



What is Child Abuse?

FOR PARENTS:

Child abuse is causing of **willful and unjustifiable** pain and suffering on children.

It includes: physical violence, verbal abuse, and failure to give proper shelter, nourishment, medical treatment, or emotional support. Also Rape, incest (sex with a family member), sexual molestation, and the making of child pornography.

Emotional Abuse is a pattern of behavior such as belittling, humiliating and ridiculing a child.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Aggressive or withdrawn behavior.
- Shying away from physical contact with parents or adults.
- Afraid to go home.

Physical Neglect is failure to provide children with adequate food, clothing, shelter and medical care. Physical abuse also includes abandonment, expulsion from home and failure to enroll children in school.

It is important to distinguish between willful neglect and a parent's failure to provide the necessities of life because of poverty or cultural norms.

Physical Abuse is defined as acts of assault and exploitation of minors by parents, caretakers or strangers. Physical abuse is assault, causing cuts, fractures, bruises, shaking, burns and internal injuries.

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained or repeated injuries such as welts, bruises, or burns.
- Injuries that are in the shape of an object (belt buckle, electric cord, etc.)
- Injuries not likely to happen given the age or ability of the child. For example, broken bones in a child too young to walk or climb.
- Unreasonable explanation of the injury.
- Obvious neglect of the child (dirty, undernourished, inappropriate clothes for the weather, lack of medical or dental care).
- Fearful behavior.

Sexual Abuse is defined as acts of sexual assault and sexual exploitation of minors by parents, caregivers or strangers. Sexual abuse includes a broad range of behavior and may consist of a single incident or many incidents over a long period of time. Sexual abuse includes: fondling a child's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism and sexual exploitation (using a child for pornography or prostitution).



Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Child tells you he/she was sexually abused.
- Child has **physical** signs such as:
 - difficulty in walking or sitting.
 - stained or bloody underwear.
 - genital or rectal pain, itching, swelling, redness, or discharge
 - bruises or other injuries in the genital or rectal area.
- Child has **behavioral** and emotional signs such as:
 - difficulty eating or sleeping.
 - soiling or wetting pants or bed after being potty trained.
 - acting like a much younger child.
 - excessive crying or sadness.
 - withdrawing from activities and others.
 - talking about or acting out sexual acts beyond normal sex play for age.

Other common behavioral signs of SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Excessive masturbating or insertion of objects into orifices
- Difficulty in sleeping, relaxing, and or eating
- Passive and withdrawn, or clingy and fussy.
- Bed-wetting
- Eating disorders (bulimia, anorexia, obesity)
- Avoidance of sports or games



- Avoiding adults
- Mentioning a “secret” in the family
- Sexual behavior with other children
- Overly knowledgeable about specific sexual acts.

Report abuse – Break the silence! Get Help!

CALL 08 600 10111

You have a moral responsibility according to the Children's Act to report cases or suspected cases of child abuse to police, social worker or any Child Protection organisation in your area.



What can we all do to help?

- Join community-based Victim Support initiatives; be trained as a Volunteer.
- Make sure you have a list of the police stations and emergency services in your area.
- Report rape - and help others to report rape.
- Do not protect rapists - do not hide them in your home or community - tell the police about them.
- Bring up your boys to be real men - real men respect women and real men do not rape.

How do I respond when a child reports abuse to me?

- Believe the child.
- Thank the child for having courage to talk to you.
- Tell the child that it was not his or her fault.
- Explain confidentiality – that although the child has disclosed in confidence, you as the adult need to report to the right authority, like the social worker, so that the child can get help and support. Address the child's concerns. Maybe share with them the understanding of "good and bad" secrets. Recognise and be sensitive to the child's feelings. Listen to the child, reflect on their feelings.









Reassure them you will find support for them.

What must I NOT do?

- Investigate the abuse.
- Remove the child unless the child is in immediate and serious danger.
- Confront the abuser or the parents.
- Decide if the child is telling the truth or not.
- Don't over-react when a child tells you of the abuse – listen kindly and calmly.
- Make any promises to the child that you can't keep.
- "Bad mouth" the abuser.

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For children:

	NEVER get into a car with someone you don't know.
	DO NOT accept gifts from a person you don't know.
	NEVER open your door to people you don't know.
	NEVER go into a toilet with someone you don't know. Always tell your parents if you are going to the toilet when you are away from home.
	TELL an adult where you are going and when you will return.
	DO NOT keep secrets another child or adult tells you to. Tell your parents or caregivers
	TELL your mom or dad, or a family member or a teacher if someone is hurting you, or touching you in your private place
	Your body is private and you have the right to say if something doesn't feel right!

Contact your local police station and/or:

SAPS Emergency Services / Crime Stop	10111 / 08600 10111
Netcare Ambulance	082 911
SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection Unit, Pretoria	(012) 393-2363
Childline	0800 055 555
Woman Abuse Helpline	0800 150 150

Women & Men Against Child Abuse (011) 789-8815

 <https://www.facebook.com/WMACAKidz>
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