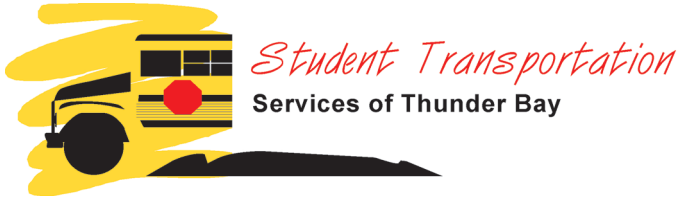
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Statement	Under the Child and Family Services Act, if a Bus Driver, Operator or Consortium Staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, it is their duty to report to the Children's Aid Society.
Practice	All members of the community play an important role in the protection of children from abuse and neglect. This role resonates strongly within the Student Transportation industry, where employees, Bus Drivers in particular, are in frequent and direct communication with students each day and may be in a position to become witness to situations which may cause them to reasonably suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection. Anyone who has a reasonable suspicion that a child is or may be in need of protection must contact CAS immediately. If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of help, you need to make the call. It isn't up to you to investigate or prove the abuse, but it is up to you to reach out and help protect the child. There is a Direct Duty to Report, such that you must not rely on anyone else to report on your behalf. This means that bus company staff (e.g. Bus Drivers), who have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, are required under Ontario's Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) to report their concerns directly to CAS, with employer support. First-person reporting enhances the accuracy of the information provided to CAS, helps to keep details intact and to ensure that reports are made without delay.

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	Ontario's CFSA provides protection for children who may be at risk. Section 72 of the Act states that the public, including professionals who work with children, must promptly report any suspicions that a child is or may be in need of protection to a children's aid society (CAS). The Act defines the phrase "child in need of protection" and explains what must be reported to a CAS. It includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, neglect, and risk of harm. It is not necessary for you to be certain a child is or may be in need of protection to make a report to CAS. Drivers, Bus Operators and Consortium staff have a duty to report only. The CAS will determine if investigation or action is required. Ongoing Duty to Report – even if you know a report has already been made about a child, you must make a further report to the CAS if there are additional reasonable grounds to suspect that the child is or may be in need of protection. Anyone can call CAS and consult a protection worker without identifying the family you are concerned about if you are uncertain about a path forward and would like some direction. Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay and the school may be notified that a situation has been reported, however, it is not necessary for any further information to be shared with the consortium or school. STSTB and our school boards sincerely appreciate all that student transportation professionals do each and every day for the safety and well-being of the community and of the children that you transport.
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