



## Child Abuse and Neglect Signs and Symptoms

Below is a list of symptoms and signs commonly associated with children who may have been physically, emotionally, sexually abused and/or neglected.

### Physical Abuse:

- Suspicious injuries such as bruising, marks, burns, bone fractures or trauma to the head or abdomen
- Unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eyes
- Fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- Seems frightened of parents
- Protests or cries when it is time to go home from school
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver

### Emotional Abuse:

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

### Sexual Abuse:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age fourteen
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Is frequently absent from school

**Neglect:**

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

To learn about healthy parenting practices visit your local New Parent Support Home Visitation Program or go to the [Fleet and Family Support Program website](#).

To learn more about child abuse and neglect go to the [Child Welfare Information](#) site or get this [factsheet](#).