

Minors at the UW

University of Washington (UW) employees and volunteers may have interactions with minors in many ways such as:

- An estimated 150 programs and activities for children and youth offered by UW or held in UW facilities annually (an estimated 24,000 children);
- Enrolled students who are under 18 years of age;
- Community mentoring, tutoring, and college preparation;
- Patients in healthcare facilities;
- Student internships in area schools and organizations;
- Guests participating in camps and events, and visiting our public facilities.

Our Duty to Protect Children at UW

Chapter 26.44 Revised Code of Washington (RCW), mandates reporting by those who are in positions to identify when children are at risk of abuse and neglect or are victims of abuse or neglect. As of 2012, the law includes employees of higher education as mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

To implement the requirements of the state law, UW created Administrative Policy Statement 11.8 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse, which includes:

- Prohibiting child abuse by University employees, volunteers, or students or in University facilities and programs;
- Steps for University employees to report suspected child abuse;
- A description of what to report;
- A prohibition against retaliation.

University of Washington Policy Statement

The University of Washington does not tolerate child abuse. Suspected perpetrators of child abuse, including University employees, volunteers, or students, may be removed from the premises and may be subject to arrest and criminal prosecution.

Employees, volunteers, or students who engage in child abuse in the workplace, or who use University facilities, property, or resources to engage in child abuse are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from employment, engagement, or from educational programs.

Report if you suspect that someone under the age of 18 years of age is or has been the victim of:

Abuse or Neglect - Sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or injury of a child by any person when it may cause harm to the child's health, welfare, or safety, or the negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for or providing care to the child.

Negligent Treatment - Means an act or a failure to act, or the cumulative effects of a pattern of conduct, behavior, or inaction, that evidences a serious disregard of consequences of such magnitude as to constitute a clear and present danger to a child's health, welfare, or safety.

Sexual Exploitation - Allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution by any person; or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child by any person.

As a public university we are deeply committed to serving all our citizens.



It's not only the responsibility of staff and volunteers to report. It's the right thing to do.

All University employees and volunteers who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect must report the suspected abuse or neglect to the police or the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

The UW Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, and Hall Health Primary Care Center each have policies and procedures governing mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect. Health care providers who work at these locations and should follow those policies and procedures.

Two-Part Reporting: First, you must notify one of the following:

1. Call the University of Washington Police Department (UWPD) at 206-685-UWPD (8973) (TTY accessible) or other local police in which the incident occurred if outside UW jurisdiction; **or**
2. Call the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) at 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276) (TTY accessible); **or**

Second, in addition to making the report to DSHS or the police as above, if the suspected child abuse may be occurring in a University program or at a University facility, University employees and volunteers must also notify their supervisor or departmental administrator.

After employees or volunteers make their report, the supervisor or departmental administrator must notify the administrative head of their organization that a report has been made. Then the administrative head is responsible for ensuring that UWPD is contacted to confirm that it has received a report and that the appropriate Human Resources office is contacted to determine what other actions may be necessary.

University policy, APS 11.8, **prohibits retaliation** against any individual who makes a report in accordance with this policy and/or RCW 26.44 or who cooperates with or participates in any investigation of allegations of child abuse. Retaliation means to take adverse action against an individual because he or she has acted in accordance with the law or University policy.

When You Report, DSHS or the police will evaluate whether what you have told them could potentially be child abuse or neglect.

If yes, then an investigation will be initiated.

If no, then DSHS will typically make a record of the report in case future reports are received about the same situation.

If the report is about child abuse or neglect that may be occurring within a UW program or facility, the UW may also need to take action.

Once a report is made, UWPD and other appropriate offices, such as HR, will determine how to best respond, which includes evaluating how to protect the child or other children in the program.

Useful resources on reporting suspected child abuse or neglect can be found here:

UW Safety of Minors website:
<http://compliance.uw.edu/minors>

Dept. of Social and Health Services
EndHarm website:
<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/child-safety-and-protection/how-report-child-abuse-or-neglect>

Questions?
safemnrs@uw.edu

