



# Act 31 Mandated Child Abuse Recognition & Reporting

Presented by

## Debra Schilling Wolfe, M.Ed.

**3 Hours CE: Approved by PA Dept. of Human Services to Satisfy Act31 CE Requirements for All Mandated Reporters**

### Objectives: Participants will be able to describe:

- Differences between child protective services and general protective services
- Relevant definitions including: child, perpetrator, acts or failures to act, categories of child abuse, and exclusions to child abuse
- Provisions and responsibilities for reporting suspected child abuse
- Indicators for the recognition of child abuse

### AGENDA

Description of Child Welfare in Pennsylvania  
 Child Protective Services (CPS)  
 General Protective Services (GPS)

- Description/differentiation of the two types
  - Criteria for a report being CPS vs. GPS

Definitions that Must be Covered:

Components of Child Abuse

- Child
- Perpetrator
- Inclusion of school employees
- Act or failure to act

All Categories of Child Abuse

Exclusions to Child Abuse

- Clarify exclusion to substantiating a report versus exclusion to reporting

Provisions and Responsibilities for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

- Permissive Reporters
- Mandated Reporters
- Attorneys as Mandated Reporters
- Privileged/Confidential communications

Reporting Process

- Mandated Reporters role related to reasonable cause to suspect vs. conducting an investigation
- Reporting without having to determine the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim child
- Streamlining of the reporting process
  - Direct reports by the person who suspects
  - Report immediately
  - Electronic submission of reports by mandated reporters
    - Reporting scenarios
    - To whom and how quickly reports are made
  - What happens after a report is made

Protections for Reporters  
 Penalties for Failure to Report  
 Mandated Reporters Right-to-Know  
 Recognition/Indicators of Child Abuse

## Debra Schilling Wolfe, M.Ed.

Debra Schilling Wolfe received her M.Ed. in Community Mental Health Counseling from Northeastern University in 1978. She is the founding Executive Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Field Center for Children's Policy, Practice & Research, a multidisciplinary center focused on child welfare systemic reform. The research and testimony of Ms. Wolfe and her colleagues have influenced change in child welfare policy and laws on local and national levels.

A former Director of Child Welfare Services for Catholic Social Services and Clinical Director for Our Town Family Center, Ms. Wolfe's clinical background includes child and family therapy and supervision specifically with child abuse cases.

Her publications include *Revisiting Child Abuse Reporting Laws and Social Policy*, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, and *Forensic Psychiatry*.

She has held leadership roles in the child welfare arena for over 30 years and directed innovative child welfare programs nationally including the New York Foundling Hospital Crisis Nursery and Boston City Hospital Sexual Abuse Team.

**Approved Home Study CE Hours for Psychologists Counselors Social Workers Nurses AOTA**

**Exam Enclosed** Participant Practice Level—Intermediate

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