

**Child Abuse Reporting Policy**

Living Hope Church is committed to reporting any suspected abuse of children whether the suspected abuse happened on our campus, at a church function or separate from church activities all together. We will report all suspected abuse.

The reporting of the abuse will be the responsibility of the party witnessing the suspected abuse.

We will follow the Ohio State Department of Job and Family Services Guidelines.

At first notice of suspected abuse the witness will contact the Children’s Pastor or Children’s Assistant. If there are questions whether the behavior is abusive or not we may ask clarity questions of the witness. If it is still a question that abuse may be occurring the witness will be asked to report the incident(s).

At any sign of actual abuse the witness is to follow OSD Job and Family Services Guidelines for reporting before reporting to any Church staff member. After reporting to JFS advise the Children’s Pastor or Senior Pastor that a report has been made. You may be asked questions to help clarify the situation that led to the report.

**Report Child Abuse and Neglect 855 O-H-CHILD**

Ohioans who suspect child abuse or neglect now only need to remember one phone number.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has launched 855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453), an automated telephone directory that will link callers directly to a child welfare or law enforcement office in their county.  Reports can be anonymous.

*Please Note: All of the below information is not needed to make a report. If you are not sure you have enough information to report, always err on the safety of the child. Children Services screens all reports to determine if there is enough information to investigate.*

**What information is helpful when making a report?**

1. The name and address of the child you suspect is being abused or neglected;
2. The age of the child;
3. The name and address of the parents or caretakers;
4. The name of the person you suspect is abusing or neglecting the child and the address if available;
5. The reason you suspect the child is being abuse and neglected;
6. Any other information which may be helpful to the investigation; and
7. You have the option of giving your name or reporting anonymously. Giving your name can help the investigator clarify information. The agency will not give your name to the person suspected of abusing the child.

**What happens after a report is made?**

 In Ohio, after a report is made,

1. A child protective services investigator will interview the child, family members and others as deemed appropriate.
2. The investigator determines if the child is being abused or is at risk for abuse.
3. The case may be referred to local social service agencies, or to juvenile, family or criminal court.

**What is a mandated reporter?**

A mandated reporter is someone required by law to report if they suspect or know that child abuse if occurring. A list of mandated reporters for Ohio includes:

* Attorneys
* Audiologists
* Child Care Workers
* Children Services Personnel
* Clergy
* Coroners
* Day Care Personnel
* Dentists
* Foster Parents
* Nurses
* Physicians including hospital Interns and Residents
* Podiatrists
* Psychiatrists
* School Authorities, Employees and Teachers
* Social Workers
* Speech Pathologists
* Animal Control Officers/Agents