



## **Guidelines for Presenting Three-hour Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse Curriculum**

There is a lot of great information in the full-length six-hour version of PFSA's "Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse" curriculum. Unfortunately, when the three-hour version is presented, some information must be only referred to briefly in order to get the critical pieces across to the audience.

Inform participants that the three-hour version is a condensed version of a six-hour curriculum, so that there will be many things that will not be covered in as much depth. Be sure to let participants know they will still receive critical information, but for better comprehension and more details, they should utilize their Participant's Guide to review any information that was not covered completely during training.

You do not have permission to alter the PowerPoint presentation or any of the slides. In the three-hour version, there are many slides that you will not spend much time on, but they should still be included.

There are several important general things to keep in mind:

- You must cover the subject matter necessary for participants to be able to meet the learning objectives. With audiences that ask a lot of questions, it is sometimes easy to get off track and need to make up some time. Just be sure the critical information is always included.
- Move the material along quickly from the very beginning. Be careful not to become sidetracked with questions. Postpone questions that will be answered later by the presentation. Start on time and keep the break short (i.e. no more than 10 minutes is recommended).
- Keep the introductory piece at the beginning of training very short. You should be through the introduction, including a very brief introduction of the program and the trainer, the introductory lesson, an overview of the materials each participant has received, and the pre-training survey (a.k.a. pre-test) in no more than 20 minutes.
  - Sharing expectations (What Is In It For Me Activity) should not be skipped. However, instead of dividing participants into groups to discuss and then share expectations, you should ask them to provide them individually by going around the room as quickly as possible. With larger groups (e.g. 20 or more), it will be necessary to consider asking for volunteers to give

expectations instead of asking everyone. This exercise is a critical piece, however, so do not be tempted to cut it entirely. Not only does it provide the trainer with valuable insight as to where the group is coming from, but it also sets the stage for demonstrating that their input is valued.

- You will need to amend the activities. Be sure to point out to participants that the answers to all activities are located at the back of their Participant's Guide and recommend to them that they take the opportunity after training to test their knowledge. Activities can be adjusted in different ways:
  - Turn activities into a large group discussion – In advance, you can identify a few scenarios or questions from each activity they feel are particularly relevant or important point to stress. Do those scenarios or questions as a large group, with the trainer reading the question aloud and asking for feedback from participants.
  - Shorten activities – You may assign groups of participants only one or two scenarios and only give them a brief time to complete their answers.

### **Agenda Timeframes:**

Here is a suggested, amended agenda timeframes to fit everything into 3 hours.

Introductions and Course Overview	20 minutes
Lesson One: The Child Protective Services System	45 minutes
Lesson Two: The Reporting Process	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Lesson Three: Defining Child Abuse	45 minutes
Lesson Four: The System's Response to Child Abuse	15 minutes
Conclusion	15 minutes

### **Guidelines by Lesson:**

Here are some key concepts regarding the curriculum, along with suggested timeframes to ensure all information is covered during the 3 hours. Not all slides are listed – this does not mean they are unimportant. It means that those slides are pretty straightforward and do not need the key concepts spelled out.

#### **Introduction & Course Overview (20 minutes):**

See notes above for this section.

#### **Lesson One – The Child Protective Services System (45 minutes):**

Resist the temptation to review this lesson too quickly. There are several key concepts that build a foundation for later in the program.

- Slide “Sequelae” – It is important that participants understand the impact that child abuse has on individuals as well as society. Although the trainer may not have time to go through each and every concept in detail, they should choose several key areas to make an impact and share the financial implications of child abuse across the country. Be sure to mention some statistics and reference the “Annual Child Abuse Reports” created each year by the Department of Humans Services.
- Slide “The Child Welfare System” – A brief review of this will suffice, with a key point being the hierarchy, the connection of state laws to federal mandates, the existence of ChildLine, the role of Regional DHS offices, and that PA has a county-based system.
- Slide “Purposes of the CPSL” – It is important to cover the slide, with an emphasis on helping participants understand the law’s intent. Swiftly and competently should be addressed in greater detail since the concept pertains to deadlines set forth in the law.
- Slide “Children and Youth Functions” – This slide is important because it highlights to participants (for the first time for many) that much of C&Y’s time is not spent on issues that rise to the level of abuse, that interventions are available before abuse occurs, and sets the stage for distinguishing for participants what the difference between CPS and GPS concerns are.
- Slide “Safety and Risk Assessment” – Another example of a slide that you may not have a lot of time to go into detail about, but it is important to provide key concepts.
- Slide “General Protective Services” – Important again to making the distinction between abuse and other concerns.
- Slide “Essentials of Life” – Also important to help participants understand the concerns may not rise to the level of abuse and that there may be other options for families to prevent abuse and serious neglect. Spending some time discussing the essentials and when a lack of them is a GPS concern and when it is a CPS concern is helpful to participants.
- Slide “Making a GPS Referral” – Be sure participants understand that anyone can make a GPS referral to C&Y, but otherwise keep this slide brief. It is pretty straightforward, so you can highlight key points and refer participants to their guide.
- Activity: “GPS vs. CPS – What Would You Do?” – See discussion of activities above. Do not skip this activity entirely as it is essential to determine whether the group understands the concept of abuse versus a general neglect issue or concern.

## Lesson Two – The Reporting Process (30 minutes):

- Slide “Reporters of Abuse” – A key concept – it is important for participants to understand the difference between the two, and that to understand that anyone can make a report of suspected abuse.
- Slide “When to Report” – This slide contains important information. Try to have participants think in terms of mandated or permissive reports as opposed to whether or not the report is required.
- Slide “Making a Report” – Several critical concepts are contained in this one slide, so it is important to emphasize (and even reinforce later in training).
- Slide “Follow Up Action” – this slide provides the visual depiction for when a CY47 or follow up electronic report is required.
- Slide “Report of Suspected Child Abuse” – Another important concept – be sure to refer to perforated copy in back of Participant’s Guide as well as availability on PFSA’s website. Reinforce the timeframes and to whom the CY47 is submitted. Key concepts – suing child’s language, do not need to know all of the information to make a report, must provide name and contact information.
- Slide “Plan of Supervision” – It can be helpful to point out that this is why ChildLine now asks you for the alleged perpetrator’s place of employment (if known) since this affects all mandated reporters, regardless if their agency falls into the definition of a school or child care service.
- Slide “Protections for Mandated Reporters” – Be sure to spend a little more time on this slide since concerns regarding their personal safety/fear of retribution are one of the top reasons why mandated reporters fail to make a report of suspected child abuse.
- Slide “Confidential Communications” – Important to point out that although both clergy and some attorneys are mandated reporters, it comes down to how they come about the information when determining whether or not they are required to make a report of suspected child abuse. Very little clarification is available at this time to further define this section of the law.
- Slide “Failing to Report” – the important take away for this slide is the penalties are increased when the abuse is severe or continues because of the failure to report.
- Activity – “Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse” – Choose at least a couple of activities to do with the group to ensure they understand key concepts.

## Lesson Three – Defining Child Abuse (45 minutes):

- Slide “Elements of Child Abuse” – This slide highlights the components of child abuse. If the components were covered previously, simply point out that discussion will move on to defining perpetrators and categories of abuse.
- Slide “Perpetrators” – Although participants do not need to determine if the suspected abuser fits the CPSL definition of perpetrator, it is still important to provide them with basic information about who a perpetrator would be while

emphasizing that they do not need to determine this. It is also the place where discussion about who the most frequent abusers of children are to dispel the myth that most abuse occurs outside the home.

- Slide “Exclusions to Child Abuse” – Another slide that provides information to participants to provide them with better understanding why something may not be determined to be child abuse. It can be covered briefly and used to emphasize that mandated reporters are not investigators, so it is not their job to consider exclusions.
- Slide “Categories of Child Abuse” – Although this can be covered quickly, it is also a good place to share some critical statistics specific to Pennsylvania, such as the high percentage of sexual abuse in the Commonwealth. County and state statistics can be found in the Annual Child Abuse Report.
- Slide “Bodily Injury” – Clarify that the definition for each category of abuse on these slides are the threshold that C&Y must meet in order to substantiate it as abuse. Mandated reporters do not have to know whether or not it meets this definition, only suspect that this type of abuse has occurred in order to report.
- Slides of Drawings – Quickly review these and indicate that they are in the Participant’s Guides as some potential examples. The key point in discussing physical abuse is that participants should be suspect of harm that comes to a child that is unusual or atypical for that child, that kind of scenario, or a typical child that age, etc.
- Slide “Behavioral Indicators of Abuse” – In general, trainer may reference this list without going into each concept in detail. It is important to point out that often one indicator on its own may not cause you to suspect abuse (as there could be other factors) and that these lists are not exclusionary of all other indicators. It is important for mandated reporters to think about what they know about the circumstances, observations, familiarity with the individuals and gut feelings about the incident/indicators when asking themselves if they have a “reasonable cause to suspect abuse”.
- Slide “Serious Mental Injury” – Be sure to emphasize that serious mental injury is NOT emotional abuse or mental abuse (although they may contribute to serious mental injury) and that the legal definition is much more stringent.
- Slide “Sexual Abuse and Exploitation” – Summarizes this definition by explaining it really covers any situation in which a child is used for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator. As a mandated reporter they do not have to know if sexual gratification occurred but rather suspect the child was used for that purpose.
- Slide “Serious Physical Neglect” – This is an important category to cover in some detail to re-emphasize that while many children are in less than ideal circumstances, they may not rise to the level of serious physical neglect. Be sure to use examples that really drive home the concept.
- Slide “Physical Signs of Neglect” – In general, trainer may reference this page and refer participants to page 46 in the Participant’s Guide as a resource to

emphasize the discussion of potential indicators without going into too much detail during class.

- Slide “Additional Categories” – Important to cover each of the additional categories briefly, spending the most time on the concept of the “likelihood” categories since that is not something mandated reporters often think about as being “abuse”.
- Slide “Per Se Definitions” – Although very similar to the “likelihood” categories of abuse, please explain that these are actions which constitute abuse “in and of themselves”. The definitions based on physical actions of the perpetrator look at intent and amount of force used (not actual injury to the child).
- Slide “Engaging a child in a severe form of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking” – Although these slides can be covered quickly, be sure to point out that this type of abuse includes both sex trafficking and labor trafficking of children and that both types of trafficking are occurring here in PA. The most important indicators to point out are the history/status as a runaway (highest risk), living with their employer, not being paid for work done, and/or not having access to their identity documents due to their employer holding them.
- Activity: “What Would You Do?” – See activity guidelines. Use a couple of scenarios to underscore key concepts.

#### Lesson Four – The System’s Response to Child Abuse (15 minutes):

- This entire lesson should reinforce some concepts already mentioned throughout training. The trainer may review the entire lesson fairly briefly.
- Be sure to emphasize the concept of a mandated reporter’s right to information about the investigation’s outcome and the status determinations.

#### Lesson Five – Conclusion (15 minutes):

- The trainer should be sure they have reviewed all critical concepts.
- Be sure to address unanswered questions and remind participants that PFSA is available to them as both a resource for technical assistance as well as for additional training.