



Red Flags for Abuse or Neglect

ANY KIND

Subtle Signs of Abuse

- Marked changes in personality that do not make sense
- Constant sadness
- Abnormal fears
- Often complains of stomach aches, headaches, nausea for no apparent reason

Behavior Seen in Children

- Discloses abuse or neglect
- Re-enactment of abuse using dolls, drawings, or friends
- Frequently criticizes or tries to hurt him/her-self
- Bullies others

Behavior Seen in Abusers

- Does not show love toward the child
- Talks about the child as being bad or “the cause of my problems”

PHYSICAL

Subtle Signs of Abuse

- Unusual bruising
 - On the ears or neck
 - On ankles, chest or back
 - In the genital area
 - In the shape of an object (hand, belt, utensil)
- Unusual injuries
 - Bite marks
 - Patterned burns (cigarette, iron,)
 - Inconsistent with normal play
 - Pain moving arms or legs
 - Pain with breathing
- Wears clothes to cover up injuries

Behavior Seen in Children

- The story of what happened does not match the injury
- Refuses or is afraid to talk about injuries
- Is away a lot, and when s/he comes back has signs of healing injuries
- Is frequently afraid of others or being touched

Behavior Seen in Abusers

- Has a different account than the child of how the injury occurred
- Cannot control anger or frustration
- Expects too much from the child
- Severely punishes the child

SEXUAL

Subtle Signs of Abuse

Frequent itching, pain, or foul discharge in the genital or anal region

Injuries to the breasts or genital area

- Redness or swelling
- Bruising or cuts

Pain when

- Peeing or pooping
- Walking or sitting down

Blood in urine, in stool, or on underwear

Behavior Seen in Children

Details of sex in the child's drawing

Sexual actions with others

Fears or refuses to go to a parent, relative, or friend for no clear reason

Refuses to undress or shows fear about being undressed

Behavior Seen in Abusers

Touches the child in a sexual way

Is more invested in spending time with a child than that child's own parents

Talks about the child being sexy

May be jealous of the child's relationship with others

NEGLECT

Subtle Signs of Abuse

Always hungry

The child does not develop as expected, including poor weight gain

Not dressed properly for weather and/or is severely unkempt

Lack of attention to medical problems

Behavior Seen in Children

Has little energy, even to cry

Does not play with toys or notice people

Does not seem to care for anyone

Very demanding of affection or attention

Behavior Seen in Abusers

Does not provide for the child's basic needs

Does not properly supervise the child (e.g., leaves child home alone, in a dangerous place, or with someone irresponsible)

Ignores or rejects child's affection

MENTAL

Subtle Signs of Abuse

The child does not develop as expected, including poor weight gain

Self-stimulating habit disorders (e.g., rocking, biting, head banging)

Behavior Seen in Children

Is unhappy, stressed out, withdrawn, aggressive, or angry for long periods of time

Desperate for affection or attention

Behavior Seen in Abusers

Often insults, criticizes, rejects the child, or talks about them as being the cause of problems

Keeps the child isolated

Threatens to hurt or kill the child or someone/something that is special to the child

Forces the child to watch someone special being hurt (e.g., pet)