

A Doll's Position

The Scenario:

You observe a 1st grade student playing in the back of the classroom. He is decorating a dollhouse and putting toy dolls in all of the rooms. The child puts all of the male and female dolls in beds together throughout the dollhouse. In each bed, he sets up the dolls in a variety of sexually explicit positions. What do you do?

Discussion Begins

What do you do?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to the student? 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

This child appears to display an intimate knowledge of sexuality that is inappropriate for his age. You may not conduct an investigation for child abuse purposes, but clarifying questions are appropriate. You may want to ask the child a clarifying question such as “What are the two dolls doing?” If there is a reasonable suspicion that this child has been a victim of child abuse, 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

Whether or not DCFS or the Local Law Enforcement Agency investigates, you would want to refer this child to counseling, as appropriate.

Listen

You may or may not have a strong emotional reaction (i.e., anger, sadness, guilt). However, listen to the interaction to be able to recall the exact language used. You may want to take notes to help with remembering details.

Protect

Utilize learning support staff (psychiatric social workers, counselors, nurses, pupil services and attendance counselors, school psychologists) to consult about the meaning of the student's behavior. Doing so is the best way to protect students and promote a safe learning environment.

Connect

Access learning support staff as available on campus to provide support to the students. 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

This is an opportunity to review the familiar play patterns in your class. Pay particular attention to their normal “baseline” behavior and identify anything out of the ordinary that may need to be addressed.

Emotional Support