**ALWAYS document the injury:**

* Take pictures of the injury as soon as you notice the bruise or injury for as long as the injury lasts (at same time every day for as many days as the injuries last, in the same light). You want to show how long the injury lasts.
* If your child is able to tell you what happened, make a video or recording of what your child says (if possible).

* If you can, bring your child to their pediatrician to document the injury and ask the doctor’s opinion of how this might have happened (and in some cases whether the school’s explanation makes sense).

* Decide whether or not it is safe to bring your child back to school. Inform the District and the California Department of Education with a letter from the doctor if you decide to not bring your child back and why.

**ALWAYS send this information to your school district:**

* In your letter to the **school principal** and **district special education director (list of area special education directors is available at (https://dredf.org/special-education/special-education-resources/alameda-contra-costa-and-san-joaquin-counties-special-education-contacts/)**
* explain how you found out about the injury;
* send copies of the pictures, recordings and doctor’s reports;
* ask for an investigation and explanation of what happened;
* request copies of any incident reports;
* report any unusual behavior for your child after the injury, such as a sudden refusal to go to school, crying or screaming;
* ask that this letter be made part of your child’s permanent file (the last sentence is “Please place a copy of this letter in my child’s permanent file.”).
* Get a receipt showing that this letter was received by the school.
* Keep copies of pictures, videos, recordings and letters for your own files.
* **Document any injury/bruise EVERY TIME it happens**.

**With repeated injuries (more than one):**

* Write to the school and ask for an IEP meeting to discuss what happened and how to keep your child safe. Notify the district you plan to tape the meeting.
* In the meeting, talk about:
* what the school will do differently - as what they have been doing isn’t working;
* ask for how staff are being trained;
* request copies of policies and procedures they are following;
* find out how staff (who work with your child) are being supervised.
* For children who are medically complex, you may want to share these protocols and procedures with doctor/therapists to see if these are appropriate for YOUR child.
* **If the district is unresponsive, you may want to contact your local police department.**

**For additional assistance:**

* Peer parent help is available from DREDF (510) 644-2555 or FRN (510) 547-7322.
* Disability Rights California (800) 776- 5746 can assist families in California.
* You may want to contact an attorney for legal advice.