

# Child Abuse Reporting Available Online

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, making it an effective time to reflect on the importance of reporting potential child abuse.

As a child care provider, you are in a key position to observe and report potential signs of child abuse and neglect. State law requires reporting of suspected abuse and neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Families Child Abuse Hotline. Reporting is available 24 hours every day both online at <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/> and via the department's Hotline at 1-800-962-2873. However, using the online system can save valuable time in providing the department the information needed to initiate an investigation quickly.

By the profession we have chosen, we are committed to protecting children and ensuring they have happy, healthy lives. Reporting potential abuse and neglect saves lives. Last year the department investigated nearly 188,000 reports of child abuse and neglect; sadly, these were only the cases that were reported.

For further guidance on when it is appropriate to make a report, the child abuse reporting feature, at <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>, includes helpful resources such as definitions for reporting, laws, tips for successful reporting, frequently asked questions and more.

Any report made in good faith is important. The child may not be in imminent danger but child protective investigators may determine the family would benefit from services to strengthen parenting skills or from mental health care. The department's primary goal is to protect children, but safely keeping families together whenever possible is also a priority and the department collaborates with community partners in every region of the state to provide care and services that families need to thrive.

Be vigilant if you suspect abuse. A child may be depending on you.

