

Child Sexual Abuse Plan-Jarrell ISD

Texas Senate Bill 471 requires schools to have a plan for dealing with the prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and other Maltreatment of children.

As a parent or guardian of a child in Jarrell ISD, it is important that you be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping or eating disorders, and problems at school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see:

http://dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp (underscores between words)

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?is=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

http://oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/child_abuse1.shtml

http://oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/child_abuse2.shtml

Reports of suspected abuse may be made to:

Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services:
1-800-252-5400 or online at: <http://www.txabusehotline.org>