

To report suspected
child abuse or neglect
please call
1-800-842-2288

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

BRINGING THE CHILDREN OF CONNECTICUT
HOPE AND POSSIBILITIES

Warning Signs of Abuse

You may be a child's only lifeline to safety. Please pay attention to the treatment of children around you.

Child abuse is everyone's business.

Children who have been abused or neglected may be:

- ◆ Nervous around adults or afraid of certain adults
- ◆ Reluctant to go home (coming to school early or staying late, for example)
- ◆ Very passive and withdrawn—or aggressive and disruptive
- ◆ Tired often or complaining of nightmares, or not sleeping well
- ◆ Fearful and anxious
- ◆ Showing sudden changes in behavior or school performance

Possible signs of physical abuse:

- ◆ Unexplained burns, bruises, black eyes and other injuries
- ◆ Apparent fear of a parent or caretaker
- ◆ Faded bruises of healing injuries after missing school

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

- ◆ Difficulty walking or sitting, or other indications of injury to the genital area
- ◆ Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond what is normal for the child's age
- ◆ Running away from home

Possible signs of neglect:

- ◆ Missing school frequently
- ◆ Begging for or stealing money or food
- ◆ Lacking needed medical or dental care
- ◆ Being frequently dirty
- ◆ Using alcohol or other drugs
- ◆ Saying there is no one at home to take care of him or her

Possible signs of emotional abuse:

- ◆ Acting overly mature or immature for the child's age
- ◆ Extreme changes in behavior
- ◆ Delays in physical or emotional development
- ◆ Attempted suicide
- ◆ Lack of emotional attachment to the parent

Many of these signs may also be present in children exposed to violence in their homes and communities, like domestic violence and gang violence. These signs don't prove that a child is being abused. But they could be a signal that the child and his or her family need help.

Also know the signs of an abusive adult.

Consider the possibility of abuse if a parent or caretaker:

- ◆ Seems unconcerned about the child's welfare at school or at home
- ◆ Denies problems at school or at home—or blames the child for them
- ◆ Sees the child as worthless or as a burden
- ◆ Avoids discussing the child's injuries or gives conflicting explanations for them
- ◆ Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- ◆ Seems isolated from other parents and school and community activities
- ◆ Uses harsh physical discipline or asks other caretakers to use it
- ◆ Depends on the child for emotional support
- ◆ Seems indifferent to the child
- ◆ Seems secretive or tries to isolate the child from other children
- ◆ Frequently blames, belittles, or insults the child

These signs don't prove that an adult is abusive. But they could be a signal that the adult and his or her family need help.



Helping Connecticut's Children in Need.

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To learn more or make a donation:

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