado, 22 cases were reported. In all instances teachers were involved in reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect (Education Commission of the States, 1977a).

The metropolitan school district of Madison, Wisconsin is a good example of how school involvement in detecting and reporting cases of abuse can help. In the 1974-75 school year, eight cases of abuse were reported. Two years later, after the adoption of a school policy, publication of a handbook, and staff awareness programs, referrals of abuse by the staff rose to 21 cases. Figures from Stanly County, North Carolina, show the same trend in reporting, within a two-year period, following training and involvement of school personnel and the establishment of a Child Abuse Committee.

In some counties, such as Odom County, Colorado and Stanly County, North Carolina, community agencies work together in providing for the

best possible service plan for a family when abuse is suspected (Broadhurst, 1978).

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that when teachers have been trained, they become effective participants in the referral system (Broadhurst, 1978). Riscalla (1971) asserts the following:

Schools are composed of people who exert a powerful influence over the lives of others. Individuals with enlightened perspective have the constructively critical skill to overcome with positive alternatives the dehumanization that takes place within our society. People who are awake to realities and accurately informed, can best contribute to the social and moral reforms vital for an enlightened society. (p. 131).

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

This study is an assessment of the extent to which elementary teachers in a selected southern school system are aware of child abuse and associated reporting laws and procedures.

Population and Sample

The population for this study is defined as all elementary teachers in 14 different schools within a given district. This includes classroom teachers and all other teachers within the school system, with the exception of teacher aides, who came in daily contact with children. The names of principals contacted and the number of teachers in each school were obtained from the county school directory. From a total population of 428 teachers, 368 are included in the sample.

The school district, which serves 14,700 elementary pupils, is located in the southeastern United States, with an approximate population of 75,000. The area is a cross section of rural and urban populations with varying cultural and religious backgrounds. To protect information sources for the present study, the name of the school district is not disclosed.

Description of Research Design

This study is a survey which involves teachers within 14 different elementary schools. Permission to conduct the survey, as well as other investigation procedures, was obtained through the district superintendent.

The questionnaires, counted in advance by the researcher, were sent by courier from the superintendent's office to the schools, and returned by courier to that office upon completion. Also, the investigator agreed to share results with the superintendent.

A letter (see Appendix B) stating the purpose and procedure of the study was then written to the superintendent by the researcher and he in turn wrote to the principals of the participating schools requesting their cooperation. The researcher then contacted each of the principals concerning the questionnaire, the procedures, and to see if further assistance was needed. This was done by phone or personal contact in order to provide additional information following written correspondence. At this time each principal was assured a written copy of results and that names of teachers and schools would remain anonymous. It was suggested by the investigator that questionnaires be distributed in a manner that each principal felt appropriate. Each principal decided upon the procedure he wanted to use in his/her school. Upon their completion each school returned the questionnaires by courier to the superintendent's office where they were collected by the researcher.

After tabulating the results of the questionnaires, letters (see Appendix C) were sent to the superintendent and each of the schools involved thanking them for their cooperation and disclosing the results. A follow-up appointment was made with the superintendent and the results of the questionnaires were discussed.

Data-Gathering Instrument

A questionnaire format was chosen by the researcher to gather information needed for the study since it was "the best method of

gathering factual information" (Best, 1970, p. 161), and the time element involved was minimal. The questionnaire (Appendix A) consisted of multiple choice type questions dealing with the county policy on child abuse, the state's child abuse law, and characteristics elementary school teachers attribute to abusers.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and was critically examined by the following five qualified professionals: a health consultant with the State Department of Education, two professors experienced in psychological testing, a social worker, and an author and teacher of child abuse programs assigned to another school district with an outstanding child abuse program. The questionnaire was approved by the district superintendent, and his assistant who is in charge of the district's child abuse program. It was pretested and received favorably in one of the schools included in the study before being distributed to other schools in the selected district. Comments from participants in the pretest school reflected no apparent confusion in either the wording of the questions or the presentation of answer choices.

Statistical Treatment and Analysis

It was decided that the data derived from the questionnaire could best be tabulated by computer. Questionnaires were numbered in order to avoid tabulating a questionnaire more than once, and answers were transferred onto IBM COBOL Coding Forms. The coding forms were checked for accuracy by two additional persons. These data are presented in tabulation form in chapter four.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is an assessment of elementary teacher awareness of child abuse in a southern school system. The study was accomplished with the aid of a questionnaire that assessed teacher knowledge in three areas: (1) state laws regarding child abuse; (2) county policies concerning child abuse; and, (3) characteristics of abusers. The study also determines how many teachers have suspected or reported a case of abuse; from what source teachers have derived their information on abuse; and, what means teachers believe could more readily solve the problem. Four hundred and thirty-eight questionnaires were distributed with 368, or 86 per cent, returned and suitable for analysis. This chapter presents the results of those returns.

Reporting Laws and Procedures

The following items dealt with the state's child abuse law and reporting procedures. Questions are numbered and presented as they appear on the questionnaire. In order to provide for a clearer interpretation of the survey, the percentages of each possible answer are indicated and correct responses are designated with an asterisk. Percentages may total less than 100 per cent if no answer was given by one or more of the participants.

The following items dealt with the state's child abuse law and reporting procedures.

5. Which of the following is true?

- (a) *In this state it is mandatory for only certain professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse. 11%
- (b) In this state it is not mandatory to report cases of child abuse but persons are called upon to use their social consciousness and act 16%
- (c) In this state it is mandatory for anyone to report cases of child abuse. 45%
- (d) Don't Know. 28%

6. According to state law, which of the following would warrant a report on child abuse?

- (a) Obvious physical symptoms of abuse must be evident to the observer. 30%
- (b) *The physical or mental health or welfare of a child has been harmed or threatened with harm 39%
- (c) The victim must describe the abusive situation and name the responsible party 5%
- (d) Don't know. 26%

7. How should reports be made?

- (a) *Orally, as soon as possible, to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency; may be followed by a written report 49%
- (b) A written report must be submitted immediately 6%
- (c) Oral report must be followed by a written report. 13%
- (d) Don't know. 31%

8. The state law provides that any person required to report:
- (a) Must make a definitive diagnosis before reporting a suspected case of child abuse. . . . 25%
 - (b) *May take, or cause to be taken, photographs of areas of trauma visible on the child. 14%
 - (c) Don't know 61%
9. According to state law any person required to report a case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so:
- (a) Shall not suffer further legal action. . . . 8%
 - (b) *Will be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor . . . 47%
 - (c) Don't know 44%
10. State law provides that any person required to report, acting in good faith:
- (a) *Shall be immune from civil and criminal liability. 37%
 - (b) Shall not be immune from civil and criminal liability if the case is unfounded. 8%
 - (c) Shall not be immune from legal action no matter what the outcome of the case . . . 9%
 - (d) Don't know 43%
11. According to state law, a report of a suspected case of child abuse must be investigated by the proper agency:
- (a) *Within 24 hours. 21%
 - (b) Within 30 days 14%
 - (c) Within 60 days 1%
 - (d) Don't know 64%
12. The state law concerning child abuse and neglect:
- (a) *Dictates well-being and development of endangered children and preservation of family life when appropriate. 47%

- (b) Seeks immediate severe punitive action for the guilty parties of indicated child abuse cases, since child abuse is a crime. 14%
- (c) Don't know. 35%
14. State laws on child abuse were not established until:
- (a) The early 1900's. 5%
- (b) 1940's. 13%
- (c) *1960's. 63%
- (d) Don't know. 17%

A majority of the population sampled did not answer correctly on any of the questionnaire items regarding state law and reporting procedures. Only 41 of those teachers questioned knew that mandatory reporting was required by certain professionals while 166 believed all persons were required to report. Slightly more than one-tenth of the teachers surveyed were aware of their legal responsibility to report a suspected case of child abuse as stated by law. Less than half are aware of penalties they might suffer for failing to report. Although almost half the population (182) knew procedures for making a report, 225 were not aware of what would warrant a report of child abuse. Some 223 did not know that they may take, or cause to be taken, photographs of areas of trauma visible on a child. As seen by the answers chosen, 221 were not knowledgeable of their immunity from civil and criminal liability if acting in good faith when a report was made. Just 78 teachers were aware of the length of time a suspected case of abuse must be investigated by the proper authorities once it is reported. The majority of teachers (195) did not know that the state's law dictates

the well-being and development of endangered children and preservation of family life when appropriate.

Question 14 reveals that 232 of the teachers did know that state laws on child abuse were not established until the 1960's. Teacher knowledge that laws are relatively new might help to explain why they still lack knowledge, or overall understanding, of the law and county policies, and the practice of acknowledging and abiding by the laws may not, as yet, be a part of their everyday responsibilities.

Those sampled may interpret this "newness" as a valid reason for lack of information.

Reported and Suspected Cases

It is interesting to note the discrepancy between the percentage of teachers who have suspected a case of abuse and those who have actually reported a case of abuse (Table 1). Of the 194 teachers answering yes to suspecting a case of abuse, only 70 have ever reported a case. A look at Question 6, under reporting laws and procedures, might explain one reason for this discrepancy. Teachers were not knowledgeable of what would warrant a case of child abuse, therefore, they might have been hesitant in reporting. Question 11 discloses that

Table 1
PERCENTAGES OF TEACHER WHO HAVE
SUSPECTED AND REPORTED
CASES OF CHILD ABUSE

Cases	Percentages	
	Yes	No
Suspected	47	53
Reported	19	81

n = 368

teachers did not know that a proper agency must investigate a reported case of suspected abuse within 24 hours. Without this knowledge teachers might have thought their reporting would not be given prompt attention or produce further action.

Sources of Information

Since teachers failing to report suspected cases could feasibly be linked to their lack of knowledge on reporting laws and procedures, it was necessary to determine what exposure teachers have had on the subject and from what source they have derived this information (Table 2). The greatest source of information for those teachers surveyed

Table 2
SOURCES OF TEACHER INFORMATION
ON CHILD ABUSE

Sources	% Selecting
Commercial Television and Educational Television	62*
Newspapers	49
Magazines	41
Lectures	24
Fellow Teachers	19
Workshops	12
Friends	11
Radio	5

n = 368

*Column totals more than 100 percent because respondents could mark more than one response.

was commercial television or educational television. Lectures and workshops had informed only 69 of those surveyed. As shown by this analysis, teachers seem not to have been informed adequately. Their major source of information, commercial television and educational television, has not been sufficient in providing them with critical information.

School Policy

It is important to note that of the 368 teachers participating in the survey, 247 were aware that their school district had a policy for reporting child abuse (Table 3). This is well over half the sampled population, yet there remained 113 persons who did not know whether or not such a policy existed, and eight who said there was no such policy. As with reporting laws and procedures, it would appear that the lack of knowledge about the school policy is due to a lack of information.

Table 3

TEACHER RESPONSES WHEN ASKED IF THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT HAD A CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Responses	% Selecting
Yes	67
No	2
Don't know	31

n = 368

It is worth noting that 181 teachers believed it was the teachers' responsibility to initiate a report of child abuse, but 127 teachers designated that responsibility to the principal, and 159 designated the responsibility to other school personnel (Table 4). This might be attributed to a lack of communications between the administration and the faculty regarding the school's policy. It could also mean that reporting procedures stated in the school policy are not clearly understood by the administration or the teachers.

Table 4
PERSONS TEACHERS BELIEVE RESPONSIBLE
TO INITIATE REPORTS OF ABUSE

Persons	% Selecting
Teacher	49
Principal	35
Guidance Counselor	7
Assistant Principal	5
Nurse	2
Superintendent	1
Assistant Superintendent	1

n = 368

Characteristics of Abusers

Answers to the questions pertaining to characteristics of abusers were not as diversified as other responses to the questionnaire. On question 15 (Appendix A), 327 of the teachers surveyed characterized

abusers as being unable to cope with the complex problems of daily life. Only 33 teachers attributed low socio-economic class as a common characteristic of abusers and seven believed it to be common in members of a minority race.

Three hundred and ten teachers believed abuse occurred more often in homes where parents themselves were abused as children. The second most selected abusive home situation was one where there was marital conflict, and this was chosen by only 96 of the respondents. As shown in Table 5, the other choices were not as significant to the teachers surveyed in contributing to an abusive home situation.

Table 5

HOME SITUATIONS WHERE TEACHERS BELIEVE
ABUSE IS MORE LIKELY TO OCCUR

Abusive Home Situation	% Selecting
a. both parents have jobs outside the home	4*
b. there is no father present at home	6
c. there is no religious guidance	10
d. the family is isolated from the extended family	5
e. parents who themselves were abused as children	84
f. a large family	1
g. there is marital conflict	26

n = 368

*Columns total more than 100 percent because respondents could mark more than one response.

Teachers' answers revealed similar knowledge on questions regarding abusive mothers and fathers (Table 6). When teachers were asked what characteristics they attributed to abusive mothers, 264 indicated abusive mothers learned poor parenting from their own mothers. When asked to characterize abusive fathers, 226 agreed that abusive fathers lacked an effective model. The responses to these three items seem to indicate the majority of teachers sampled believe abusive behavior is learned and abused children tend to be abusing parents. Teachers characterizing the abusive mothers as an alcohol and drug abuser numbered 88, and 89 attributed the same characteristic to abusive fathers. Emotional problems were selected by 170 teachers as a characteristic of abusive fathers.

Table 6

CHARACTERISTICS TEACHERS ATTRIBUTE
TO ABUSIVE FATHERS AND MOTHERS

Mothers	% Selecting	Fathers	% Selecting
have learned poor parenting from their own mothers	72	have lacked an effective model as a child	62*
alcohol and drug abuser	24	have emotional problems	46
ignorant of child development	22	alcohol and drug abuser	24
talk very little with their family	11	less satisfied with their jobs than most fathers	16
have had children that have medical or physical disabilities	6	be unemployed	12
have had low birth weight babies	1	have a low I.Q.	2

n = 368

*Columns total more than 100 percent because respondents could mark more than one response.

The results of teachers responding to item 19 on the questionnaire are shown in Table 7. Of those sampled, 255 believed the best qualifying characteristic attributed to a non-abusive babysitter is that he/she can best meet the needs of a particular child.

Table 7
QUALITIES TEACHERS SELECTED FOR
NON-ABUSIVE BABYSITTERS

Qualities	% Selecting
a. Friend of a friend	9*
b. Best prices	1
c. Love for children	53
d. Best suited to meet the needs of a particular child	70
e. Convenient hours and location	5

n = 368

*Column totals more than 100 percent because respondents could mark more than one response.

Solving the Problem

The cooperation and working together of professionals in the community was the choice of 267 respondents as a solution that could more readily resolve abuse, while 31 indicated federal money and further legislation would help lessen the problem. Of those sampled 70 did not know what would help.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study describes a survey taken of elementary teachers in a southern school system concerning their knowledge of child abuse. The research was conducted with the aid of a multiple choice type questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of nineteen items each pertaining to a certain aspect of child abuse. Questions dealt with the state law on child abuse and procedures established by the law for reporting. Teachers were asked if there was an existing child abuse policy within their school system, and if so, who was designated responsible for initiating reports. Teachers were also asked to reveal from which sources they had derived their information on abuse and if they had ever suspected or reported a case of abuse. Questions dealt with characteristics teachers attribute to abusers or abusive situations, and by what means teachers believe the problem could more readily be resolved.

Results of the questionnaire indicate that the majority of elementary educators lacked knowledge on the state's child abuse law and their responsibility as to the procedures established within the law. The majority were aware, however, of an existing county policy, but there were varied opinions as to who was to initiate reports. Teachers were aware that the establishment of state laws is relatively new. The majority of teachers characterized abusers as unable to cope with the complex problems of daily life and as having suffered abuse themselves

as children, therefore having poor-parenting role models. Teachers believed that parents should find babysitters best suited to meet the needs of a particular child in order to avoid an abusive situation.

Conclusions

The problem presented in this research states that teachers may be limited in their knowledge concerning child abuse. In light of the findings in this study, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is a lack of knowledge among elementary teachers in this selected district on the state's child abuse law and reporting procedures. The majority of teachers were not aware of their legal responsibility to report a suspected case of abuse or procedures for reporting. The majority of teachers were not aware that, according to law, proper agencies must investigate reported cases of abuse within 24 hours. They also did not know that the state's law on abuse was intended to be rehabilitative rather than punitive. The majority of the respondents were not aware of immunities for reporting in good faith, or of possible penalties imposed for failing to report. The lack of knowledge in the preceding areas of law might have contributed to the fact that less than half of those sampled who had suspected a case of abuse had ever reported it.

A majority of those sampled were aware that state laws on child abuse are relatively new. The recency of legislation could well be a justification for limited knowledge in some areas of the child abuse law.

A majority of teachers were aware of a school policy on child abuse but their opinions were diverse as to who was to initiate the report. Inadequate information may have resulted in either a lack of

knowledge of laws, policies and procedures, or a teacher hesitancy to report. Commercial and educational television were the greatest sources of information for teachers on the subject of child abuse, while lectures and workshops had provided information for few of those sampled.

The majority of respondents believed abusers might be characterized as persons unable to cope with the complex problems of daily life. The majority also believed abusive mothers and fathers experienced abuse as children or had abusive role models. In order to avoid a possible abusive situation, most of the teachers believed that the babysitters best suited to meet the needs of a particular child were the most qualified.

Most of the educators sampled indicated professionals in a community, working cooperatively, could best help to resolve the problem of child abuse.

Recommendations

It has been determined from the results of this study that teachers in the selected school district are not aware of laws and policies on child abuse. Adequate laws can be effective only through compliance; however, in order to comply, teachers must first have a working knowledge of the law and the procedures established within the law. The sampled population needs to be aware of state law and procedures on child abuse, not only to help protect a child whose welfare might be endangered, but also because of the penalties one might suffer for failure to comply with the law.

Commercial and educational television, the teachers' greatest source of information on the subject, had not been sufficient. It

would appear that further education is needed not only on the law but also on school policy. Workshops involving child welfare agencies and persons responsible for school policies would provide an excellent means of informing teachers not only in this particular school district, but also in other districts as well.

The results from this study disclose that teachers believe cooperation among professionals is necessary in resolving the problem of child abuse. This response perhaps indicates a willingness on their part to become more active participants in the protective and preventive process, but first they must know and understand the significance of their role.

Greater communication at all levels of education, and especially between faculty and administrators, is needed in order for individuals to understand their part in the referral process. Boards of Education, locally and at the state level, should take affirmative steps toward financing programs for educators on identifying, reporting and preventing child abuse. In-service training should include everyone in education and credit should be given not only as an incentive for attending, but also because of the vital issue itself.

It is difficult to incorporate a working knowledge of child abuse into the everyday classroom situation simply because of the recent enactment of the laws, policies and procedures. This is why educating future teachers at the college level would be beneficial. The knowledge gained from the study of child abuse and its implications for the teacher would insure future teachers of a working knowledge of

child abuse. A study of child abuse should be incorporated into other curriculum requirements that enable aspiring teachers to fulfill their responsibilities in the school environment. 'Future teachers need to be informed of laws relating to child abuse, recognition of abuse, and local policies relating to the issue.'

The teachers in this study seem to place great significance on the role models encountered by children. Because teachers come in close daily contact with children, they are an important model in their students' lives. The way they handle themselves in an everyday or stressful classroom situation should exemplify behavior that they would want their students to model.

Supporting an effective child abuse program will not necessarily mean an infringement upon the valuable time needed to fulfill teachers' professional duties. If teachers suspect a case of abuse and they are familiar with their role and the procedures they are to follow, then reporting would not seem to be an overwhelming process, but just another professional responsibility.

Findings from this study seem to indicate that similar research would benefit other school districts in this state in determining teachers' knowledge of child abuse, the state law and respective county policies concerning child abuse.

A study could also be conducted at the state level to determine if school districts have existing policies on child abuse and to determine their effectiveness. Research of this nature is not limited to the state where this particular study was conducted. Other states, and the school systems within them, could benefit as well. If a

state has one district with an effective child abuse policy, it could serve as a model for other districts in adapting and implementing effective child abuse policies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baken, D. Slaughter of the innocents. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass., 1971.
- Best, J.W. Research in education. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.
- Brenton, M. What can be done about child abuse? Today's Education, 66 (3), 51-52.
- Broadhurst, D.D. What schools are doing about child abuse and neglect. Children Today, 7 (1), 22-24, 36.
- Chase, N.F. A child is being beaten. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975.
- Cohen, S. and Sussman, A. The incidence of child abuse in the U.S. Child Welfare, 56, 432-443.
- DeFrancis, V., and Lucht, C.L. Child abuse legislation in the 1970's. Denver, Colorado: Children's Division of the American Humane Association, 1974.
- DeMause, L. Our forebears made childhood a nightmare. Psychology Today, 8 (11), 85-88.
- Drew, K. The child and his school. In C.H. Kempe and R.E. Helfer Helping the battered child and his family. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1974.
- Education Commission of the States. Teacher education - an active participant in solving the problem of child abuse and neglect. Report No. 99. Denver, 1977.
- Education Commission of the States. Trends in child protection laws - 1977. Report No. 106. Denver, 1978.
- Education Commission of the States. Education policies and practices regarding child abuse and neglect: 1978. Report No. 109. Denver, 1978.
- Fontana, V.J. Somewhere a child is crying. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973.
- Forer, L.G. The rights of children. Young Children, 27, 332-339.

- Friedman, R.; et al. Four perspectives on the status of child abuse and neglect research. U.S. Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 127 764, 1976.
- Gil, D. What schools can do about child abuse. American Education, 5 (5), 2-5.
- Gil, D.G. Violence against children: Physical child abuse in the United States. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1970.
- Helfer, R.E., and C.H. Kempe, eds. The battered child. Second Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974.
- Kempe, C.H., and R. E. Helfer. Helping the battered child and his family. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972.
- Kline, D., and J. Christiansen. Educational and psychological problems of abused children. U.S. Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 121 041, 1975.
- Kline, D.F. Child abuse and neglect: A primer for school personnel. Reston, Virginia: Council for Exceptional Children, 1977.
- Martin, D.L. The growing horror of child abuse and the undeniable role of the schools in putting an end to it. The American School Board Journal, 160 (11), 51-55.
- Morgan, S.R. The battered child in the classroom. Journal of Pediatric Psychology. 2, 47-49.
- Murdock, C.G. The abused child and the school system. American Journal of Public Health, 60, 105-109.
- National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. 1977 analysis of child abuse and neglect research, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1978.
- Nordstrom, J. Child abuse: A school district's response to its responsibility. Child Welfare, 53, 257-260.
- Osborn, K.D. Early childhood education in historical perspective. Athens: The University of Georgia, 1975.
- Radbill, S.X. A history of child abuse and infanticide. In C.H. Kempe and R.E. Helfer Helping the battered child and his family. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1974.
- Riddle, C. An assessment of the level of awareness of Utah Public School Special Educators concerning the state's child abuse reporting laws and procedures. (Master's thesis, Utah State University, 1975).

- Shanas, B. Child abuse: A killer teachers can help control. Phi Delta Kappan, 56, 479-482.
- Spargo, J. The bitter cry of the children, New York: Garrett Press, Inc., 1970.
- ten Bensel, R.W., and J. Birdie. The neglect and abuse of children and youth: The scope of the problem and the school's role. The Journal of School Health, 46, 253-261.
- Wall, C.M. Child abuse: A societal problem with educational implications. Peabody Journal of Education, 52, 222-225.
- Wooden, K. Weeping in the playtime of others: America's incarcerated children. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.
- Zalba, S.R. Battered children. Transaction, 8, 58-61.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS CONCERNED WITH TEACHER AWARENESS OF CHILD ABUSE.
PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE.

1. Have you ever suspected a child of being abused?

_____ yes

_____ no

2. From what source have you derived most of your information on child abuse?

_____ fellow teachers

_____ magazines

_____ friends

_____ newspapers

_____ T.V. and E.T.V.

_____ workshops

_____ radio

_____ lecture

3. Does your school system have a policy for reporting child abuse?

_____ yes

_____ no

_____ don't know

If yes, who is the person responsible for initiating reports of child abuse?

_____ principal

_____ nurse

_____ assistant principal

_____ teacher

_____ superintendent

_____ guidance counselor

_____ assistant superintendent

4. Have you ever reported a case of child abuse?

_____ yes

_____ no

5. Which of the following is true?

_____ a. In this state, it is mandatory for only certain professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse.

_____ b. In this state, it is not mandatory to report cases of child abuse, but persons are called upon to use their social consciousness and act.

- _____ c. In this state, it is mandatory for anyone to report cases of child abuse.
- _____ d. don't know
6. According to state law, which of the following would warrant a report on child abuse?
- _____ a. Obvious physical symptoms of abuse must be evident to the observer.
- _____ b. The physical or mental health or welfare of a child has been harmed or threatened harm.
- _____ c. The victim must describe the abusive situation and name the responsible party.
- _____ d. don't know
7. How should reports be made?
- _____ a. Orally, as soon as possible, to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency; may be followed by a written report.
- _____ b. A written report must be submitted immediately.
- _____ c. Oral report must be followed by a written report.
- _____ d. don't know
8. The state law provides that any person required to report:
- _____ a. must make a definitive diagnosis before reporting a suspected case of abuse.
- _____ b. may take or cause to be taken photographs of areas of trauma visible on the child.
- _____ c. don't know
9. According to state law any person required to report a case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so:
- _____ a. shall not suffer further legal action.
- _____ b. will be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor.
- _____ c. don't know

10. State law provides that any person required to report, acting in good faith,
- a. shall be immune from civil and criminal liability.
 - b. shall be immune from civil and criminal liability if case is unfounded.
 - c. shall not be immune from legal action no matter what the outcome of the case.
 - d. don't know
11. According to state law, a report of suspected cases of child abuse must be investigated by the proper agency:
- a. within 24 hours
 - b. within 30 days
 - c. within 60 days
 - d. don't know
12. The state law concerning child abuse and neglect:
- a. dictates well-being and development of endangered children and preservation of family life when appropriate.
 - b. seeks immediate severe punitive action for the guilty parties of indicated child abuse cases, since child abuse is a crime.
 - c. don't know
13. The problem of child abuse could be more readily solved if:
- a. The federal government appropriated more money and passed further legislation to lessen the problem.
 - b. Professionals in a community worked cooperatively to help resolve the problem.
 - c. don't know
14. State laws on child abuse were not established until:
- a. the early 1900's
 - b. 1940's
 - c. 1960's
 - d. don't know

15. Which one of the following characteristics might most child abusers have in common:
- _____ a. Low socio-economic class
 - _____ b. Member of a minority race
 - _____ c. Inability to cope with the complex problems of daily life
16. Abuse is more likely to occur in which of the following home situations?
- _____ a. both parents have jobs outside the home
 - _____ b. there is no father present at home
 - _____ c. there is no religious guidance
 - _____ d. the family is isolated from their extended family
 - _____ e. parents who themselves were abused as children
 - _____ f. a large family
 - _____ g. there is a marital conflict
17. Abusive fathers tend to:
- _____ a. be less satisfied with their jobs than most fathers
 - _____ b. alcohol and drug abuse
 - _____ c. be unemployed
 - _____ d. have emotional problems
 - _____ e. have a low I.Q.
 - _____ f. have lacked an effective model as a child
18. Abusive mothers tend to:
- _____ a. be an alcohol and drug abuser
 - _____ b. talk very little with their family
 - _____ c. have had low birth weight babies
 - _____ d. be ignorant of child development

- _____ e. have had children that have medical or physical disabilities
 - _____ f. have learned poor parenting from their own mothers
19. Due to recent research in abusive babysitters, what qualities should parents look for before hiring someone to sit with their children?
- _____ a. Friend of a friend
 - _____ b. Best prices
 - _____ c. Love for children
 - _____ d. Best suited to meet the needs of a particular child
 - _____ e. Convenient hours and location

APPENDIX B

FIRST LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Superintendent:

In order to complete the requirements for a masters degree at Appalachian State University, I have elected to do a thesis to evaluate the level of teacher awareness of child abuse in the elementary school. In order to determine teacher awareness, I have developed a questionnaire that I would like to distribute to all the elementary school teachers in the county. The information derived from this questionnaire could later be used as a basis for workshops on child abuse in our school system and other school districts as well. I feel this endeavor will prove beneficial to our school system by motivating teachers to assume a greater role in identifying and preventing child abuse. The name of the county and participating schools will not be used in the thesis.

The questionnaire deals with aspects of the state law and county policy on child abuse and characteristics of the abuser. The time element is ten to fifteen minutes and the participants are to remain confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy T. Schupp

APPENDIX C

FINAL LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT,
PRINCIPALS AND FACULTY

Superintendent of Schools
County

Dear Superintendent:

The survey on "the general awareness of child abuse" in which the principals and teachers in this district so graciously participated has now been completed. I would like to thank you and all other school personnel involved in the pursuit of this study for your time and willingness to share some information with me. Let me assure you that all names, individuals and schools, have remained confidential throughout.

Enclosed is a copy of the results and hopefully this information will prove to be beneficial in helping to create interest and build a greater awareness as to how best to protect the children in our schools from abuse. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With sincere appreciation for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy T. Schupp

Dear Principal and Faculty Member:

The survey on the "general awareness of child abuse" in which you so graciously participated has now been completed. I would like to thank all who were involved in this study for your time and willingness to share your information with me on child abuse, school policies and state laws. Let me assure you this study was to assess a total population's awareness and not to pinpoint any individual response. All names of participants, schools and otherwise, have remained confidential.

Enclosed is a copy of the results and hopefully this information will prove to be beneficial in helping to create interest and build a greater awareness as how to best protect the children in our schools from abuse.

With sincere appreciation for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy T. Schupp

Percentages of teachers responding to each answer choice are in the blank beside that choice, * denotes correct response.

1. Have you ever suspected a child of being abuse?

47% yes

53% no

2. From what source have you derived most of your information on child abuse?

19% fellow teachers

41% magazines

11% friends

49% newspapers

62% T.V. and E.T.V.

12% workshops

5% radio

24% lecture

3. Does your school system have a policy for reporting child abuse?

67% yes

2% no

31% don't know

If yes, who is the person responsible for initiating reports of child abuse?

35% principal

2% nurse

5% assistant principal

49% teacher

1% superintendent

7% guidance counselor

1% assistant superintendent

4. Have you ever reported a case of child abuse?

19% yes

81% no

5. Which of the following is true?

11% a. *In this state, it is mandatory for only certain professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse.

- 16% b. In this state, it is not mandatory to report cases of child abuse, but persons are called upon to use their social consciousness and act.
- 45% c. In this state, it is mandatory for anyone to report cases of child abuse.
- 28% d. don't know
6. According to state law, which of the following would warrant a report on child abuse?
- 30% a. Obvious physical symptoms of abuse must be evident to the observer.
- 39% b. *The physical or mental health or welfare of a child has been harmed or threatened harm.
- 5% c. The victim must describe the abusive situation and name the responsible party.
- 26% d. don't know
7. How should reports be made?
- 49% a. *Orally, as soon as possible, to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency;
- 6% b. A written report must be submitted immediately.
- 13% c. Oral report must be followed by a written report.
- 31% d. don't know
8. The state law provides that any person required to report:
- 25% a. must make a definitive diagnosis before reporting a suspected case of abuse.
- 14% b. *may take or cause to be taken photographs of areas of trauma visible on the child.
- 61% c. don't know
9. According to state law any person required to report a case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so:
- 8% a. shall not suffer further legal action.
- 47% b. *will be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor.

- 44% c. don't know
10. State law provides that any person required to report, acting in good faith,
- 37% a. *shall be immune from civil and criminal liability.
- 8% b. shall be immune from civil and criminal liability if case is unfounded.
- 9% c. shall not be immune from legal action no matter what the outcome of the case.
- 43% d. don't know
11. According to state law, a report of suspected cases of child abuse must be investigated by the proper agency:
- 21% a. *within 24 hours
- 14% b. within 30 days
- 1% c. within 60 days
- 64% d. don't know
12. The state law concerning child abuse and neglect:
- 47% a. *dictates well-being and development of endangered children and preservation of family life when appropriate.
- 14% b. seeks immediate severe punitive action for the guilty parties of indicated child abuse cases, since child abuse is a crime.
- 35% c. don't know
13. The problem of child abuse could be more readily solved if:
- 8% a. The federal government appropriated more money and passed further legislation to lessen the problem.
- 73% b. *Professionals in a community worked cooperatively to help resolve the problem.
- 19% c. don't know

14. State laws on child abuse were not established until:
- 5% a. the early 1900's
 - 13% b. 1940's
 - 63% c. *1960's
 - 17% d. don't know
15. Which one of the following characteristics might most child abusers have in common:
- 9% a. Low socio-economic class
 - 2% b. Member of a minority race
 - 89% c. Inability to cope with the complex problems of daily life
16. Abuse is more likely to occur in which of the following home situations?
- 4% a. both parents have jobs outside the home
 - 6% b. there is no father present at home
 - 10% c. there is no religious guidance
 - 5% d. the family is isolated from their extended family
 - 84% e. parents who themselves were abused as children
 - 1% f. a large family
 - 26% g. there is a marital conflict
17. Abusive fathers tend to:
- 16% a. be less satisfied with their jobs than most fathers
 - 24% b. alcohol and drug abuse
 - 12% c. be unemployed
 - 46% d. have emotional problems
 - 2% e. have a low I.Q.
 - 62% f. have lacked an effective model as a child

18. Abusive mothers tend to:

- 24% a. be an alcohol and drug abuser
- 11% b. talk very little with their family
- 1% c. have had low birth weight babies
- 22% d. be ignorant of child development
- 7% e. have had children that have medical or physical disabilities
- 72% f. have learned poor-parenting from their own mothers

19. Due to recent research in abusive babysitters, what qualities should parents look for before hiring someone to sit with their children?

- 5% a. Friend of a friend
- 1% b. Best prices
- 53% c. Love for children
- 69% d. Best suited to meet the needs of a particular child
- 5% e. Convenient hours and location