HOW MIGHT I KNOW THAT A MEMBER IS BEING ABUSED OR NEGLECTED?

STAY ALERT

Be aware of signs that may indicate a member has been or is being abused or sexually molested.
SOME COMMON SIGNS TO BE AWARE OF:

✓ Sudden changes in behavior
✓ Always watchful
✓ Overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
✓ Arrives early and stays late. Does not want to go home.
✓ History of frequent injuries or unexplained injuries or bruising
✓ Behavior indicating fear of a specific adult
✓ Sudden difficulty walking or sitting

**NOTE:** The presence of a single sign does not necessarily indicate abuse/neglect, but if observed repeatedly or regularly may be cause for concern.
WHY SHOULD YOU RESPOND?

There are several reasons for responding to suspected or alleged abuse or neglect.

- THE PRIMARY REASON IS TO PROTECT THE MEMBER FROM FURTHER ABUSE/NEGLECT
- PROTECT OTHERS FROM THE SAME TREATMENT
- MAY SERVE TO GET THE PERPETRATOR NEEDED HELP
- MAY BE LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO REPORT THE ABUSE

Reporting alleged or suspected abuse or neglect is a very deliberate choice on your part and one that will help to break the cycle of abuse and neglect.
What should I do if I observe an act of abuse or neglect?

- If the child is in danger, call 911 immediately.

  *Intervene to prevent continued abuse if the circumstances do not create an unreasonable risk of personal injury, although requirements may be governed by state or local law.*

- If the child is not in immediate danger, report your observations to the proper authorities.

As soon as possible report the incident to USPC at 859-254-7669 or youthprotection@ponyclub.org.

Follow your “gut instincts.” If you are uncomfortable with a situation, then chances are good that the member is too. Intervene by putting a stop to the situation or staying with the member, so that the member has another adult there as support.
What should I do if a member confides in me?

- Remain calm – do not overreact.
- Be supportive and believe the member.
- Listen carefully. Rephrase statements to be sure that you are understanding properly.
- Reassure the member that help is available and that he/she is not to blame.
- Do not make false promises. Be honest with the member.
- Report the allegations to the proper authorities.
- Report the allegations to USPC if the alleged perpetrator is a Pony Club volunteer or member, even if this did not take place at a Pony Club activity.

- In most cases your instincts will lead you to say the right thing.
- Research suggests that the intervention of a nurturing and trusted adult, who takes the necessary steps to support an abused child, is instrumental in protecting the child from future abuse and in helping to break the cycle of abused children becoming abusive parents.
Do I have to report concerns or suspicions or the confidence of a member?

YOU MAY BE LEGALLY OBLIGATED

ARE YOU A “MANDATORY REPORTER”?

Every state has what is referred to as “mandatory reporters,” which means that persons in specific roles or jobs are required, by law, to report suspected or alleged abuse/neglect. Use this url to learn the requirements of your state.

http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/
Do I have to report concerns or suspicions or the confidence of a member?

**MORAL OBLIGATION**

You may not be legally bound to report suspected or alleged abuse/neglect, but there is a moral obligation. Your choice could make a big difference in the future of a minor. In most cases, you can report your concerns to local authorities anonymously. Once you report your concerns, they will proceed with this information as they determine appropriate.
To whom do I report my concerns?

If you are not sure to whom to report your concerns, you can always report to the local police and they will direct you to the proper agency. You can also check the reporting agencies in your state by checking at this same url as used previously.

http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/

Am I protected if I file a report and it is "unfounded?"

MOST STATES PROVIDE IMMUNITY from civil and criminal liability for persons who make a good faith report of suspected abuse or neglect.
Reporting to USPC

When to Report:

- If you suspect or have reason to believe that an incident of abuse has occurred at a Pony Club activity.
- If you become aware of accusations claiming that a Pony Club volunteer or member has committed an act of abuse or neglect, even if not at a Pony Club event.

How to Report:

- Contact the National Office at 859-254-7669 or youthprotection@ponyclub.org as soon as practical.
- Complete and return to the National Office the USPC Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Incident Form.
What should I do if I observe a behavior that I believe is bullying?

Although not a form of child abuse or neglect as defined by the federal Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act (CAPTA), bullying is a behavioral problem that Pony Club leaders are likely to encounter.

- Immediately intervene so the behavior does not escalate.
- Calmly communicate that you value the member, but that the observed behavior cannot and will not be tolerated.
- Make it clear that you will address the behavior further in private.

Emphasize that the member is responsible for their behavior.
What should I do if a member reports that she/he is being bullied?

**DO:**
- Listen carefully to what the member has to say.
- Carefully gather what information you can from other members and other adults.

**DO NOT:**
- Jump to any conclusions.
- Make the member feel “cut off” from further communication with you.
SUMMARY

- Child abuse and neglect is a community wide problem that has no barriers. It occurs across every socioeconomic level, across all ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education.

- Increased awareness and education is the first step towards breaking the cycle of abuse in which abused children become abusive adults.

- Pony Club is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is safe for members and volunteers while building a culture of health, wellness and respect.
This ends Section Three of the USPC Youth Protection Training.

At this time, please take this short quiz.

100% must be achieved in order to earn credit towards the Youth Protection Training Certificate.

If you have trouble with the link to the quiz, please copy this address into your browser: