



Child Abuse and Neglect

1. What is Child Abuse & Neglect The procedures will apply in the identification and reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect as defined in, and pursuant to, the National Head Start Policy and the State of Missouri law. This plan will apply in the Southeast Missouri counties served by East Missouri Action Agency, Inc. Head Start and to all EMAA Head Start personnel.

2. CA/N Procedures Locations CA/N procedures are to be posted in each office and where emergency numbers are kept.

3. Identification/Reporting

Missouri CA/N Hotline Online at <https://apps.dss.mo.gov/OnlineCanReporting/default.aspx> or call 1-800-392-3738

- a. If any EMAA Head Start staff person has cause to believe that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would result in abuse or neglect as defined by state law, he/she shall immediately follow the procedures as outlined by EMAA Head Start procedures for reporting child abuse/neglect.
- b. The report should be made to the Missouri Children's Division Central Registry Unit Online at <https://apps.dss.mo.gov/OnlineCanReporting/default.aspx> or call (1-800-392-3738).
- c. This report should be made without delay.
- d. When a report is made the Site Manager/Lead Teacher, the Central Office Contact Person, the Head Start Director, and the Area Coordinator will also be notified immediately after the call is made. A report is to be filled out immediately and emailed to Candice Winick. Report can be found in the Red Child Abuse and Neglect Binder.
- e. The staff person reporting the incident will take no further action after the report has been made; the proper authorities shall handle appropriate action.

4. Confidentiality

- a. All such information, whether written or oral, pertaining to the report of child abuse or neglect shall be considered confidential.
- b. Missouri State law calls for severe sanction against any person who violates this confidentiality or who permits or encourages the unauthorized dissemination of this information.
- c. This provision of the law will be strictly enforced by EMAA.

5. Follow-Up



- a. EMAA Head Start will take no further action nor will any Head Start Staff until such time EMAA or Head Start is contacted by the Missouri Children's Division.
- b. The Missouri Children's Division or any assigned protective service worker will have access to any information pertaining to the reported case with the proper paperwork (CS-30) and identification.
- c. The Head Start staff will contact the Central Office contact person or the Head Start Director or Deputy Director without delay upon being contacted by the Missouri Children's Division.
- d. During the time the child remains in the Head Start program a liaison should be maintained with the protective service worker and Head Start in regards to services provided and plans being made for the child through Head Start.

6. Immunity

- a. The law provides immunity from civil or criminal liability to those who make reports, and also to those who work in cooperation with Missouri Children's Division, any law enforcement agency, or juvenile office in the completion of an investigation. Immunity is provided regardless of the outcome of the investigation; however, it does not apply if a person intentionally makes a false report.
- b. Failure to report is a Class A misdemeanor for a person who is required under law to report.
- c. Filing a false report is also a Class A misdemeanor.

7. Treatment

- a. EMAA Head Start may **not and will not** undertake to treat cases of child abuse and neglect, but will cooperate fully with the Missouri Children's Division.
- b. Every effort will be made to retain in the Head Start program children allegedly abused or neglected.
- c. Staff will use as far as possible, a helpful rather than punitive attitude toward abusing or neglecting parents or another caregiver.
- d. Upon referral from Missouri Children's Division Protective Service Worker, Head Start will determine an eligible unenrolled child as having a "special need" to facilitate his/her enrollment in an open slot.

8. Prevention

- a. EMAA Head Start is not nor is to become a primary instrument for treatment of child abuse and neglect.
- b. Head Start should play an important role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- c. It is expected that specific prevention efforts will be identified and implemented by Head Start when agreed with by the Missouri Children's Division or Administration for Children, Youth, and Families.



d. It is equally expected that the Head Start goal of a socially competent, healthy child in an aware, informed and responsive family will be underscored in each component's activity as important primary preventive measure.

9. Staff Responsibility

1. The Designated Central Office Contact Person is the designated employee with the responsibility for:
 - a. Establishing and maintaining cooperative relationships with the Missouri Children's Division. This will include regular formal and informal communications. Please make sure Children's Division has proper identification on them.
 - b. Informing other staff regarding the process for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect as outlined in EMAA'S policy and procedure.

10. Training

- a. EMAA will provide orientation and training on the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect on an annual basis.