

OTHER QUESTIONS



Q: What happens after I report abuse?

A: OYA's Professional Standards Office will investigate your report, along with the police. You will be offered medical care and counseling support. If you or the abuser needs to be moved for your safety, that will happen.

Q: What if I see, suspect, or hear about someone else being abused?

A: Please report it! We will investigate to find the truth. You will not get in trouble if you make an honest report based on the information you have.

If you make a false report on purpose, you will be held accountable.

If another youth tells you about abuse, but you didn't see it, you should still report it.

Q: Who will know if I make a report?

A: OYA will keep your report as private as possible. An OYA investigator may speak with you. Some staff members may need to know about your report to keep you safe. Sometimes, if a case goes to court, other people also are told about it.

You can ask the Professional Standards Office (PSO) for more information by contacting the OYA Reporting Line at 1-800-315-5440.

Q: What happens if I abuse someone or if I am accused of abuse?

A: OYA and the police will investigate the abuse and you might eventually have criminal charges against you. If you are found guilty, you will face more time in custody. If you have trouble controlling your actions, seek help before you harm anyone.

Q: What if someone tries to get even with me for reporting abuse?

A: This is called retaliation. It is not allowed. If this happens, report it to the OYA Reporting Line or a trusted adult right away so we can investigate and keep you and others safe.

PERSPECTIVES FROM OYA YOUTH

Why is it important to report abuse?

"People need to be safe in their own home. This is where we live. Abuse is not OK."

"Everyone deserves to feel safe and secure, no matter where they're at. If it's happening to you, it's most likely happening to someone else."

"I don't think you should be labeled a snitch for caring for someone's safety or mental health."



YOUTH SAFETY GUIDE

Oregon Youth Authority has zero tolerance for abuse, sexual abuse, and harrassment.

YOU DESERVE TO BE SAFE.

If someone is abusing you, OYA will investigate and hold the person accountable.



You can report abuse by calling 1-800-315-5440.




WHAT DOES ABUSE LOOK LIKE?

- ▶ **Abuse:** Hitting, scaring, bullying, threatening, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment.
- ▶ **Sexual abuse:** When anyone – youth or staff – has any kind of sexual contact with you without your permission. This includes intentionally touching your butt, breast, inner thigh, or genitals, under or over your clothing, without you wanting them to. The only time these things might be OK is when staff need to touch your body as part of their official duties (such as during searches).

It is against the law for OYA staff or other adults to have sexual contact with youth living in OYA facilities, even if you want the contact to happen. Inappropriate relationships between youth and staff are prohibited by OYA policy and often against the law.

- ▶ **Sexual harassment:** When someone makes comments or gestures of a sexual nature to you, or they make repeated, unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors. Comments include references to gender, comments about body or clothing, obscene language or gestures, sexually suggestive comments, or comments of a romantic nature.
- ▶ **What if something feels wrong, but I'm not sure if it is abuse?** Please report it! If it feels wrong, it probably is wrong. You deserve to feel safe.

 **A NOTE ABOUT SEARCHES:**

All searches must be done professionally and thoroughly, but they should not include unnecessary force and should not make you feel shame.

All searches must be conducted by a staff who is the same gender as you. Comprehensive searches must also have another same-gender staff assisting and standing by for safety and security. For transgender youth, there is a process to approve the gender of staff to do searches – please talk with your case coordinator.

Physical body cavity searches are prohibited within OYA facilities.

WERE YOU ABUSED? PLEASE REPORT IT.

It may feel hard to report abuse. But if you report it, you can help protect yourself and others. Please report abuse!

There are many ways to report abuse and get help. You do not need to make reports in each of these ways – you can choose which one is most comfortable for you.

- ▶ **Call the OYA Reporting Line: 1-800-315-5440.** Ask a staff member to make the call. Please speak clearly and leave a message with your first and last name, your phone number, where you're calling from, and any other details you wish to share about the abuse. Someone from OYA's Professional Standards Office (PSO) will call you back between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday – Friday. They don't listen to messages or return calls on weekends or holidays.

If you want to stay anonymous, please leave as much information as you can so we are able to investigate your concern.
 - Staff must allow you to call the OYA Reporting Line as soon as possible.
 - Staff have to make sure that you have privacy during the call, and when an investigator calls you back to follow up on your report. These calls are confidential to prevent retaliation.
 - Staff should not ask why you want to call the OYA Reporting Line and they should not ask for any details about your complaint.
 - When an investigator calls you back, they will identify themselves as a Professional Standards Office (PSO) investigator with the Oregon Youth Authority. They will ask to privately speak with you.

- ▶ **Contact an adult you trust.** OYA and residential program staff, teachers, and volunteers are mandatory reporters, which means that they are required to make an official report if they see or hear about abuse. You can also talk to a Certified Recovery Mentor (CRM) if you are living in a close-custody facility. The CRMs are also mandatory reporters.
- ▶ **Turn in a grievance form.** You can find grievance forms in your facility living unit or at your community program. You also can ask any OYA or program staff member for a form.
- ▶ **Contact the Governor's Office of Constituent Services.** This office is independent from OYA.

Governor's Constituent Services Office
900 Court St. Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301

 **VICTIM ADVOCATES**

If you want to talk with someone, but you're not ready to file a report, you can talk to victim advocates in the community. They are not mandatory reporters. If you tell them about abuse, they are not required to report it to authorities.

In OYA facilities: Contact info for your local advocate is posted in your living unit.

In the community: Contact the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.
Online: ocadsv.org | **Phone:** 503-230-1951