

# Special Committee on Reporting of Child Abuse & Neglect



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# Overview

- DPI's work prior to WI Act 81
- WI Act 81 changes for schools
- DPI's support to implement WI Act 81
- Feedback from Wisconsin school officials
- Questions

# DPI's Work prior to WI Act 81

- Publications

- *Reporting Requirements for Sexually Active Adolescents: Suggested Procedures for Educators*

- <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pdf/rfsaa.pdf>

- *The School's Role in Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect*

- <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/sswchildabuse.html>

- Webcast

## Prior to Act 81 ...

- Mandated reporters in schools included school teachers, counselors, administrators & most other professional employees
- Mandated reporters could not be dismissed for making a report for suspected child maltreatment, as required by law

# WI Act 81 Changes for Schools

- 🍎 All school district employees are now mandated reporters
- 🍎 Prohibition against disciplining or discriminating against people reporting in good faith

# WI Act 81 Changes for Schools

- School districts must require every employee to receive DPI training
  - Identification of children who have been abused or neglected
  - Laws & procedures for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect
  - Within 6 months of initial employment & at least every 5 years thereafter

# DPI Interpretations of Act 81

- “every employee” construed broadly (i.e., anyone receiving an annual wage statement from the school district)
- WI Act 81 became effective 12/09/11, so initial training was to be completed within 6 months (no later than 6/09/12)

# DPI's Support to Implement WI Act 81

- Developed training alternatives for educators
  - Webcast #1 to meet training requirement
    - Definitions of child abuse & neglect
    - Warning signs
    - How to report
    - How to get more information
  - Webcast #2 recommended for school administrators & pupil services professionals
    - Guidelines for talking with students
    - Cooperating with CPS assessment
    - Possible outcomes of a report
    - Special circumstances



# DPI's Support to Implement WI Act 81

- Developed training alternatives for educators
  - PowerPoint presentations from webcasts available to be delivered locally by school or county officials
    - Speaker notes provided
    - OK to supplement but not supplant content
    - Electronic completion certificate

# DPI's Support to Implement WI Act 81

- DPI publication *The School's Role in Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect* was updated to include new requirements & information from WI Act 81

# DPI's Support to Implement WI Act 81

- Established new home page on child abuse & neglect

<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/can.html>

—Description of WI Act 81 requirements

—Links to:

- Both webcasts
- Both PowerPoint presentations used in the webcasts
- DPI publications
- Wisconsin public & private, non-profit agencies

# Feedback from WI School Officials

- Issues surrounding ...
  - Part-time employees
    - Coaches
    - Substitute teachers
  - Employees who are minors
  - Casual employees
    - People who take tickets at athletic events
  - School board members
  - Contracted personnel
    - Bus drivers

# Feedback from WI School Officials

- Some law enforcement officials who receive reports for suspected child abuse or neglect have disclosed police reports, upon request, including the name of the reporter
  - Prohibited by Wis. Stat. sec. 48.981(7)
  - Penalty for disclosure is up to \$1,000 & up to 6 months in jail