

CHAPTER 26

OTHER DEPARTMENTS, ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONER

- 26.1 Suspected child abuse cases or child abuse victims may come to the attention of different organisations, e.g. mutual help group, church organisations and various social service units, individual practitioners etc. in their daily activities or service delivery.

GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

- 26.2 In handling child abuse cases, the paramount concern is the welfare of the child.
- 26.3 Children should not be required to describe the child abuse incident(s) to different parties and agencies unnecessarily.
- 26.4 To ensure that timely assistance can be rendered to the victim, where suspected abuse incident is occurred, concerned staff should report immediately to the supervisor / designated personnel and refer the case to the intake Social Work Officer / Family and Child Protective Services Unit (SWO/FCPSU) (Appendix VII) immediately during office hours. For reports on suspected child abuse cases received after office hours, the SWD Outreaching Team (after office hours) through contact by the SWD hotline (Tel. No. : 2343 2255) should respond to the report.

REFERRALS

- 26.5 Staff of the organisation should be alert to signs and symptoms of child abuse for children. Their sensitivity in early identification of suspected abused students is important in saving the child victims from being further abused (refer to Chapter 2 on **Checklist for Identifying Possible Child Abuse**).
- 26.6 In handling suspected child abuse cases, staff of the organization, if in doubt, may consult SWO/FCPSU. (List of Offices of FCPSUs at Appendix VII)
- 26.7 In informing the parents of suspected child abuse cases, staff of the organisation may consult SWO/FCPSU or the responsible caseworker as appropriate on how to handle the case and by whom it should be handled. Special attention has to be paid when parent(s) / guardian(s) is/are suspected to

be involved in the abuse.

- 26.8 When making case referrals, staff of the organisation should provide all the background information and the relevant data of the child and his/her family as far as possible.
- 26.9 In circumstances that suggest a criminal offence may have been committed, the case should be reported to the Police to safeguard the welfare of the child. (refer to paragraph 24.23 of Chapter 24 for the procedures in making report to the Police).

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PARTIES

- 26.10 The staff personnel / referrer / informants may be invited to attend the Multi-disciplinary Case Conference to formulate the welfare plan if appropriate (refer to Guide to Participants of MDCC on Child Abuse at Annex I to Chapter 11).