Why?

- Everyone’s safety and well-being matters.
- Protecting children protects us all.
- Children deserve a secure environment.
- It’s University policy.
- It’s the right thing to do.
Who?

Who *Must* Protect Children?

• You!

• Anyone associated with the University
  – Faculty
  – Staff
  – Students
  – Representatives
  – University Contractors and their staff
A Definition

• Who is considered a “child” for purposes of the UA Child Protection Policy?
  – A “child” is anyone under the age of eighteen (18).
Where & When?

• This Policy applies to abuse or neglect that occurs
  • on the campus,
  • on property owned or leased by the University, or
  • while University personnel are participating in a University connected activity off campus.

• But, you may be a mandatory reporter according to Alabama law no matter your location:
  – any person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to a child, University employees, teachers, hospitals, clinics, medical professionals, school officials, law enforcement officials, social workers, daycare workers, mental health professionals, and members of the clergy
Mandatory Reporter

• Pursuant to Ala. Code § 26-14-13, any mandatory reporter who fails to report child abuse “shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a sentence of not more than six months' imprisonment or a fine of not more than $500.00.”
Protect from What?

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
What is Physical Abuse?

- Nonaccidental physical harm or injury to a child by a caregiver.
What is Neglect?

• The failure to provide adequate food, medical treatment, supervision, clothing, or shelter.
About sexual abuse...

• Usually it occurs at the hands of someone a child trusts.
• Both boys and girls suffer from sexual abuse.
• False accusations are rare.
• Your shame and embarrassment can make reporting sexual abuse difficult.
  – Don’t turn a blind eye!
What is sexual abuse?

• Touching
• Exposure to pornography
• Other types of activity intended to sexually gratify an abuser
  – Including internet focused sexual exploitation
Touch

• Sexual abuse includes *any* touching by an adult of a child’s body when the abuser’s purpose or motive for the touching is to arouse or gratify the abuser’s sexual desire.
Pornography

• Sexual abuse also includes intentionally exposing a child to pornography or using a child in the production of pornography.
• Taking indecent photos or videos of children is abuse.
• Internet exploitation has become one of society’s most serious problems.
Other Sexually-oriented Activities

• An adult commits abuse when he persuades two children to engage in sex with each other.
• Abuse occurs when an adult masturbates knowing a child is watching.
• Exhibitionism (e.g., exposing your genitals, buttocks, or breasts) is abuse.
How do I protect children?

• Keep an eye out.
• Behave responsibly.
• Report even if you “just” suspect.
  – Let others investigate.
    • Professionals are trained to determine what happened.
  – You don’t need proof to report, just a good faith belief that abuse occurred.
    • We know that reporting suspected abuse works best for all.
Guidelines for Responsible Behavior

• You should not use physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children.

• It is unacceptable for you to use any form of physical discipline.
  – This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force.

• Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child or others.
Guidelines for Responsible Behavior

• Avoid being alone with a child where other adults cannot easily observe you.
  – unless it is an emergency or unavoidable circumstance.

• Conduct one-to-one counseling with children in the open or in public or another place where private conversations are possible, but occur in full view of others.

• When supervising or assisting private activities such as dressing or showering, remain observable by others or work in pairs.
Guidelines for Responsible Behavior

• Appropriate Forms of Affection
  – Brief hugs
  – “High fives” and hand slapping
  – Verbal praise
  – Touching hands, faces, shoulders, and arms
  – Arms around shoulders
  – Holding hands when walking with small children
  – Kneeling or bending down for brief hugs with small children
  – Holding hands during prayer
  – Sitting beside small children
Guidelines for Responsible Behavior

• Below are some examples of **inappropriate** affection.
  – Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
  – Kissing
  – Touching bottoms, chests, or genital areas except during appropriate diapering or toileting of infants, toddlers, and those with special needs.
  – Touching knees or legs of children
  – Showing affection in areas where you cannot be seen by others
  – Any form of unwanted affection
  – Comments or compliments (spoken, written, electronic) that relate to physique or body development
  – Touching underwear (over or under outer clothing)
  – Private meals with children
  – Holding children over 4 years old on your lap
  – Occupying a bed with a child
  – Do not give or receive any type of massage

• There are a handful of times, however, when these acts might be acceptable, including situations involving the appropriate administration of medical care or treatment, as part of a properly approved research program, or where the act is a universally accepted part of the athletic or educational activity.
Reporting Guidelines

• When in doubt, report.
• Remember, certainty is NOT necessary.
• Do **not** interview or question a child yourself.
  – A trained expert needs to do that.
• Make your report orally and in writing.
• Any person who makes a good faith report of child abuse or neglect shall not be subjected to retaliation.
• Any person who makes a good faith report of child abuse or neglect is immune under Alabama law from any liability, civil or criminal.
• Your identity, as a reporter, is kept confidential.
How to Report: Oral Report

• Preferred Information:
  – Name of child
  – Child’s whereabouts
  – Description of known or suspected abuse or neglect
  – Suspected abuser’s name and whereabouts
  – Names/addresses of parents/guardians
  – If known, description of previous injuries

Report to The University of Alabama Police Department (UAPD) at

• 205-348-5454
How to Report: Written Report

• Following an oral report, you **must also complete** a Child Abuse or Neglect Report Form and deliver it to the UA Police Department.

• You can download the form here:
  – [http://policies.ua.edu/childprotection.html](http://policies.ua.edu/childprotection.html)
  You can email the completed form to:
  – [ua.police@ua.edu](mailto:ua.police@ua.edu)
More information

• The full UA Child Protection Policy can be found at:
  – http://policies.ua.edu/childprotection.html

• More information can be found at:
  – Alabama Department of Human Resources
    • ADHR – Child Abuse FAQs
  – Child Welfare Information Gateway:
    • Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect