

# C.C. Mellor Memorial Library

## Child Abuse Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees

### Purpose

This policy is adopted to affirm the obligation of C. C. Mellor Memorial Library employees to assist in identifying suspected child abuse and to establish procedures for reporting such in compliance with the Pennsylvania Protective Services Law.

### Definitions

Child abuse shall mean any of the following:

1. Any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious physical injuries to a child under 18 years of age.
2. Any act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious mental injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.
3. Any recent act, failure to act, or series of such acts or failures to act by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.
4. Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.

No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare, such as inadequate housing, furnishing, income clothing and medical care.

### Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse

All C. C. Mellor Library employees who in the course of their employment come in contact with children shall report or cause a report to be made when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child is being abused. Reasonable cause may be established by direct observation or report from a third party.

Patron confidentiality applies in situations of suspected child abuse; employees shall cooperate with officials to the extent that they can.

Any person required to report suspected child abuse who, in good faith, reports or causes the report to be made shall have immunity from civil and criminal liability related to those actions.

A person or official required to report a case of suspected child abuse who willfully fails to do so commits a misdemeanor of the third degree for the first violation and a misdemeanor of the second degree for a second or subsequent violation.

Employees who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately notify the library director or the children's librarian. In their absence the employee shall immediately call ChildLine (1-800-932-0313).

If there is immediate danger to the child, an employee should dial 911.

Employees should cooperate as much as possible with the police and CYS employees within the limits of library confidentiality.

Within 48 hours of the report a written statement must be filled out by the employee who observed or received information about the child abuse.