



BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS
of Central Oregon

Child Safety Vol. Handbook



*The child and volunteer intake process used by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon is a consistent process to determine eligibility of children, youth and volunteers for services based upon written eligibility criteria. Children, youth and volunteers are not excluded on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or marital status of parent. (*Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Standards of Practice for One-to-One Service for Programs Operating Within Affiliated Sponsoring Organizations, October 2003, V-15, page 7*).

A Top Priority-Child Safety

Children's safety is our #1 priority. We focus on the child's safety and well-being throughout the match. We do this by providing:

- Thorough professional screening.
- Child Safety and child abuse prevention education programs for volunteers, parents and children.
- Guidelines that establish appropriate boundaries and respect a child's right to feel safe.
- Ongoing BBBS Match Support contact with each party in the match. This helps provide up-to-date information about safety issues and early warnings of potential problems throughout the match relationship.
- The BBBS Match Support Specialist maintains *required* consistent scheduled contacts with each member of the match party.

As a Big you play a role in supporting the parent's primary role of keeping their child safe. Bigs need to model appropriate behavior as well as assume responsibility for their Little's safety during outings.

Some safety issues include: Internet safety, bullying and violence prevention, the Little's medical condition and child abuse prevention.

Our agency has expectations and guidelines relating to Child Safety. We expect you to know and follow these guidelines.

CRITICAL ISSUES

As you look at the lists of indicators of child maltreatment in this chapter, these are naturally very upsetting things to look at. Normal reactions are to disbelieve these things happen or to see them everywhere. Some of us even have experienced such things ourselves. Our goal is not to upset you or make you into someone who is always looking for these things, but to make you aware that these are real possibilities for any child. We all need to be aware of how vulnerable children are and to see ourselves as those who can help protect them. The following chapter describes in detail the indicators of abuse with guidelines for appropriate responses. Keep your eyes and ears open. Report anything you think may be an indicator to your caseworker.

Child Abuse

Child Abuse means any victimization or maltreatment of a minor by an older person through physical, sexual, or emotional means.

Indicators of Maltreatment

Physical Abuse

Physical Abuse tends to be episodic, while neglect tends to be chronic.

- Unexplained bruises and welts
- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained fractures
- Lacerations or abrasions
- Apprehensive when other children cry
- Aggressive or withdrawn
- Indiscriminately seeks affection
- Vacant or frozen stare
- Extreme efforts for attention
- Frightened of parents/afraid to go home
- Reports injury by parents
- Reluctant to change clothes for gym (hides bruises)
- Parents show dislike, impatience towards child
- Illogical explanations for injuries

Neglect

Neglect involves inattention to the basic needs of a child, such as education, food, shelter, medical care and supervision.

- Hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Unattended medical problems
- Underweight, poor growth
- Abdominal distention
- Skin problems, bald patches
- Begging, stealing food
- Extended stays at school or in public places
- Consistent fatigue
- Extreme efforts for attendance
- Poor school attendance
- Unusual concern or responsibility for younger siblings
- Delinquency, substance abuse
- States there is no caretaker

Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse includes any contact or interactions between a child and an adult in which the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the

perpetrator or another person. Another definition of child sexual abuse is the exploitation of a minor by an adult and/or older child/teen for the sexual gratification of the abusive individual that involves a range of sexual activities from touching to non-touching offenses.

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, bloody underclothing
- Pain, swelling, itching, bruises, bleeding, or scarring in genital area
- Discharge from genitals
- Fecal soiling or retention
- Pregnancy in younger girls where father is “unknown”
- Recurring urinary infections
- Venereal disease
- Preoccupation with sex, overly sophisticated sexual knowledge or behavior
- Unwilling to change for gym (but there are other possible reasons as well)
- Withdrawal, fantasy, infantile behavior
- Takes in portions of adult role
- Sexual abuse of other children
- Unusually close relationships with adults with secretive or sexual overtones
- Extreme over-protectiveness of child by an adult

Emotional Maltreatment

- Almost any mental or behavioral disorder may be an indicator

Guidelines on Child Abuse

If a young person comes to you about abuse, especially sexual abuse:

- Attempt to remain calm and deal with the disclosure at their reaction level.
- Maintain eye contact while talking with the youth.
- Stress that the youth did the right thing by telling you.
- Don't ask the child leading questions.
- Stress that you believe them.
- Tell them the abuse was NOT their fault.
- Convey that you feel bad and want to help.
- If a child begins to disclose abuse, ask only open-ended questions such as” Can you tell me what happened?..tell me more... And then what happened?”
- Show affection to indicate your love is constant and they are still worthy.
- Avoid displays of shock.

- Never use terms such as “bad,” “awful,” or “disgusting” to describe the incident. The youth may feel he/she is disgusting due to his/her role in the incident.
- Attempt to give some control back to the youth by asking what he/she wants to do.
- Do not confront the abuser. A confrontation can jeopardize the match. During this kind of crisis, the youth will be even more in need of a Big Brother/Big Sister.
- Tell the youth you have a responsibility to report to the appropriate authorities.
- Call the Big Brothers Big Sisters agency as soon as possible. The youth, as well as you, may need information and support in order to cope with the situation.

Supportive Statements to Use with Youth

- “You did the right thing by telling me and I believe you.”
- “What happened to you was wrong, but it was not your fault.”
- “There are other people we must tell what happened, but don’t worry, I will be with you to help.”

Your Role as a Mandatory Reporter and Reporting Abuse

Mandatory Reporter – those people required by law to report any form of child abuse. Since you are a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon and as such will be working primarily on a one-on-one basis with a child you are a Mandatory Reporter.

As a Mandatory Reporter, if you suspect a child with whom you have had contact is being abused or a person has abused a child, you must tell either Department of Human Services or a law enforcement agency (city or state police, sheriff or county juvenile department). A call to your BBBS Case Manager is also required but does not replace your need to contact DHS or law enforcement. Youth sexual abuse is criminal behavior. Individuals who report suspected victimization have the right to confidentiality in most cases and immunity for prosecution.

Reporting Child Abuse

Any suspicion of child abuse should be reported immediately to BBBS Program staff. Someone from the agency will walk you through the steps of reporting the alleged abuse/neglect to DHS.

What Information Do I Need to Report?

You will need to give as much information as possible. It is helpful to have the child's name, age and address. If you do not have this, BBBS staff can provide this information. In addition, you will need to provide the nature and extent of the abuse, including any knowledge or evidence of previous abuse.

Will My Report Be Confidential?

The reporter's identity will remain confidential to the full extent allowable by the law. If court action is initiated, the reporting person may be called as a witness or the court may order that the reporter's name be disclosed. Only people with firsthand knowledge of a child's situation can provide testimony proving that abuse has occurred.

What Happens After a Report?

A Child Protective Services worker from DHS and/or a law enforcement official will assess the situation. An assessment includes:

1. Determining the presence or absence of child maltreatment and the nature and extent of abuse and neglect.
2. Evaluating the child's condition, including risk of harm to the child and the need for medical attention
3. Identifying all of the factors that cause risk and the problems underlying the abuse or neglect.

After the initial report is made, a social worker will call you to let you know the outcome of their assessment and what action, if any, needs to take place.

Call to Report Abuse

Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties: 541-693-2700

Warm Springs Child Protective Services: 541-553-3209

If you feel like the child is in imminent danger please call your local police or 911

Substance Abuse Prevention

A recent study shows that Bigs can definitely have an effect on keeping youth away from drugs and alcohol.

- Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 46% less likely to initiate drug use than kids without Bigs.
- Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 27% less likely to initiate alcohol use than kids without Bigs.

Indicators of Substance Abuse

- Poor school attendance, constantly late
- Poor school performance
- Hostile attitude, argumentative
- Jittery and hyperactive
- Sleepy and nodding off during the day
- Delinquent behavior
- Dilated pupils, bloodshot eyes
- Slurred speech, rapid speech
- Lack of motivation, lazy
- Lack of attention to task
- Sudden change in personality
- Change in sleeping and/or eating patterns
- Odor of alcohol, marijuana etc.

Prevention Strategies

Here are some concrete ways you, as a Big, can prevent your Little from using drugs or alcohol:

- Be a good role model for your Little.
- Talk to your Little about the dangers of peer pressure.
- Talk about acceptable behavior in terms of substance use, clearly stating what behavior limits are.
- Encourage leaving a situation if peers decide to engage in unacceptable behavior.
- Suggest alternative activities to substance use that are acceptable.
- Participate in healthy activities with your Little. Activities can be anything that you both enjoy and that promote a sense of well being.
- Attend drug-free special events sponsored by community service organizations with your little.
- Use teachable moments to help explain the consequence of substance abuse, giving information, and discussing values. This is also a time when you can learn from your Little.

If you ever have a situation where your Little talks to you about any abuse or violence he/she is subject to, contact your Match Support Specialist immediately. Our response to the disclosure by a child can prevent negative outcomes for the child and their family. For that reason, it's critical that volunteers follow our BBBS protocols on reporting abuse.

Emergency Contacts for Bigs

Police Departments: Emergency: 911

Bend: 1441 NE Forbes Rd. (388-0170)

Redmond: 777 SW Deschutes Ave. (388-0170)

Prineville: 400 E. 3rd. (447-4168)

Madras: 71 SW D St. (475-2424)

Sisters: 703 N. Larch St. (549-2302)

Deschutes Sheriff's Office: 63333 Hwy 20 W. Bend (388-0170)

La Pine Station: 51530 Huntington Rd. (536-1758)

Central Oregon Family Resource Center: 389-5468

For information on the variety of classes, resources and services available to families in Central Oregon, call: 389-5468 or visit them on the web:

www.frconline.org

Department of Human Resources: 388-6161

If you have a gut feeling about a potential abuse of any kind, please contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon and allow us to take the appropriate steps. To report an immediate abuse, contact DHS or 911.

Cascade Youth & Family: 382-0934

CYFC provides family mediation, temporary shelter for runaway and homeless youths ages 11-18 years, crisis intervention, transitional living program, truancy prevention, and a 24-hour Crisis Hotline.

Poison Information Center: 1-800-222-1222

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon:

Deschutes County Office: 541-312-6047

Crook County Office: 541-447-3851 x333

Jefferson County Office: Community Based - 541-325-5603

School Based – 541-325-5607

Darkness to Light Training Schedule

The Darkness to Light training educates adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. For every 1 adult trained in this program, 10 children are potentially better protected. Trained participants learn how to spot the signs of abuse and how to respond if they have a suspicion that a child is being abused. It gives you the tools you need to help protect children in our community!

Darkness to Light is coordinated by the Kids Center in partnership with a strong group of county and non-profit agencies throughout Central Oregon. BBBSO strongly encourages our volunteers to be aware of child abuse and to attend a Darkness to Light training. It is a 3 hour interactive training program that is offered several times throughout the year. If you are interested in attending a training please visit the following website for a current schedule: <http://kidscenter.org>

The Department of Human Services also has a short video **available online** about **your role as a Mandatory Reporter** and Child Abuse. You can see this video at <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/abuse/main.shtml> and scroll down to the Video “The Role of Mandatory Reporters in Child Abuse Cases.”

BBBS Overnight Policy

Big Brothers Big Sisters permits overnight match activities only on a special occasion basis. The agency may at its own discretion, plan group events/activities, which may provide overnight accommodations for a group of matches. Special consideration may be given to a request to include the Little on a family vacation/trip where another adult/ family members will be present.

The following conditions must be met before an overnight can occur:

- The match must be six months or older.
- The volunteer has demonstrated good judgment and reliability in his/her commitment to the Little and has adhered to program ground rules.
- The volunteer, parent and match support worker must discuss overnight plans, sleeping accommodations and any health considerations before an approval is granted for the overnight.
- The volunteer must provide separate sleeping accommodations for the Little (separate beds, sleeping bags, etc.) and provide a safe & secure environment.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer and child sleep together in the same bed or sleeping bag.

Failure to comply with this overnight policy will result in the closing of the match.

Your Little May Need a Booster Seat!

Some of our Littles are exactly that...LITTLE! They may be required to use a booster seat when traveling in a car. Review the following information to understand if a booster seat is needed in your car when transporting your Little.

Oregon Child Car Seat Laws:

- **CHILD RESTRAINT LAW:** Child passengers must be restrained in approved child safety seats until they weigh forty pounds.
- **BOOSTER SEAT LAW:** Children over forty pounds must use boosters to 4'9" tall, unless they have reached age eight.

General Tip: Keep an older child in a booster seat until he/she fits properly in the lap and shoulder belts in the car. Most children need to ride in boosters from about age 3-4 until about 8 years of age. Children under age thirteen are recommended to ride in the back seat (reduces the risk of crash injury by 37% for this age group).

National Guidelines:

| Type of Seat | Child's Age | Child's Weight | Child's Height | Features |
|---|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Combination (forward facing only; harness is removable) | Age one to 8-10 years | 20-30 lbs. up to 40lbs. with harness; 30-40 lbs. up to 80lbs. with lap and shoulder belt in car | Remove harness if child's shoulders are above top strap slops; child is too tall if head is not fully supported | Removable harness fits up to 40 lbs.; can be used after baby outgrows infant-only seat if baby is at least one year old |
| Booster Seat (has no harness) | 3-4 years up to 8-10 years | 30-40 lbs. up to 80-100 lbs. | Child is too tall if head is not supported up to top of ears; use high back booster if car has low seat back | Use with lap and shoulder belt in car; do not use with only lap belt; includes comfort clip or strap to keep shoulder belt centered on shoulder and chest |
| Booster with removable shield (low back booster) | 3-4 years up to 8-10years | Not certified to use with children over 40 lbs.; safety experts recommend use of safety seat with harness for children under 40lbs. | Child is too tall if head is not supported up to top of ears | Safety experts recommend removing shield and using with lap and shoulder belt in car (verify shield is removable by checking instructions) |

For more information, contact Safety Belt U.S.A. 1-800-745-SAFE
www.carseat.org