

I. Detection of Child Abuse

Children are precious to God, and therefore should be precious to us. But 4 children die every day in the United States due to abuse. Abused children usually grow up to become abusers. As Christians we must do our part to stop this cycle.

The following Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Abuse are from **The National Children's Advocacy Center**-
http://www.nationalcac.org/families/for_workers/abuse_indicators.html

A. Physical Abuse:

1. Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises
- Unexplained burns, especially cigarette burns or immersion burns
- Unexplained fractures, lacerations or abrasions
- Swollen areas
- Evidence of delayed or inappropriate treatment for injuries

2. Behavior Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Self-destructive behavior
- Withdrawn and/or aggressive - behavioral extremes
- Arrives at school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home
- Chronic runaway (adolescents)
- Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably
- Wears clothing inappropriate to weather, to cover body
- Bizarre explanation of injuries
- Wary of adult contact

B. Physical Neglect

1. Physical Indicators of Physical Neglect

- Abandonment

- Unattended medical needs
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene
- Lice, distended stomach, emaciated
- Inadequate nutrition

2. Behavioral Indicators of Neglect

- Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness, falls asleep in class
- Steals food, begs from classmates
- Reports that no caretaker is at home
- Frequently absent or tardy
- Self-destructive
- School dropout (adolescents)
- Extreme loneliness and need for affection

C. Sexual Abuse

1. Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse may be non-touching: obscene language, pornography, exposure - or touching: fondling, molesting, oral sex, intercourse

- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Pain, swelling or itching in genital area
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruises or bleeding in genital area
- Venereal disease
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections

2. Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Excessive seductiveness
- Role reversal, overly concerned for siblings
- Massive weight change
- Suicide attempts (especially teens)
- Inappropriate sex play or premature understanding of sex
- Threatened by physical contact, closeness

D. Emotional Abuse

1. Physical Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Speech disorders
- Delayed physical development
- Substance abuse
- Ulcers, asthma, severe allergies

2. Behavioral Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Habit disorder (sucking, rocking, biting)
- Antisocial, destructive
- Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play)
- Passive and aggressive - behavioral extremes
- Delinquent behavior (especially adolescents)
- Developmentally delayed

II. Definitions of Child Abuse New York State Laws

A. Physical Abuse

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 371

Abused child means a child less than age 18 whose parent or other person legally responsible for his or her care:

- Inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury by other than accidental means that causes or creates a substantial risk of death, serious or protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of physical or emotional health, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ

- Creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of physical injury to such child by other than accidental means that would be likely to cause death, serious or protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of physical or emotional health, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ

Note: Spanking is not prohibited by State Law as long as it does not cause physical injury. There is a big difference

between giving a disobedient child a swat on the bottom, and "beating a child" leaving physical injury.

B. Neglect

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 371

Neglected child means a child less than age 18 whose physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as a result of the failure of his or her parent or other person legally responsible for his or her care to exercise a minimum degree of care:

C. Sexual Abuse

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 371

Abused child means a child less than age 18 whose parent or other person legally responsible for his or her care commits, or allows to be committed, an act of sexual abuse against such child, as defined in title H, article 130, of the penal law.

D. Emotional Abuse

Citation: Family Court Act § 1012

Impairment of emotional health and impairment of mental or emotional condition includes a state of substantially diminished psychological or intellectual functioning in relation to, but not limited to, such factors as failure to thrive, control of aggressive or self-destructive impulses, ability to think and reason, acting out, or misbehavior, including incorrigibility, ungovernability, or habitual truancy; provided, however, that such impairment must be clearly attributable to the unwillingness or inability of the respondent to exercise a minimum degree of care toward the child.

E. Abandonment

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 384-b

A child is *abandoned* by his parent if such parent evinces an intent to forego his or her parental rights and obligations as manifested by his or her failure to visit the child and communicate with the child or agency, although able to do so and not prevented or discouraged from doing so by the agency. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, such ability to visit and communicate shall be presumed.

III. Duties Concerning Child Abuse

Standards for Reporting

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 371

A report is required when a child has been subjected to harm or a substantial risk of harm.

Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 371; Family Court Act § 1012

Mandated Reporters include medical professionals, teachers, school administrators, etc. Ministers are not specifically required by law to report, but may deem it necessary to do so for the safety of the child.

Things to Remember

DISCIPLINE helps a child learn a lesson that will carry over and positively affect future behavior.

ABUSE affects the future in a negative way, leading to anger, hatred and more deviant behavior.

DISCIPLINE enhances the child's sense of self-worth, helping the child learn self-control and thus becoming comfortable within the family and in society.

ABUSE robs the child of self-worth and causes him/her to feel outcast and resentful.

DISCIPLINE is not shame or guilt.

ABUSE is shame or guilt which satisfies the needs of the parents at the moment and destroys the self-image of the child in a hostile manner.

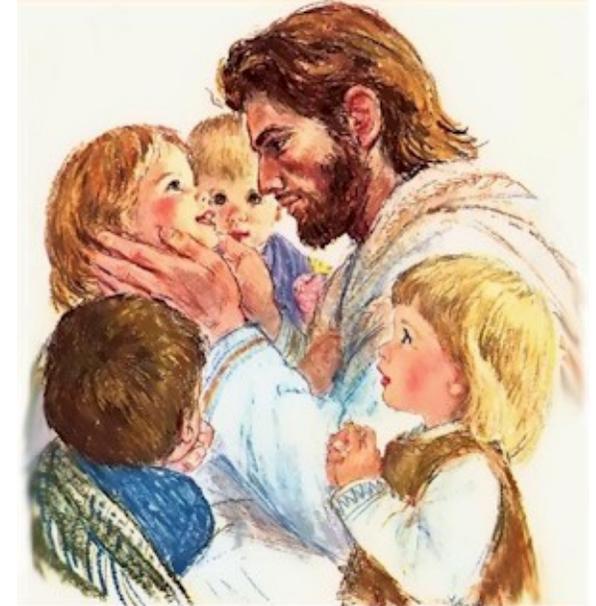
DISCIPLINE is taught by example. But so is abuse!

Jesus warned: *"And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea"*-- Matthew 18:5-6

The Truth About....

Child Abuse

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them



not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.: -- Matthew 19:14

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