

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Have you noticed...?

Physical Abuse

- Unclear reason for burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn, or aggressive behaviors
- Reactions of fear towards parents or going home
- Cowering when adults approach
- Differences in eating and sleeping tendencies
- Mistreatment of animals

Sexual Abuse

- Walking or sitting with difficulty
- Bleeding, bruising, or swelling in their private parts
- Refusing to attend school
- Reports of nightmares
- Bedwetting
- An abrupt change in appetite
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior
- Pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases
- Attempts to run away
- Reports of sexual abuse
- Quick attachment to new adults

Neglect

- Often missing school
- Begging or stealing
- Untended to medical needs
- Poor hygiene
- Insufficient clothing
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Shares lack of care at home

Emotional Maltreatment

- Extremely submissive, demanding, passive, or aggressive
- Behaviors that are overly like an adult or child for one's age
- Slower development, either physical or emotional
- Depression or suicidal thoughts
- Difficulty in building an emotional bonds with others

References: Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2019). What is child abuse and neglect? recognizing signs and symptoms. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf>

Suspect Child Abuse or Neglect?

Call the Tennessee Reporting Number Toll-Free: (877) 237-0004

Toll-Free Crisis Hotline Numbers: 800.4.A.CHILD, 800.422.4453

Online reporting <https://apps.tn.gov/carat/>

<https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/child-safety/reporting/child-abuse.html>

