Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse: A Flow Chart for OVW-Funded Advocates

Are you a "mandatory reporter"?
Review your statute to determine who must report child abuse in your jurisdiction. Pay attention to the particular requirements. Be sure to inform the survivor at the outset—before they make any disclosures—if you are a mandatory reporter.

NO → STOP

YES ↓

Is the survivor someone whose abuse must be reported?
Is the survivor a minor about whom abuse must be reported? For example, a minor might not be subject to the mandatory child abuse reporting laws if the minor is emancipated, in the military, or a parent.

NO → STOP

YES ↓

Has the survivor experienced "child abuse" as your statute defines it?

NO → STOP

YES ↓

Are you exempt from reporting in this case?
For example, is the disclosure protected by a victim-advocate, therapist-patient, attorney-client, or other privilege that prohibits disclosure without survivor consent?

YES → STOP

NO ↓

Report Must Be Made
Make the report to the appropriate agency. If there is a choice between agencies, discuss the options with the survivor. Ensure you are reporting only what is required, and that you are complying with VAWA or other funders' confidentiality requirements. You may report only the information required by the mandatory reporting statute unless the survivor gives informed consent, in writing, for you to release additional information. Remember to safety plan and offer the survivor ongoing support!

STOP

You may not report the abuse or otherwise breach a survivor's confidentiality without their written and informed consent.

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