

PAC Chat #2

What is “a matter of SAFETY and SECURITY”?

As mentioned in PAC Chat #1, whenever you are involved with students you are in a position of trust. This means that you are responsible for a few things, including protecting the children in your care. If you become aware of information that would reasonably lead you to believe that someone’s safety (physical being or mental health) is at risk, that someone is planning to harm someone else or themselves, or that the security of the people, possessions, transportation or building is in jeopardy, this is NOT covered by confidentiality expectations. In fact, the expectation is that you DO report it!

Gulp! How should you decide what qualifies and what doesn’t? Should you ask questions to clarify? Who should you report it to?

- A good measurement for deciding what qualifies is:
 - Is it legit or just “kids playing around”?
 - Would you want to know if a similar situation were happening with your own child or someone you care about?

Here’s some examples of what to report, to help you out...

-You overhear kids talking about how they plan to “jump” another child after school for “ratting on them” to a teacher.

-A student tells you that one of their friends has been really sad and doesn’t want to be around anymore.

-A child you are reading with shares that they and their siblings are left alone at night and they don’t have dinner.

-You see a child hit their head on something hard.

-You hear kids plan to put a rock in one of the doors, so someone can sneak in after hours.

-You see someone hurt another person and it appears to be intentional.

-A student tells you that someone took something that did not belong to them.

*You may come across scenarios that fall under BC’s duty to report. (Don’t worry, we’ll explain that too!)

- Ask open ended questions (who, what, where, when etc.) to get specifics (if you can naturally). If you do not know the student(s) by name, take note of the colour and style of their clothing, their hair colour/length/style, their size, or the classroom they were in, and the time/location.

Something to note: Often kids will be hesitant to share something that they are embarrassed about, or info that might get someone they care about in trouble. They may tell you a story about “a friend” when in fact they are the ones experiencing the situation.

-Don’t try and fill in the blanks.

-Be an active listener (nod, keep an open body posture, and engage them if possible).

- Report what you know to the teacher in charge (if other ears are around keep it private!), or the school administrator (principal or vice principal). They will assess the situation and decide on next steps (investigating further, solving it in the classroom, contacting parents etc.).

Your DUTY TO REPORT is covered in PAC Chat #3!