



# Facilitator Guide for Training School Staff as Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect

August 2023

## Purpose

This document is intended to provide an overview and considerations for facilitators of local in-service training of school staff as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. A facilitated local in-service training is one of two ways a school system may meet the statutory requirement under [Wis. Stat. sec. 118.07\(5\)](#). The second way is to have staff complete the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) online module individually.

**Legal note:** This training is not intended to serve as legal advice and cannot substitute for legal guidance in specific cases. If needed, legal advice on specific issues should be obtained by legal counsel.

### Step 1 - Prepare for the Training

### Step 2 - Facilitate the Training

### Step 3 - Follow Up After the Training

## Step 1 - Prepare for the Training

Seek Collaboration:

- School facilitators are strongly encouraged to partner with local child welfare agency professionals for the planning and delivery of this training. Meet prior to the training to discuss local procedures and philosophies, including when to report to child welfare, local law enforcement, or both (dual reporting) and how to best support an initial assessment of a student at school.

Become Familiar with the Content:

- Review the PowerPoint, and/or online module, and related training materials, and address any unanswered questions you have as the facilitator.
- Read through the provided scripts. These give an idea of the content that should be covered in each section. Facilitators may use the provided slide deck, or may choose to screen each video segment from the online module for a group.
- Review the [Key Messages Related to the System Transformation for School Staff as Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect](#) to ensure you are aware of the main changes in the training content as of 2023.
- Add any local content as needed or required by local policies, such as local reporting phone numbers, local procedures for working with CPS or law enforcement, or school specific- procedures.
- Consider the role, training, and experience of the school-based facilitator. Engage with additional training on the topic to enhance expertise where needed. Additional state and national training and learning on the topics covered within the training are available, including those linked on the DPI [Child Abuse and Neglect website](#).

Consider the Audience and Training Content:

- Seek additional perspectives and incorporate feedback where appropriate.



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- Where possible, including when positive relationships exist, discuss training content with students and adults in the community with lived experience who have had reports made on their family and who have been involved with the child welfare agency.
- Gather background information to best understand the audience and local context. Consider how school staff will receive the content, which questions they may ask, and how to respond. Where possible, pilot the training with a small group of school staff and gather data related to their knowledge acquisition, perspective on the effectiveness of the training, and feedback related to content and delivery.
- Consider various groups of staff and their specific needs; for example, are there staff new to their roles who will be hearing this content for the first time, and are there experienced staff who have heard much of this before? What differentiation needs to occur, and how will that be done?
- Determine how to provide a preview of the content to the audience in advance so they come to the training with an understanding of what to expect. Include a statement cautioning that content may be disturbing or upsetting, and plan for how to encourage staff to take care of themselves if this is a difficult topic.
- Consider how to infuse the guiding principles of trauma sensitive schools into all aspects of the training. The guiding principles are safety, trustworthiness, cultural responsiveness, collaboration, choice, and empowerment.

## Plan for Training Logistics:

- Determine where and when the training will take place, other training or events happening that staff will be attending to avoid conflicts, participant minimum and maximums, and consider whether to train certain groups or roles of staff together.
- Determine breaks and refreshments, and provide information about these to participants in advance of the training.
- Determine technology needs and ensure the training space will accommodate those needs, such as a projector, screen, computer, microphone, sound system for playing video, and access to the internet.
- Prepare any printed materials, including optional handouts, pre/post tests, or others. Gather supplies such as writing utensils and any other office supplies needed for activities.
- Incorporate discussions, small group work, or other activities to accommodate adult learning styles and to help staff apply the learning to their work.

## Step 2 - Facilitate the Training

### Incorporate the Complete Content from the DPI-Created Training Materials:

- Facilitators may use the provided slide deck, or facilitators may choose to screen the video segments from the online training module. Speaker notes are provided within each PowerPoint slide. The entire PowerPoint, or each video from the online module, must be utilized in order to meet the statutory requirement of completion of DPI training. Additional slides and information may be added as determined by local trainers. In addition, local information (e.g., phone number for county child protective services) may be added to the presentation.



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- Please note that the images in these slide decks were created or purchased for use in this training by DPI. They may not be copied and reproduced for inclusion in other training or publications.

## Gather Data:

- A pre/post test is provided to help the facilitator gather data about the experience of the participants. The test is an optional part of the required training when held in-person. Additional questions may be added to fit the local context and data needs. Any data collected should be analyzed and leveraged when planning future training events and ongoing coaching and support.

## Discuss Local Resources:

- Ensure school staff understand the local referral pathway, which is the process and procedures used to identify student needs and connect students with the appropriate supports and resources in and outside the school building.
- Provide information on pupil services staff names, office locations, and the method by which students are able to make an appointment with them.
- It is helpful to have local resource information available for school staff to increase their ability to connect families to community agencies. Consider providing a resource map or list of local services that could meet the basic needs of families, including [Family Resource Centers](#) in the area. Parental stress hotlines, respite care centers, and parent support group information are also good for school staff to be aware of.

## Step 3 - Follow Up After the Training

### Track and Monitor Training Compliance:

- School leaders are responsible for monitoring and tracking adherence to the training requirement. DPI recommends school leaders, including Human Resource Directors, create a process to ensure training requirements are met, and records of completion of training are on file for employees.

### Conduct Booster Sessions and Share Reminders of the Content Throughout the Year:

- Booster sessions for employees could provide an opportunity to discuss scenarios, review the process for establishing if a reasonable cause exists, review the process to report, and to consider various options for supporting students and families. Booster sessions could also provide deeper learning on one aspect of child safety, such as human trafficking prevention, adult sexual misconduct at school prevention, or teen dating violence prevention. Remind staff of local policies around maintaining the confidentiality of student information, including disclosing sensitive information only to those who have a need to know.

### Check for Understanding:

- Periodically survey staff to check their understanding of their role as a mandated reporter and supporter. Determine to what extent they understand local procedures, including how they could access support with determining reasonable cause or making a report.



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## Facilitator Resources

- [Facilitator Outline for Training School Staff](#)
- [Facilitator Resource: Key Learning by Training Section](#)
- [Facilitator Resource: Pre/Post Test with Answers](#)
- [Facilitator Resource: Additional Resources by Section](#)

## Optional Handouts

- [Pre/Post Test Handout - Questions Only](#)
- [Key Messages Related to the System Transformation for School Staff as Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- [Process for Mandatory Reporters When Concerns Arise Handout](#)

## Overview of Training Requirements for Facilitators

### Who Are Mandated Reporters In Schools?

#### All Employees

- All school employees are mandated reporters of child maltreatment. This includes all people who receive a W2 from the school district.

#### Individuals Not Required to Report

- Some individuals involved in schools are not listed in statute as being mandated reporters and therefore are not required to report suspected child maltreatment, such as contracted staff and volunteers. However, any person with reasonable cause to suspect child maltreatment *may* make a report to CPS. Also, school policy may require contracted staff and volunteers to engage in training and to notify appropriate school authorities of concerns about maltreatment.
- Additionally, school staff are not legally required to report situations they observe in the community while not working.

### Provide Training at Least Every 5 Years

School boards and leaders in schools participating in the Private School Choice Programs (Choice) and Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP) are to ensure all employees receive training provided by the Department of Public Instruction within six months of initial hiring and, minimally, at least every five years thereafter, Wis. Stat. sec. 118.07(5).



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## **Track and Monitor Training Compliance**

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*For questions about information contained within this document, contact Julie Incitti, school social work consultant, [julie.incitti@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:julie.incitti@dpi.wi.gov) (608) 266-0963.*