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# How to Detect Abuse in a Child

## 7 Types of Abuse and Neglect

### Emotional Abuse

Mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning. It is causing or permitting the child to be in a situation in which the child sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

### Physical Abuse

Physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given. This excludes an accident or reasonable discipline by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm. It is also the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in physical injury and substantial harm to the child.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct, as those terms are defined by law, including: sexual penetration with a foreign object, incest, sexual assault, sodomy inflicted on, shown to, or intentionally practiced in the presence of a child to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any person. It is also the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct, as those terms are defined by law and as they are described above. This includes compelling or encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct as defined by law.

### Abandonment

Leaving a child in a situation exposing him / her to substantial risk of harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, when there is a demonstrated intent not to return by the parent, guardian, or managing or possessor conservator of the child.

### Neglectful Supervision

Placing the child in or failure to remove the child from a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities and that results in bodily injury or substantial risk of immediate harm to the child.

## Medical Neglect

The failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for the child, with the failure resulting in or presenting a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or bodily injury or with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development, or functioning of the child.

## Physical Neglect

The failure to provide the child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services had been offered and refused.

## Myths and Facts

### The Myths and Facts of Incest

**MYTH:** Children are usually molested by strangers.

**FACT:** 85% of children are molested by someone they know. The people most likely to molest children are those who have the most opportunity and access to them.

**MYTH:** Incest only happens in lower class and/or rural families.

**FACT:** Incest plays no favorites. Incest crosses all socio-economic, race, and class barriers. It happens in both rural and urban centers.

**MYTH:** Only young girls are the victims of child abuse or incest.

**FACT:** Young boys are as vulnerable to sexual exploitation as are girls. Though reported cases indicate a higher percentage of girls, this can be attributed to the idea that males are expected to take care of themselves and, as a result, often do not deal with the problem by talking about it.

**MYTH:** It is only homosexuals who abuse children of their own sex.

**FACT:** Abuse is a crime of control, not sex. Victims are chosen because of easy access, not because of gender. Statistics show abuse of male children by males is most often perpetrated by heterosexual men or by pedophiles, rarely homosexuals.

**MYTH:** Child sexual abuse is a family problem, not a concern for outsiders.

**FACT:** We all pay the social price. 70% of runaway girls and boys, 70% of adolescent drug addicts and 90% of young prostitutes were victims of sexual abuse.

**MYTH:** The crisis of disclosure is more devastating than the abuse itself.

**FACT:** Disclosure brings the pain and suffering out into the open; it does not create it. Work the victims who did not disclose or who were not believed reveals the burden and devastation the child bears alone. Only disclosure will end the abuse and make the healing possible.

**MYTH:** Children lie about incest.

**FACT:** Children do not have the cognitive capabilities to talk about incest unless they've experienced it. If children lie about sexual abuse, it is often to say that it did not occur to protect the offender and/or the family unit.

## Child Sexual Assault: Other Facts

Approximately 1 out of 3 girls and 1 out of 5 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18. Persons with developmental disabilities are sexually assaulted more frequently by a factor estimated between 4 and 10.

The average victim of child abuse is between 8 and 11 years old. Some experts suggest that the most vulnerable child is between the ages of 6 and 10, and living in a two-parent home. Some experts estimate that 5 or 6 children in a typical classroom of thirty have been affected by sexual abuse, regardless of geographic area, race, or socioeconomic class.

Approximately 90% of offenders are known to the child/ren. In addition, a child is 3 times more likely to be molested by a recognized, trusted adult than by a stranger. 50% of child victims are molested in their own homes or in the offender's home.

One recent study in Oregon found that more than 80% of known rapists were abused as children. The offender that rapes and is incarcerated has had an average of 76 victims during his lifetime.

Perpetrators of sexual abuse are compulsive and repetitive in their offending behavior. The average pedophile will have an average of 244 victims in his lifetime. Forty-two percent of pedophiles begin their sexual abusive behaviors before the age of 12. Seventy-five percent of all perpetrators begin offending before the age of 13.

Some experts say that incestuous parents often love their children. However, those parents put their sexual intimacy needs before those of the children. Sometimes this is due to a crisis in their lives or because boundaries get confused or unclear. The average length of an incestuous relationship is three years; it is rarely a one-time occurrence.

# Child Sexual Assault: The Perpetrator

Offenders are not usually strangers to children. According to the National Clearinghouse, approximately 90% of offenders are known to the child/ren. In addition, a child is 3 times more likely to be molested by a recognized, trusted adult than by a stranger. 50% of child victims are molested in their own homes or in the offenders home.

29% of offenders are relatives; 60% are acquaintances; and only 11% are strangers. It has been calculated that the chances of getting caught for child molestation are approximately 3%. Fewer than 1% of offenders are arrested, convicted and imprisoned.

Studies recently found t80% of incestuous fathers in a sex offender treatment program were sexually abused as children, but did not report the abuse. 49% of incest offenders, who molest girls within the family, molest girls outside the family as well. Of those incest offenders who molest boys within the family, 61% molest females outside the family and 68% molest boys outside the family

## Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

### Who must report?

A person having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abused or neglected must report IMMEDIATELY! Professionals must make a report within 48 hours of when the reporter first suspects child abuse. A professional may not delegate or rely on another person to make the report.

**This includes:** Teachers, Counselors, Attorneys, Doctors, Individuals whose personal communication would otherwise be considered privileged.

### Legal Protection

The identity of an individual making a report under this chapter is confidential and may be disclosed only on the order of a court or to a law enforcement officer for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation of the report.

You are immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in "good faith" and "without malice". "Good faith" means that you took reasonable steps to learn the facts. "Without malice" means that you did not intend to injure or violate the rights of another person.

## Failure to Report

Class B Misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for up to 180 days and/or fine of up to \$2,000.00

## What to Report

- Child's name and age
- Parents name and address
- Physical indicators observed
- Person suspected of abuse or neglect
- Address and/or school of child
- Any statement made by the child
- Behavioral indicators observed
- Relationship to child

## Where to Report Abuse

Your local law enforcement or State Hotline.

# How to Recognize Child Abuse and Neglect

## Child's Behavior

Sexual Abuse Indicators	Physical Abuse Indicators
<p>Sexual Acting Out</p> <p>Angry, Hostile, Aggressive</p> <p>Change In Behavior. (outgoing becomes withdrawn)</p> <p>Nightmares, Bedwetting, Fear of Dark</p> <p>Reluctance or fear of a Person or of Certain Places</p> <p>Change in School Grades, or Attention Span</p> <p>Advanced Sexual Knowledge and/or Interest in Sexual Acts or Terminology</p> <p>Regression to Babyish Habits</p> <p>Masturbates Excessively</p>	<p>Wary of Physical Contact With Adults</p> <p>Wears Long Sleeves or Other Concealing Clothing (usually to hide injuries)</p> <p>Child's Story of How Injury Occurred is Not Believable</p> <p>Shows Little or No Distress in Being Separated From Parents</p> <p>Apt To Seek Affection From Any Adult</p> <p>Constantly On Alert For Danger, Chronically Suspicious</p>

## Physical Signs

Sexual Abuse Indicators	Physical Abuse Indicators
<p>The Most Difficult Type Of Abuse To Detect Because There Are No Warning Signs</p> <p>Irritated or Reddened Genitals</p> <p>Unusual Smell or Discharge From Genitals</p>	<p>Unusual Bruises On Places Not Common With Childhood Injuries</p> <p>Bite Marks</p> <p>Unexplained Burns</p> <p>Unexplained Fractures</p>

## Offender's Behavior

Sexual Abuse Indicators	Physical Abuse Indicators
<p>Extreme Over Protectiveness Toward Child</p> <p>Extreme Parental Dominance in Home</p> <p>Socially Isolated</p> <p>Sexually Abused As Child</p> <p>Interchange of Mother and Daughter Roles</p> <p>See Child as Seductive</p> <p>Refer to Children in Sexual Manner</p> <p>Use Gifts And Favors As a Way To Relate With Children</p> <p>Invite Children Over to Their Home</p>	<p>History of Abuse As Child</p> <p>Unrealistic Expectations of Child</p> <p>Uses Harsh Discipline That Isn't Age, Condition or Offense Appropriate</p> <p>Seems Unconcerned About Child</p> <p>Emphasizes Bad Qualities Instead of Good Qualities of Child</p> <p>Seldom Looking At or Touching Child</p> <p>Showing No Concern About the Injury, Treatment or Prognosis</p>