

A Clumsy Student?

The Scenario:

A student and his parent report that the student had an in-classroom disagreement with a teacher. The teacher ordered the student to leave the classroom. As the student was leaving, he tripped over the teacher's foot. The student believes that the teacher purposely tripped him. What do you do?

Discussion Begins

The Scenario Continues:

The teacher has two prior incidents of "accidental" tripping involving different students. What do you do?

Discussion Continues

What do you do?

Is this child abuse?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to the student? To the suspected abuser? To other students? To you? To your school? To LAUSD?

If you report and the Local Law Enforcement Agency or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) tells you...

...to **handle it administratively**, what do you do next?

...**they will investigate**, what do you do next?



Legal Response

The Scenario: Facts presented here may not provide reasonable suspicion for filing a Suspected Child Abuse Report. However, if you have a reasonable suspicion that the teacher was acting intentionally, you should report the behavior to an administrator.

The Scenario Continues: The additional facts suggest this may not be the first instance of accidental tripping. In order to file a Suspected Child Abuse Report, you still need reasonable suspicion. If there is reasonable suspicion that child abuse occurred, a Suspected Child Abuse Report must be filed with either the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or the Local Law Enforcement Agency.

Other Considerations

Additionally, you should notify an administrator of inappropriate conduct. The administrator should then notify the Local District Operations Coordinator. At this time, the Local District Superintendent or Unit/Division Head must exercise discretion as to whether the employee should be removed from the school site or work assignment.

As appropriate, the Local District Operations Coordinators and/or Division of Human Resources Representatives shall consult with Employee Relations and communicate with the Local Law Enforcement Agency to determine whether they may begin an administrative investigation. Once clearance has been obtained from the Local Law Enforcement Agency, the administrative investigation shall proceed. Upon conclusion of the investigation, appropriate administrative action should be taken, if warranted.

Listen

It is important to listen carefully to the student, conveying your concern without investigating or probing for details.

Protect

The situation must be addressed by following the legal response. Doing so is the best way to protect students and promote a safe learning environment.

Connect

Every school site has protocols, systems, and resources to support and address student safety and well-being. This is an opportunity to become familiar with and use the procedures, policies, and resources at your work site.

Model

Maintain a professional and calm level of emotions and reactions. Do not express shock or anger at the possible perpetrator or event.

Teach

Inform the student and parent that by reporting their concern, they acted in the best interests of the student. Help the student to understand that it is normal to have a confusing range of feelings as a result of experiences like this.

Emotional Support