

## Child Abuse

### Emotional Abuse

The indications may be that there is a lack of affection or love, care or concern. Emotional ill treatment may be identified by the way the child is negatively referred to, or by the use of statements which devalue the child constantly. Another indicator is the use of emotional blackmail eg. "If you don't do \_\_\_\_\_ I'll kill myself!"

The behaviour that can result from this sort of treatment may include:

- developmental delay
- behavioural difficulties
- lack of relationship with parents or main carers
- attention seeking;
- withdrawal;
- lying;
- inability to have fun;
- low self esteem;
- tantrums; aggressive behaviour
- speech disorders;
- eating disorders-comfort eating etc.
- inability to play.
- inability to form relationships with peers and adults.

### Sexual Abuse

#### *Physical Indicators*

- Bruises or scratches, often minor but inconsistent with accidental injury.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Injuries to the genital area.
- Pain or itching in the genital area.
- Soreness, discharge or bleeding.
- Pain urinating.
- Repeated urine infections.
- Rectal bleeding
- Frequent stomach and head pains
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes.

#### *Behavioural Indicators*

- Hints of sexual activity through words, play, drawings etc.
- Fear of going to bathroom.
- Sexually precocious or seductive behaviour. (Inconsistent with stage of development).
- Sexually explicit language or swearing.
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters.
- Excessive masturbation
- Abnormal knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Poor self esteem.
- Bed wetting-soiling.
- Appetite disorders.
- Withdrawn or insular behaviour.
- Over compliant behaviour
- Wariness of adults.