REPORTING on Child ABUSE & NEGLECT

FIVE things to CONSIDER BEFORE Identifying a Surviving CHILD or Youth VICTIM of Child Abuse or Neglect

MOTIVATION
Carefully examine the motivations of people seeking to publicize a child’s story, what they have to gain, and if the information can be verified.

NEWSWORTHINESS
Determine if there is any newsworthy reason to identify an innocent child by name or image and if that outweighs the child’s right to privacy.

STIGMATISM
When telling stories about child abuse or neglect, avoid descriptions that further stigmatize children, possibly exposing them to additional physical or psychological harm, or to discrimination by their local communities.

CHILD DEATHS
When a child dies from abuse or neglect, the child is typically identified in stories about the circumstances leading to his or her death. If there are surviving brothers or sisters, the identities of siblings should continue to be protected.

IDENTIFICATION
Do not name, and obscure the visual identity, of any child who is: A victim of sexual abuse or exploitation; or living with AIDS (unless the child, a parent or a guardian gives fully informed consent)

Helpful WAYS to Present INFORMATION

BROADER ISSUES
Media play an important role in reporting about the broader issues of child abuse and neglect, which includes analysis of policy, practice, research, rates and trends, and other areas of public interest.

CHALLENGE MISCONCEPTIONS
Covering child abuse and neglect sensitively and accurately can challenge public misconceptions and myths about child welfare involvement, increase community awareness and encourage discussion and prevention activities.

IDENTIFY SIGNS
When the public understands how to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and how to report it, children can be better protected and potential tragedies can be averted.

PERSONAL STORIES
Personal stories such as youth who have overcome an abusive childhood or foster parents who have made a positive difference in a child’s life can promote hope and may encourage others to get involved.

Associated PRESS
See more at: www.ap.org “Standards and Practices-Privacy”.

The RADIO and TELEVISION Digital News Association
See more at: www.rtdna.org, “Guidelines for Identifying Juveniles”