

Gainesville Country Day School Abuse and Neglect Policies

The State of Florida requires that all members of the faculty be on the lookout for, and report to the State, all cases of child abuse and neglect. All campus staff are required to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Our staff is trained to constantly be on the outlook for any potential signs of abuse or neglect. Any incident that an employee believes is potentially dangerous to any student or employee must be reported immediately to the director. Failure to report will result in disciplinary action.

The school preforms criminal background on all employees and volunteers. All employees are now required to complete ethics training. As a participating private school, GCDS must disqualify from employment any instructional personnel or school administrator who is convicted of an act listed under Sections 1012.315 and 435.04, Florida Statutes. To comply with this requirement, GCDS will review the level 2 criminal history report received for all employees (obtained through the VECHS program)

As a participating private school, GCDS must conduct an employment history check before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students. To comply with this requirement, GCDS will contact the applicant's previous employer. All efforts will be verified, and results will be documented in writing and maintained in the individual employee's file.

The education profession has adopted Principles of Professional Conduct Rules and GCDS is obligated to follow these rules:

1. Students shall be protected from conditions harmful to their mental or physical health
- 2.. Students shall be allowed diverse points of view and allowed to be independent thinkers.
3. Students shall not be intentionally embarrassed.
4. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family

background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.

The obligation to the education profession requires that the individual:

- Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
- Shall not on the basis of
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- race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
- Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
- Shall not make intentionally false statements about a colleague.
- Shall not use coercive means to influence the professional judgments of colleagues.
- Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
- Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document
- Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
- Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
- Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of a specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
- Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

- Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by the Head of School or her designee) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, the school shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.
- Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.
- Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Training Requirement

- All instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.
- **Reporting Misconduct**
All employees, educational support employees, and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical

aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to **Kelly Chiders at kellypc99@gmail.com**

- Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to the **Mary Helen Simpson at bbmom17@gmail.com**.
- Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, are posted in the employee break room and on our website, gainesvillecountrydayschool.org. On the drop down menu go to ABOUT, click HISTORY and scroll all the way down to ADDITIONAL DETAILS and you will see MISCONDUCT POLICIES.

All GCDS employees are made aware of their duty to immediately report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Employees who report such incidents are immune from liability.

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800- 96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

Liability Protections Liability Protections Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (F.S. 39.203)

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

Signs of physical abuse: bruises, welts, cuts, broken bones The child may be withdrawn, depressed, shy away from physical contact, be afraid to go home, or run away from home.

Signs of sexual abuse torn, stained or bloody underwear, inability to sit, trouble walking, itching in the genital area, or an STD. The child may have an unusual knowledge of sex, be withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly.

Signs of Neglect unmet medical needs, poor hygiene, underweight. The child may steal food, frequently be tired or hungry, needy for adult attention.

What if a child tells you about abuse: Listen, encourage, be supportive, do not overreact, document and then report immediately.