

# Hot Line valuable tool to help children

*Editor's note: This is in response to an editorial that ran last week, written by Melanie Wilkinson*

I read your commentary titled, "I didn't do the right thing". It's very hard to know what to do in any situation that catches off guard, situations that you don't expect. I, too, have encountered similar situations in which I wanted to do something but was not sure what I could, or should, do.

It is a sad commentary on our life that in our culture we are more afraid of lawsuits than to stand up and speak out when a child, or anyone else for that matter, is getting abused. At least you tried to do something. You asked if everything was okay - trying to reach out, trying to figure out what it is you could do. Because you said something, the adults in charge of that child were alerted that someone else is watching them and concerned. Still, it remains that the child rode away with her abusers to who knows where and having to endure who knows what.

In Nebraska everyone - that's right, EVERYONE (not just teachers, doctors etc.) - is a mandatory reporter of child abuse and neglect.

See [http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Pages/cha\\_chainindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/cha_chainindex.aspx) for information on reporting child abuse and neglect in Nebraska.

State law requires any person who suspects that a child has been physically or sexually abused or neglected to report it promptly to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. The Adult and Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline is #1-800-652-1999. Even if you think you just don't have enough information, I encourage everyone to call the hotline to report suspected abuse.

SEE **HOTLINE**, PAGE 10B

10/30/2013

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4A

## **HOTLINE:** Report to the Child Abuse Hotline

Authorities are trained to screen out reports that don't constitute abuse/neglect or otherwise offer services that can reduce and eliminate abuse.

In a perfect world there would be no abuse. Since ours is not a perfect

world it takes all of us to make good choices not only for ourselves but for our families, our communities, our country and the world around us. Won't you join me in helping our world be a better place for everyone?

That being said,

Melanie, you and all the other witnesses of the abuse of that small child, are mandated to report what you saw to the Child Abuse Hotline #1-800-652-1999.

Please call today if you haven't done so already. You may save that child's life.

For the children,

*Carol Knieriem,*  
Director, CASA  
for York County  
510 Lincoln  
Ave. Courthouse  
York, NE  
68467

[www.casaforyork.org](http://www.casaforyork.org)  
402-362-5454