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**State and Local Government Partner to Offer
Mandated Reporter Online Training to Report Child Abuse**

Press Conference Today at 10:00 a.m. to Launch Site

Chicago....The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center (CCAC) jointly announce the launch of a state of the art, easy-to-use online mandated reporter training website at a 10am press conference today at the CCAC, 1240 S. Damen Avenue in Chicago.

Mandated reporters are defined as any professional who works with children. They are required by Illinois law to report suspected child abuse. The list includes, but is not limited to, teachers, school personnel, doctors, child care workers, law enforcement officers, social workers, and social service administrators.

"Mandated reporters are the eyes and ears of child protection, calling in 71% of abuse and neglect reports in Illinois," said Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Acting Director Erwin McEwen. "This new online option will help the Department reach more child-serving professionals than ever before, training them to work effectively with us to help keep children safe."

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The genesis of this concept grew from an in-person training that DCFS has been offering mandated reporters and the Chicago Public Schools for years. According to former CPS administrator, principal and teacher Diana Gonzalez-Scatton, who participating in creating the online curriculum, this training is critical. “We knew the importance of this site to our teachers. Now there is an efficient, easy to access, faster training tool available,” said Gonzalez-Scatton.

Illinois State Senator Ricky Hendon advocated appropriations for the project through DCFS, which ultimately granted the funds to develop the site. Once the curriculum was completed, the Chicago Police Department, the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, and the Cook County Bureau of Health Services reviewed the content and the site was launched.

According to the Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center’s Chief Program Officer Alicia Vega, mandated reporters are children’s first line of defense against child abuse. “We are thrilled to have played a part in educating all professionals working with children in the State of Illinois,” said Vega.

For more information, visit [www. www.state.il.us/dcfs](http://www.state.il.us/dcfs).