

REPORTING ABUSE

The South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs wants you to know how to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation by a caregiver. A caregiver is an individual who provides care to a child or vulnerable adult with or without compensation, on a temporary, permanent, full-time or part-time basis. This may include a relative, household member, day care personnel, or personnel of a public or private residential facility/home.

What should I report?

Abuse means physical, psychological, or sexual abuse which includes hitting, slapping, threatening, or inappropriate sexual contact.

Neglect means the failure or omission of a caregiver to provide the care, goods, or services necessary to maintain the health or safety of a child/vulnerable adult including food, clothes, medicine, shelter, supervision, or medical services.

Exploitation means causing a child/vulnerable adult to engage in activity or labor which is improper, unlawful, or against the rational wishes of the victim. It also includes the improper, unlawful, or unauthorized use of the funds, assets, property, power of attorney, guardianship, or conservatorship of a child/vulnerable adult by someone for the profit or advantage of that person.

To whom should I report?

- **Children Age 17 and under- State DSS Out of Home Abuse and Neglect Investigation Unit (OHAN)**
Call (803) 898-7669 if you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child.
- **Adults Age 18 and above - The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED)** is responsible for operating the Vulnerable Adult Hotline, which is a toll free number that is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
CALL 1-866-200-6066 if you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

** It should be noted the above two investigative units may send the case to other entities for further investigation once the report is made.

WHEN IN DOUBT--REPORT