Complete free mandated reporter trainings online or request for an in-person training at: [**http://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/training/**](http://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/training/)

**How would I know a child has been exposed to family/domestic violence?**

*“If the primary aggressor intentionally allows a child under the age of 18 to witness the commission of a forcible felony, battery or family violence battery;*

*or*

*If the primary aggressor, having knowledge that a child under the age of 18, is present and sees and hears the act, commits a forcible felony, battery or family violence battery,”* (Code Section 16-5-70).

**Talk with the non-abusive parent:**

**Trauma-Informed Interventions with the Non-Abusive Parent:**

* Be mindful of possible triggers and concerns from the non-abusive parent and/or child(ren) when there is DFCS involvement
* Identify strengths in the non-abusive parent and review their choices to keep their child safe
* Avoid blaming or shaming the non-abusive parent for their role in the child’s exposure to family violence
* Hold the abusive parent accountable for their behavior and choices
* Offer to keep the non-abusive parent updated on the report and findings
* Assist in helping the non-abusive parent access resources and referrals

1. Offer to make the report *with* the non-abusive parent or ask the non-abusive parent if they would like to make the report with your support.
2. Explain the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) investigative process and discuss potential risks involved with reporting.
3. Discuss the preventative measures the non-abusive parent has taken to protect their child(ren). This could include: discussing safety planning strategies, the non-abusive parent and child(ren) living in a domestic violence shelter, etc.
4. Share the DFCS contact information with the non-abusive parent if they would like to follow up with the report.
5. After the report is made, discuss and review safety planning options with the non-abusive parent and child(ren).
6. Offer emotional support during and after the report is made to the non-abusive parent and child(ren).

**When making the report:**

1. Identify the abusive parent as the “*primary aggressor*”.
2. Clearly state that the children are currently safe in the report.
3. During and after making the report, the information you share with DFCS should be limited to what is related to the incident of child endangerment or abuse, including:
   1. The names of the children, the non-abusive parent, and the primary aggressor and;
   2. How to contact the non-abusive parent.

*\*Do not share or include other information related to the survivor and the services the survivor is receiving in the report without written permission from the survivor*

**Other ways to receive support:**

* Reach out to your local legal counsel and your respective Prevent Child Abuse organization for advice on child endangerment and children’s exposure to domestic violence.
* Schedule a time to meet with your local DFCS director and agency to build relationship and receive guidance and support around reporting.

**Mandated Reporter Reminders:**

* During the initial meeting, clearly disclose to the non-abusive parent that you are a mandated reporter and share your limits with confidentiality.
* Explain what mandated reporters are required to report.
* Seek support and guidance from supervisor and/or the designated mandated reporter with your agency prior, during and/or after making the report.
* Discuss choices and options with the non-abusive parent.
* Do not interrogate the child(ren), siblings or other children with information about suspected abuse.
* Avoid making promises or assuming/guessing what will occur with the investigation.
* On crisis calls, remember to collect only the *necessary* data to assist the survivor and child(ren).