

# While at Home

## The Scenario:

One afternoon, at your home, you hear the child next door, who attends your school, screaming, “No daddy, no! Please stop. I won’t do it again.” He screams and cries for about 15 minutes. Later that afternoon, while watering your lawn, you notice that the little boy has a fresh black eye. 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 child? To other siblings of the child? To the father? 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

Because this is not during work time or “in the course and scope of your employment” you are not legally required to file a Suspected Child Abuse Report. If you have reason to believe the child is being abused, you may call the Local Law Enforcement Agency. You should not investigate, but refer the incident to the appropriate authorities. In this situation, you are not a mandated reporter.

However, in the child’s best interest and well-being, the incident should be reported. Failure to report could jeopardize the safety of the child or siblings.

### Other Considerations

As a precaution, you may want to inform the school administrator of the conduct to see if there have been prior similar acts.

By reporting this situation to your administrator, you may enable her/him to obtain sufficient information leading to reasonable suspicion. The administrator then becomes the mandated reporter.

If the father is a District employee, the matter could be reported to his work site supervisor, Local District administrator, or other administrator.

### Listen

Hearing a parent treat his child this way can elicit a strong emotional reaction (i.e., anger). By remaining calm, you have a better chance of responding appropriately.

### Protect

The situation must be addressed by following the legal response. Doing so is the best way to protect the child.

### Connect

Convey concern for the student’s well-being. 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

Take this opportunity to think about the different reporting obligations you have during your time “on the clock” versus as a private citizen.

## Emotional Support