



## INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

The following is a list of indicators and may be used as a guide to help determine if there is a suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

These indicators can also exist in situations where a child is NOT abused or neglected; they are only suggestive of abuse or neglect.

The presence of any one or more of these indicators may have an entirely appropriate or unrelated explanation.

### INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE - CHILD

- Unexplained bruises, welts, human bite marks, bald spots
- Numerous bruises in various stages of healing
- Marks on many surfaces of the body
- Unexplained burns, especially cigarette or immersion burns
- Withdrawal or aggression - behavior extremes
- Uncomfortable with physical contact
- Afraid to go home
- Dressed inappropriately for the weather
- Cringes when approached by an adult (fears getting hit)
- Over-reacts to accidents such as spilling milk
- Does not want to talk about home life
- Extreme attachment to parents
- Extreme attentiveness to needs of parents

### INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE - PARENT

- Contradictory statements about child's injury
- Excessive anxiety about child's behavior
- Labels child as a "problem"
- Says child makes up stories, and that the child should not be believed
- Verbally aggressive toward child

## INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE - CHILD

- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Venereal disease
- A child's report or self disclosure
- Sexual knowledge beyond what is natural for a child
- Preoccupation with their body
- Acting out sexual behavior
- Withdrawal, chronic depression
- Self devaluation and lack of confidence
- Problems with bedtime or afraid to go to bed
- Bedwetting-especially if it begins in a child who has been dry

## INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE - PARENT

- Poor sexual relationship between parents
- Frequent changes of adults in household
- Lack of supervision of child
- Parent relates to child on adult level
- Parent jealous of child's relationship with others
- Parent overly possessive of child

## INDICATORS OF NEGLECT OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE - CHILD

- Unattended medical needs
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger, poor hygiene or inappropriate dress
- Distended stomach or emaciated body
- Delayed physical development
- Substance abuse
- Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness
- Steals food or begs
- Habit disorders (sucking, rocking, etc.)
- Passive or aggressive behavior extremes
- Neurotic traits such as sleep disorders or inhibition of play

## INDICATORS OF NEGLECT OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE - PARENT

- Disinterest in or rejection of child
- Deserting or avoiding child
- Threatening child, yelling, screaming at child
- Ignoring medical problems of child
- Constant criticism of child, making negative comparison with other children
- Embarrassing children in public or making child feel ashamed or guilty
- Isolating child from society or normal friendships
- Placing child in dangerous situations
- Blaming child for situations not within his/her control
- Failing to meet child's physical/emotional needs