Introduction
As members of a youth serving organization it is important that adults are aware of their responsibility for child safety. Our hope is that all children will live in a safe environment, but we know that children are exposed to neglect and abuse. We have a responsibility to educate ourselves in the role we play in the prevention, protection and intervention of child abuse. Reporting abuse gives victims a voice.

It is the policy of Penn State University to require all University employees, volunteers, and independent contractors who in the course of their business or volunteer activity have reasonable suspicion of child abuse, as defined by the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, to make a report. As a Penn State Extension volunteer pursuant to Penn State Policy AD72, you are a mandated reporter.

Key Components from Penn State Policy
Policy AD72 (http://guru.psu.edu/policies/AD72.html) provides guidance to Penn State employees, volunteers, and independent contractors regarding mandated reporting requirements pursuant to Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and pursuant to Penn State Policy. This Policy is intended to apply broadly and, when in doubt, members of the University community should always err on the side of reporting suspected child abuse.

Under this policy, ALL University employees, volunteers and independent contractors, regardless of their status as a mandated reporter as defined by Pennsylvania law, who, in the course of their business or volunteer activity, have reasonable suspicion of child abuse, as defined by Pennsylvania law, are to make a report as outlined in this policy. In addition, ALL University employees, volunteers and independent contractors, who, in the course of their business or volunteer activity, receive a specific disclosure from a person that an identifiable child is a victim of child abuse, or that the person has abused a child, are also required to make a report as outlined in this policy.

Initial Training Requirements
All University employees, volunteers, and/or independent contractors who are interacting with minors in a youth program, activity or service must complete the Building a Safe Penn State: Reporting Child Abuse training prior to working within the program, activity or service.

Ongoing Training
All University employees, volunteers, and/or independent contractors who are interacting with minors in a youth serving program, activity or service must complete the Building a Safe Penn State: Reporting Child Abuse training on an annual basis.

Building a Safe Penn State: Reporting Child Abuse Training http://lrn.psu.edu
On the welcome screen click on "Volunteer/Other". If you are a new volunteer, click on "Volunteer/Other Create LRN Account". If you have completed the online training previously, click on "Volunteer/Other Login".
Definition of Child Abuse
Child abuse, according to the CPSL, means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following to a child (who is defined as an individual under 18 years of age):

1. Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
2. Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
3. Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
4. Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
5. Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
6. Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
7. Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
8. Engaging in any of the following recent acts:
   a. Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
   b. Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
   c. Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
   d. Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
   e. Interfering with the breathing of a child.
   f. Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
   g. Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.
9. Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

Steps to Make a Report
1. If a child is in immediate danger, contact police at 911 to obtain immediate protection for the child.
2. Immediately make an oral report to the Pennsylvania Department of Human services via ChildLine (1-800-932-0313) or an electronic report using the Child Welfare Portal at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/. Solely informing a supervisor (Extension Educator) that you suspect abuse is NOT sufficient under this Policy or the law.
3. Within 48 hours after contacting ChildLine prepare and submit a written report utilizing Form CY47 and submit to the County Children and Youth Agency. If you make an electronic report using the Child Welfare Portal, you are not required to submit Form CY47. Form CY47 is found on the KeepKidsSafe.PA.gov site in the forms folder.
4. Submit an internal report to the University’s designated agents (per Penn State Policy and PA CPSL), by immediately sending an email to AD72@psu.edu, attaching the completed Form CY47 (if required, as described in #3 above). In response to the email, the person making the report will be contacted by University Police Services, Penn State’s Office of Ethics & Compliance, and/or Penn State’s Risk Management Office. All University employees, volunteers, and independent contractors are required to assist the University, to the extent deemed necessary by the University, in gathering factual information related to the report.
5. Forward any subsequent communication from the Department of Human Services relating to the report to AD72@psu.edu.
6. To the extent provided by law, Penn State will preserve the confidentiality of all child abuse and neglect reports and records to protect the privacy rights of the person making the report.

Extension staff are available to help you through the steps above if you want us to assist you. Making a report of child abuse is stressful. We can also help direct you to support resources.

See the Reporting Diagram on page 9-3
Penn State Extension
Reporting Child Abuse

Suspecting child abuse

Child

Penn State Extension/4-H Volunteer or Employee

If immediate danger, call 911

911

Report to the PA Department of Public Welfare via phone or web

Call ChildLine 1-800-932-0313

Submit Form CY47 to County Children and Youth agency

Report electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis

Report internally via email to AD72@psu.edu. Also, forward all follow up communications to this address
When to Make a Report

Mandated reporters are responsible to make a report when they suspect a child is a victim of abuse. First-hand observation of abuse or direct disclosure from a child about abuse is not required. **You are required only to report not to investigate.** A person who makes a report in good faith has immunity from civil and criminal liability.

Failure to Report

By Pennsylvania law a mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected child abuse commits an offense up to the level of a felony in the third degree. Also a Penn State Extension volunteer who willfully fails to report a case of suspected child abuse is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

**Responding to a Disclosure of Child Abuse**

**SSABER©**

Stay Calm – I am happy to help you.
Support – I am sorry this happened to you.
Affirm – You did the right thing by telling me.
Believe – It’s not your fault, I believe you.
Empower – You have the right to be safe.
Report – We need to tell others about this to make sure you are safe.

©2011 Network of Victim Assistance, Bucks County PA

No One-on-One Contact

You can protect yourself by always being in view of others. If you need to speak alone with a child, move away from the ears of others but remain in their sight. Do not use private rooms with shut doors.

Supervise activities in pairs. Per policy, all activities involving minors must be supervised by at least two or more Authorized Adults (approved and screened Extension Volunteers) or by their parents or guardians at all times.

Do not correspond directly to a child via electronic communication (text or email) without including a second authorized adult or the child’s parent. If another adult is not included, you must send the text or email to AD39Ag@psu.edu.

It is important to complete all appropriate incident report forms whenever accidents occur.

Children are naturally curious, but do not share personal dating or sexual experiences with them. Also do not ask youth personal questions regarding their dating or sexual experiences.

Do not force yourself on a child. As a volunteer you may be drawn to youth who are shy or discouraged. Support them in a way that respects their level of comfort with physical and emotional displays of affection.