

HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE



Children often do not know if they are being abused, especially if the perpetrator is an authoritative figure in their life. The perpetrator may tell the child that what they are going through is normal or that it is a punishment for something the child has done. Not every child will respond to abuse the same way, so it is up to adults in the child's life to recognize and report signs of abuse.

Better starts here.

SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Frequent or unexplained injuries.
- Lying about the cause of injuries.
- Aggressive or destructive behavior.
- Vigilance, anxiety, jumpiness and flinching.

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Difficulty sitting or walking.
- Evidence of injury to the genital area.
- Extreme fear of being left with adults of a certain gender.
- Inappropriate knowledge of sexual relations for their age.
- Inappropriate sexual comments or play for their age.



SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Extreme depression or anxiety.
- Over-compliance or extreme people pleasing behavior.
- Self-harming behavior.
- Low self-esteem.
- Behind in physical, social, emotional or intellectual development.

SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Persistent untreated injuries or medical conditions.
- A lack of supervision.
- Malnourishment or constant hunger.
- Frequently late or absent.
- Acting unusually responsible for their age range, especially towards younger siblings.

**If you suspect the abuse of a child, call the ChildLine at:
1-800-932-0313**

Information gathered from The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services at keepkidssafe.pa.gov



**PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER OF
CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS
AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS**

For more information, contact us at
www.penncac.org
or 814-451-0202