

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE IN THE SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL

Reports of child abuse may come in many forms. They may be in the form of conversations, phone calls or letter (either anonymous or with the person making the report identified).

The most important thing to remember is that all reports of child abuse involving Scouts or Scouters must be forwarded immediately to your district executive or Michelle Phillips, 713-756-3308 or michelle.phillips@shac.org or Vincent Manning, 713-756-3380 or vincent.manning@shac.org .

All allegations should be kept strictly confidential, with as few people involved and as little discussion about the matter as possible.

It's the Law: If you believe that a child has been physically or mentally abused or neglected, or that a child has died of abuse or neglect, you must report your suspicion to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) or law-enforcement agency.

You must make an oral report immediately to the nearest PRS Child Protective Services (CPS) office or to the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 (voice or TDD). All reports to CPS are given to local law enforcement agencies.

Immunity: If you, without malice, make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Confidentiality: Reports of child abuse and neglect are confidential. Information in the reports, including the name of the person who makes the report, may be used only for the investigation of abuse or neglect.

Failure to Report: It is the law in Texas that suspected physical or mental abuse or neglect of a child must be reported. Failure to do so is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment or both.

The district executive, Program Director (Michelle Phillips or Vincent Manning), and the person making a report of suspected abuse are required by law to report all suspected cases to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Service (PRS) and/or law enforcement agency.