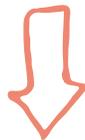


Recognizing and Reporting Abuse

If you **know** or **reasonably suspect** a child has been the victim of child abuse or neglect, you must report...

...*while* working in your professional capacity.



- If the situation is an immediate emergency, **CALL 911**.
- Your initial report should be made by phone AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:
 - » Santa Barbara County CWS Hotline: **(800) 367-0166**
- Note the name of the CWS worker to whom you report.
- Your written report should be filed within 36 hours.
- This form must be used for your written report, and can be downloaded at: http://caag.state.ca.us/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf

Who are Mandated Reporters?

People with regular contact with children

- Teachers (public or private schools)
- Teachers' aides/assistants
- Any employee of a public or private school
- Employees of youth centers
- Employees of day care centers
- Foster parents

Health care personnel

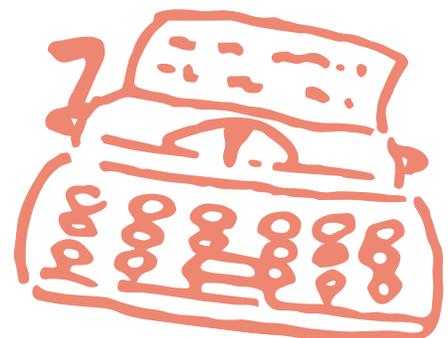
- Doctors, dentists, nurses and all medical personnel
- Therapists, psychologists, social workers, mental health workers

Public protection positions

- Law enforcement
- Probation
- Firefighters
- Child welfare

Others

- Commercial film processors
- Animal control officers
- Clergy
- CASA advocates



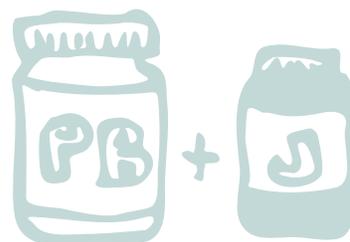
Types of Abuse

Neglect

Failure of caretakers to provide for a child's fundamental needs. Although neglect can include children's necessary emotional needs, neglect typically concerns adequate food, housing, clothing, medical care and education.

RED FLAGS

- Socially withdrawn
- Dirty clothes, clothes inappropriate for weather, poor hygiene
- Failure to thrive, or a malnourished child
- Untreated medical problems/illness
- Severe dental cavities
- Developmental delay
- Self-abusive behaviors
- Behavioral problems such as anxiety or aggression
- Depression
- Domestic violence
- Mental illness or mood disturbances
- Substance abuse
- Medications, cleaners, toxins within reach of a child
- Guns or other weapons that are not properly secured
- Trash, rotted food, insects, or animal waste
- Choking hazards within reach of an infant or toddler
- Health risks (infestation, no running water, no heat, unsanitary conditions, etc.)



Types of Abuse

Physical abuse

Nonaccidental physical injury as a result of caretaker acts. Physical abuse frequently includes shaking, slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning. Physical abuse includes unlawful corporal punishment and injury.

The type, location, and pattern of injuries such as bruises or burns can help distinguish accidental injuries from suspected physical abuse.

- Any injury, even a small bruise in a young infant is concerning
 - » If a child is unable to roll over or crawl, they are unable to sustain injuries on their own
- Typical locations for **accidental** bruises in toddlers and children include bony areas such as shins, elbows, knees, forehead, and chin among others.
 - » In contrast, common locations of **abusive** injuries include the back, buttocks, ears, face (particularly the soft tissues of the cheek), neck, and genitalia.
- Abusive bruises and burns may be patterned, or have a distinct outline. Accidental bruises typically do not leave a clear pattern or outline.



RED FLAGS

- Broken bones, lacerations, unexplained bruises
- Burns (cigarette, scalding water; iron)
- A parent or caretaker who delays or fails to seek medical care for the child's injury
- Any unexplained injury/injury with an improbable explanation
- Patterns of bruising or fractures in different stages of healing (indicating trauma over time)

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse *continued*

RED FLAGS *continued*

- A history of previous or recurrent injuries
- A statement by the child that the injury was caused by abuse
- An injury that is unusual for the child's age
- Parental depression or other mental illness
- Parent tells you of use of objects (belts, whips, clothes hanger) to discipline the child
- Parent has unrealistic expectation of child (e.g., toilet-training a 6-month-old)
- Parent is unduly harsh and rigid about childrearing
- Parent singles out one child as "bad," "evil," or "beyond control."
- Parent berates, humiliates, or belittles child
- Parent misinterprets child's normal behavior (e.g., a parent interprets an infant's crying as evidence that child hates the parent)
- Parent is indifferent to child
- Poor anger management; hostile, aggressive, or verbally abusive toward others
- Frightened of going home, frightened of parents/caretakers
- Fearful or withdrawn behavior; wariness of adults
- Self-destructive (self-mutilates, bangs head, etc.)
- Destructive (breaks windows, sets fires, etc.)
- Discomfort when other children cry
- Attempts to hide injuries
- Frequent absence from school
- Clingy, forms indiscriminate attachments



Types of Abuse

Sexual abuse

Involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent. Sexual abuse includes touching, fondling and penetration, as well as exploitation.

RED FLAGS

- Child disclosure
 - » Very common for children to disclose well after the fact, or to recant following disclosure
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge for age
- Demonstrating sexual acts on other children or toys
- Coercing, manipulating, or forcing other children into sexual activity
- Obsessive cleanliness
- Sexually transmitted infections



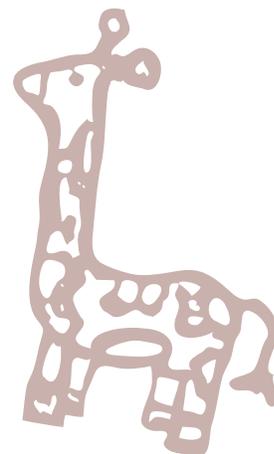
Types of Abuse

Emotional Abuse

The habitual verbal harassment of a child by disparagement, criticism, threat and ridicule. Emotional or psychological abuse includes behavior that threatens or intimidates a child. It includes threats, name calling, belittling and shaming.

RED FLAGS

- Frightened of going home, frightened of parents/caretakers
- Clingy, may form indiscriminate attachments to unrelated adults
- Developmental delay
- Self-abusive behaviors
- Socially withdrawn
- Behavioral problems such as anxiety or aggression
- Parental depression or other mental illness
- Parent has unrealistic expectation of child (e.g., toilet-training a 6-month-old)
- Parent is unduly harsh and rigid about childrearing
- Parent singles out one child as “bad,” “evil,” or “beyond control”
- Parent berates, humiliates, or belittles child
- Parent is indifferent to child



Responding and Reporting

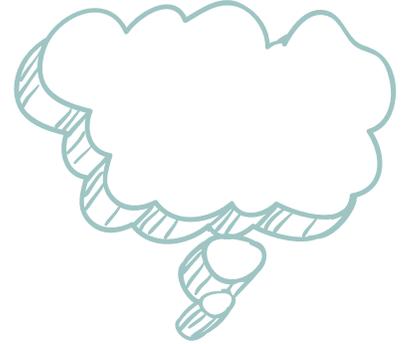
Disclosures are often:

Indirect

- “Sometimes uncle James keeps me up at night.”
- “My babysitter keeps bothering me.”

Disguised

- “I have a friend at school who . . .”
- “What would happen if a girl was being touched in a bad way and she told someone about it?”



Conditional

- “I need to ask you about something, but you have to promise not to tell.”

THE THREE THINGS TO TELL A CHILD FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE:

- “I’m glad you told me. You did the right thing by telling me.”
- “It’s not your fault.”
- “I’m going to do everything I can to help keep you safe.”

AVOID:

- Interrogating. Ask a few, open-ended questions necessary to make the report.
- Expressing panic, anger, shock, or dismay.
- Making negative statements about the alleged perpetrator (80% of perpetrators are the child’s parents).
- Having the child repeat the explanation to different staff.

DO:

- Create safety, get on the child’s level, listen closely.
- Validate the child’s expressed feelings.
- Tell the child what you’re going to do (don’t promise not to tell anyone).