

PROTOCOL FOR HELPING STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 WHERE ABUSE IS SEEN OR SUSPECTED

(Reporting of such a situation is MANDATORY BY LAW)

Abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological. If you are working with a student who is *or you think is* under the age of 18, and the student tells you about being abused *or you suspect* has been abused, *you are required by law to report this.*

You can help by following these basic guidelines. Keep in mind that the student possibly feels very alone and frightened. She or he has come to you because there is some level of trust.

DO:

- Be a caring person who listens and talks with the student.
- If you think the student MIGHT be under 18 years old, ask his/her age. It is best to be certain about this, as the laws are very precise. If the student is 18 or older, see the appropriate Protocol on the Behavior Intervention Team webpage: <http://sanjuancollege.edu/bit/>
- Explain that it is important to bring the student to the Advising and Counseling Center (ACC) and that reporting this to the ACC is mandatory.
- **Walk the student over to the Advising and Counseling Center (ACC) or contact the ACC if the student is unwilling to go. 566-3526**
- Ask a counselor in the ACC if you are not clear about a situation or the process.

KNOW:

- It's the LAW. You MUST report a situation like this.
- The ACC will be there to support and assist you every step of the way. ACC will contact the appropriate authorities.
- You will need to stay with the student and counselor until all official reporting is completed. This could take more than an hour.

DON'T:

- Ignore the situation or pretend that a student did not tell you of the abuse.
- Feel guilty that you are going to have to report this. You are helping to end the abuse.
- Say, "Don't worry", or, "It will be better tomorrow", or "I promise to keep this confidential". Empty statements will distance you from the student.
- Wait. Reporting such a situation is required immediately.