

## Georgia's mandated Reporter Law includes all Boy Scout volunteers

The Georgia mandated reporting law was expanded on July 1, 2012 to include volunteers, not just staff, working for child serving organizations which would include Boy Scout Volunteers.

The law states that any volunteer "having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made". This report must be made within 24 hours.

All child service organization personnel (employees and volunteers) are now "mandated reporters".

This statute is consistent with the BSA mandatory reporting requirement which states:

All persons involved in Scouting shall report to local authorities any good-faith suspicion or belief that any child is or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation, including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. You may not abdicate this reporting responsibility to any other person.

--Guide to Safe Scouting, "Mandatory Report of Child Abuse", 2011

### Steps to Reporting Child Abuse

1. Ensure the child is in a safe environment. In case of immediate threat, call 911.
2. If you suspect abuse has occurred in the Scout unit, within the home or family, or by any caregiver you are required by law to report your suspicions to Law Enforcement within 24 hours.
  - a) If possible, contact a Council representative for assistance in making the report.
  - b) If unable to contact the Council, you are still required to report to local authorities (DFACS, CPS, etc.) within 24 hours. Document your report: include the name of the authority, the caseworker and case number if assigned, and exactly what you reported.
3. If you contact local authorities first, you are still obligated to report to Council as soon as possible so that the BSA can take the appropriate actions to protect youth.

### Reporting Violations of BSA Youth Protection Policies

If you think a BSA's Youth Protection policy has been violated which includes those described within Scouting's Barriers to Abuse, you must notify your local council Scout executive or his/her designee so appropriate action can be taken for the safety of our Scouts.

### Georgia Child Protective Services hotline:

The DHS Division of Family and Children Services' (DFCS) Child Protective Services (CPS) Call Center was established to ensure reports of abuse/neglect are received, accessed and handled timely and efficiently during all times 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,

**Holidays, and Furloughs**

Reports of child abuse and neglect can be made to

**1-855-GA CHILD (1-855-422-4453)**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, **Holidays, and Furloughs**

***\*If a child is in immediate danger call 911***