

Signs & symptoms of abuse

Abuse



The child

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical issues brought to the parents' attention
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- Arrives early, stays late and does

Abuse



Signs & symptoms of abuse

Physical abuse



The child


- Unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eyes
- Seems frightened of the parents or protests when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another caregiver

Physical abuse



Signs & symptoms of abuse


Physical abuse



The parent/caregiver

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing or no explanation for the child's injury
- Uses or condones/encourages harsh physical discipline with the child


Physical abuse



Abuse Physical abuse Sexual abu... Emotional ... Neglect

Signs & symptoms of abuse


Sexual abuse



The child

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for, or participate in, physical activities
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or caregiver

Sexual abuse



Abuse Physical ab... Sexual abuse Emotional ... Neglect

Signs & symptoms of abuse

Sexual abuse



The parent/caregiver

- Is unduly protective of the child
- Severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- Is secretive and isolated

Sexual abuse



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Emotional abuse



The child

- Shows extremes in behavior such as overly compliant or demanding, extreme passivity or aggression, etc.
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children) or infantile
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent/caregiver

Emotional abuse



Signs & symptoms of abuse

Emotional abuse



The parent/caregiver

- Constantly blames, belittles or berates the child
- Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's issues
- Overtly rejects the child

Emotional abuse



Signs & symptoms of abuse

Neglect



The child

- Is frequently absent
- Begs for or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care


Neglect



PROMOTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY - HELP PROTECT CHILDREN


Signs & symptoms of abuse

Neglect



The parent/caregiver

- Appears indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner



Tips and Notes:

- If you suspect that someone may have been inappropriate with a child, remove the opportunity for them to be alone with that child.
- Be aware that a single sign (as those shown above) alone does not mean that a child has been physically, mentally or sexually abused
- Be aware that all abuse does not leave physical marks or scars
- Be aware of behavioral changes and expressions
- Be aware of what a child says (what, when, where)
- Be aware that most abuse of a child is at the hands of a family member or close friend.
- Be aware of parental and other family member behaviors and extremes
- Do not place the child in situations where:
 - the child lays on, sleeps in or sits on an adults bed
 - goes places with an adult other than a parent or a chaperoned group
 - adults kiss the child on the lips
 - the child is tickled by an adult
 - is given toys or treats in exchange for complying with a request
 - the child, who is walking age, sits on the lap of an adult
- Know who to report suspected abuse to.
- Familiarize yourself with the policies and practices of organizations where your children spend time.
- Confirm background checks are conducted on all employees and volunteers.

PROMOTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY - HELP PROTECT CHILDREN

- Ensure policies are in place that prohibit situations where an adult can be alone with your child in one room when no one else is around.
- Make sure they actually follow these policies – ask your child, stop by, check in, be aware.
- **TALK** to your child. Talking about personal safety is an on-going dialogue, not a single event.
- Teach your children appropriate names for their body parts and bodily functions.
- Start Early and Talk Often about child sexual abuse.
- Use everyday situations to keep the conversations about personal safety ongoing.
- Remember that the safety of the child is the highest priority.