

## WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

If a child or young person is attempting to disclose abuse, it is important that you communicate to the child:

- IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT!
- I believe you.
- I am glad that you told me.
- I will try and help you.

Abuse is wrong and we take reports of abuse very seriously.

### IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT

- Ask the child or young person if he or she is telling the truth.
- Promise the child or young person that you will not tell anyone else.
- Criticize the abuser, as it may be someone the child cares about.
- Express shock or panic.

### COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

Big Stone	320-839-2555
Brown	507-354-8246
Chippewa	320-269-6401
Kandiyohi	320-231-7800 or 877-464-7800
Lac Qui Parle	320-598-7594
Lincoln	507-694-1452 or 888-837-6713
Lyon	507-537-6747 or 800-657-3760
McLeod	320-864-3144 or 800-247-1756
Meeker	320-693-5300 or 877-915-5300
(N. Mankato)	507-387-4556
Nicollet	507-934-8559 or 800-247-5044
Redwood	507-637-4041 or 888-234-1292
Renville	320-523-2202
Sibley	507-237-4000
Swift	320-843-3160
Yellow Medicine	320-564-2211

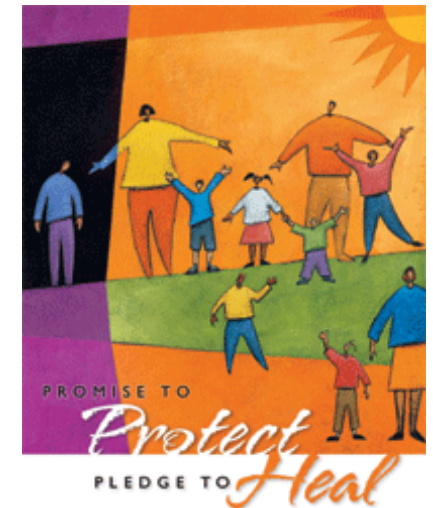
## Diocese of New Ulm

**Reporting & Victim Assistance  
Dedicated Line  
1421 6<sup>th</sup> Street North  
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073  
Phone: 507-233-5313  
Fax: 507-354-0268  
[www.dnu.org](http://www.dnu.org)**

**National Child Abuse Hotline  
1-800-422-4453**

## DIOCESE OF NEW ULM

### Guide to Reporting Suspected Abuse of Minors to Civil and Church Authorities



# IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW WHEN RECEIVING DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE

While serving in the ministry of the Church (as a member of the clergy, an employee, or a volunteer) you may have the experience of being told of abuse that has occurred or have suspicions of abuse of a child or vulnerable person. You have the responsibility to take appropriate steps to respond. In order to assist you in fulfilling this responsibility, the Diocese of New Ulm has created this brochure, outlining the procedure to be followed and including some helpful information about how a child or young person might choose to disclose abuse.

The policies and procedures for the protection of children and young people in the Diocese of New Ulm reminds clergy and employees of the Diocese, our Catholic parishes and schools that we are mandated reporters. When working with children in our parishes and classrooms, we also ask our volunteers, not mandated by law, to make the same commitment to keep these sacred young people safe.

## WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES

When seeking to disclose abuse - in other words, to 'tell a trusted adult' - a child or young person may be hindered by a variety of factors that result in a tentative form of telling. A child may attempt to tell of abuse through indirect hints or disguised disclosure. He or she may lack the vocabulary to make the disclosure, be afraid that he or she will not be believed, or have been threatened or told not to tell.

## REPORTING TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

Excerpts From *Minnesota Statutes* (2016 edition):  
Chapter 626.556

Subd. 3. **Persons mandated to report; persons voluntarily reporting.** (a) A person who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, as defined in subdivision 2, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, shall immediately report the information to the local welfare agency, agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, police department, county sheriff, tribal social services agency, or tribal police department if the person is:

(1) a professional or professional's delegate who is engaged in the practice of the healing arts, social services, hospital administration, psychological or psychiatric treatment, child care, education, correctional supervision, probation and correctional services, or law enforcement; or

(2) employed as a member of the clergy and received the information while engaged in ministerial duties, provided that a member of the clergy is not required by this subdivision to report information that is otherwise privileged under section 595.02, subdivision 1, paragraph (c).

(b) Any person may voluntarily report to the local welfare agency, agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, police department, county sheriff, tribal social services agency, or tribal police department if the person knows, has reason to believe, or suspects a child is being or has been neglected or subjected to physical or sexual abuse.

Subd. 7. **Report.** (a) An oral report shall be made immediately by telephone or otherwise. An oral report made by a person required under subdivision 3 to report shall be followed within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, by a report in writing to the appropriate police department, the county sheriff, the agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, or the local welfare agency.

(b) The local welfare agency shall determine if the report is to be screened in or out as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours after the report is received. (b) Any report shall be of sufficient content to identify the child, any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect of the child if the person is known, the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect and the name and address of the reporter.

(c) Any report shall be of sufficient content to identify the child, any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect of the child if the person is known, the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect and the name and address of the reporter.

## REPORTING TO CHURCH AUTHORITIES

When clergy and diocesan and parish or school personnel and volunteers file a report with civil authorities concerning sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric or one of the diocesan, school or parish personnel or a volunteer, the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct is to be notified within twenty-four (24) hours and, if possible, supplied with a copy of the written report, Form C of the Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Policy.