

Scenario

A Duty to Report

Zoë has been working as an RECE in a family support program for two years. The Wilson family began attending the drop-in when they moved into the area and were looking to meet other families while both parents sought work.

Zoë had gotten to know Miriam Wilson and her parents over the past 10 months, and had formed a particularly strong relationship with the mother. Recently, Zoë had begun to notice a change in Miriam and her mom. They were quieter and seemed less engaged with the program and the other families.

One day, when her mother was helping her get her coat on, Miriam's t-shirt lifted to expose her torso and lower back. Zoë gasped when she noticed a large bruise that covered Miriam's tummy and lower back.

After the Wilsons left, Zoë spoke to her supervisor immediately. The centre supervisor listened to Zoë describe the experience and said: "Oh Zoë, you should not jump to conclusions or stir anything up. Just keep an eye on them over the next few weeks to see if any other concerns arise before calling the Children's Aid Society to make a report."

Zoë felt uncomfortable ignoring the bruise that she saw, but she listened to the advice of her supervisor who had more experience with this kind of thing, and went home. She never saw the Wilsons again.



Reflecting on the Scenario

1. Identify and reflect on the facts of this scenario? What ethical and professional responsibilities does Zoë need to consider.
2. What is the role of the supervisor? Did the supervisor uphold or fail to uphold her ethical and professional responsibilities?
 - What would you have done if Zoë had come to you with the same concerns?
 - Which resources would you guide her to?
 - What would support your decision-making?
3. How would the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* support Zoë in managing this situation? Which standards would you review to support you in this situation?
4. What do you know about the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* and your duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect to a Children's Aid Society?

Review the College's [Professional Advisory: Duty to Report](#).

For more scenarios, use the [Reflection Guide](#) on the Professional Advisory: Duty to Report.