

PROCEDURAL GUIDE
FOR
HANDLING
CHILD ABUSE CASES
Revised 2007

FOREWORD

To tie in with the new service development including the re-structuring of the former Child Protective Service Units, the formation of Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres, the re-engineering of family services, and the provision of Student Guidance Service in primary schools, the guidelines on handling child abuse cases by workers of related sectors have to be updated.

The Multi-disciplinary Case Conference on Child Abuse (MDCC) is an important mechanism for handling suspected child abuse cases. In the 'Procedures for Handling Child Abuse Cases (revised 1998)' (the Procedures), the 'Guide to Participants of the Multi-disciplinary Case Conference on Child Abuse' (the Guide) is provided in Appendix XIX. As there have been concerns raised by parents about the function of the MDCC, the decision-making process, as well as the role and participation of parents, the Guide was revised and put into practice in July 2002 after endorsement by Members of the Task Group on Handling Procedures on Child Sexual Abuse Cases. Subsequently, a Reference Kit was also produced in June 2003 to supplement the Guide and to provide reference for the Chairperson to facilitate him/her to steer the MDCC effectively. When the revised Guide was implemented, Members agreed that it should be further reviewed after the concerned professionals had gained experience after its implementation.

On the other hand, there has been other development in various services for children in the recent years. To further strengthen the effort and collaboration of the different professionals in handling the problem of child abuse, there is a need to revise the Procedures other than those relating to the MDCC. As proposed by the Social Welfare Department, Members of the Committee on Child Abuse (CCA) agreed in the meeting held on 27 January 2004 to review the Procedures. A Task Group was subsequently nominated with representatives from various professions. The Task Group met on 24 occasions and prepared the revised version 'Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases (revised 2007)' (the Procedural Guide) as follows. The revised version was endorsed by the CCA at its meeting on 20 December 2007.

Making use of advanced technology, this Procedural Guide will be uploaded to the SWD Homepage for reference of all professionals. In the future, updating of any change in factual information will be done by the Social Welfare Department with input from the professionals concerned.

