Central DuPage Emergency Medical Services System

Child Abuse and Neglect

INTRODUCTION AND APPROVAL: 6/95	EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR: _____
REVIEW & APPROVAL: _____	EMSS COORDINATOR: _____
REVISION & APPROVAL: 12/97, 2/09	

PURPOSE:

To facilitate reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect to the appropriate agency.

POLICY:

A. By Illinois law, (Abuse and Neglected Child Reporting Act) medical personnel are required to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect.

B. A law enforcement officer, physician, or a designated Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) employee may take or retain temporary protective custody of the child.

C. Any person acting in good faith in the removal of a child...shall be granted immunity from any liability...as a result of such removal.

PROCEDURE:

A. Guidelines to be used for suspecting child abuse and neglect:

1. Discrepancy between history of injury and physical exam.

2. Prolonged interval between injury and the seeking of medical help.

3. History of repeated trauma.

4. Parents or guardians responding inappropriately to child, non-compliance with evaluation, treatment or transport of child.

5. The apathetic child, e.g., the child who does not seek comfort from parents or guardians.

6. Poor nutritional status of child (neglect, failure-to-thrive).

7. Home which is unsafe for child (vermin, unsanitary conditions, etc).

8. The following injuries are physical signs and should raise the suspicion of child abuse and indicate need for more investigation:

   a. Perioral and perinasal injuries
   b. Fractures of long bones in children under three (3) years of age
   c. Multiple soft tissue injuries
   d. Frequent injuries - old scars, multiple bruises, and abrasions in varying stages of healing
   e. Injuries such as bites, cigarette burns, rope marks
   f. Trauma to genital or perianal areas
   g. Sharply demarcated burns in unusual areas.

B. Treatment of Suspected Child abuse and Neglect:

1. Treat injuries per SOPs.

2. If parent or guardian refuses to let you transport the child after treatment; remain at the scene, contact Resource Hospital and request police assistance. REQUEST THAT THE OFFICER PLACE THE CHILD IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY AND ASSIST WITH TRANSPORT.

3. You are required by law to report your suspicions to DCFS. Document and report your suspicions to the Emergency Department physician and/or charge nurse as well.

4. On the Prehospital Run Report carefully document history and physical findings, environmental surroundings, child's interaction with parents or guardians, discrepancies in the history obtained from the child, bystanders, parents or guardians, and any other pertinent information.

DCFS HOTLINE for ABUSE 1-800-252-2873