

FACULTY AND STAFF ARE MANDATED REPORTERS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN

By law and college policy, all of us are “mandated reporters” of suspected child abuse and neglect.

The state legislature recently expanded the list of those who are "mandated reporters" of suspected child abuse and neglect. Mandated reporters (as of January 1, 2013) now include not only teachers but also all employees whose duties bring them into contact with individuals under the age of 18.

We come in contact with students and guests who are under the age of 18.

While the majority of Westmont students are 18 years of age or older, the college typically enrolls approximately 80 students each year who are under the age of 18. So in keeping with the intent and spirit of the new legislation, **all Westmont faculty and staff are deemed to be mandated reporters of alleged or suspected abuse and/or neglect of minors occurring on campus, in college programs, or at college events.**

What is child abuse and neglect?

Child abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse (including sexual assault and sexual exploitation), willful cruelty or unjustified punishment, unlawful corporal punishment or injury of those under 18. Neglect occurs when an individual responsible for the health and welfare of a child fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision.

What must I do as a mandated reporter?

First, the law requires that each mandated reporter read and sign the Required Statement of a Mandated Reporter that is attached. The Required Statement includes a link to the pertinent sections of the California Penal Code.

When are we required to report suspected child abuse and neglect?

If in the course and scope of our work for Westmont we become aware of an allegation, or have reason to suspect, that someone under the age of 18 suffered abuse or neglect while on campus or while participating in a college program or event, then we are required by law and by college policy to report the information to law enforcement. Such reports can be made by calling: (805) 683-2724 for Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office dispatch; **or** (800) 367-0166 for Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services hotline

Must we also notify a college official?

While California's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) does not require that you report the information to a Westmont official,

1. **Please feel free** to contact either Toya Cooper (ext. 6832, tcooper@westmont.edu) or Chris Call (ext. 6023, call@westmont.edu) if you have any questions about your reporting responsibility or the reporting process.
2. **Please remember** that a college policy (e.g., the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination) may require you to report an incident or allegation to a college official (e.g., Title IX Officer Chris Call).
3. **Please err on the side of alerting the appropriate college official.** This will allow us to provide the college's insurance carrier with a "notice of circumstance" whenever an incident creates potential legal liability for the college. In so doing, you'll help us in "keeping our resources applied to our mission."¹

¹ Office of Risk Management mission statement