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## ***What happens when I report suspected child abuse and neglect?***

- You may make an anonymous report, but it is better to provide your contact information in case the investigator needs to ask additional questions.
- After you make a report, the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) will prioritize the case and an investigation will be conducted as soon as possible. If the child is in immediate danger, a worker will investigate within the hour. Most cases will be initiated within 24-48 hours. The investigation worker may come to the child care facility to see the child before going to the home. It is important to make the report as early in the day as possible to allow time to do this. It is in the child's best interest that he/she be seen and/or interviewed in a safe, neutral setting.
- The police may also investigate to see whether a crime is being committed or whether the child(ren) need to be removed from the home for their safety. All sexual abuse investigations are conducted jointly by the DCBS and law enforcement.
- The identity of the person who made the report cannot be revealed to the family without a court order. Sometimes parents may guess that their early care and education professional made the report because of the close contact that person has with their child. Early care and education programs should develop a policy on how to handle accusations from parents.
- The investigation worker cannot share the results of his/her investigation with the reporting source unless it is determined there is a legitimate need to know (which is defined in statute).
- If the family must be separated, it is the goal of DCBS to reunite the family under better circumstances. They help to strengthen family life by providing planned, goal-orientated services that help parents to alleviate problems that may have contributed to the maltreatment of their child(ren) and to acquire better parenting skills.

Source: Kentucky Department for Community Based Services. (2001). Reporting child abuse neglect and dependency: A guide for people who work with Kentucky children. [Brochure]. Frankfort, KY.

