

Child Abuse

Compare the list you've prepared with the following indicators. It is important to emphasise that these are not definitive lists used to identify abuse but merely offer an indication of what may constitute abuse. Neither are they exhaustive. Childcare workers should make factual notes of their concerns and refer the matter to their supervisor or manager immediately, in line with local procedures.

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators

- Any bruising on a pre-mobile child
- Any multiple bruising.
- Bi-lateral black eyes
- Facial bruising, or scratches.
- Hand marks on any part of the body
- Pressure bruising on arms possibly caused by gripping.
- Finger tip bruising on chest or back.
- Welts.
- Ligature marks (indicator of tying up or strangling).
- Head injuries presenting drowsiness and vomiting.
- Bite marks.
- Bald spots.
- Unexplained fractures, dislocations, lacerations or abrasions.
- Torn frenulum (skin which joins upper lip and gum).
- Burns, particularly round cigarette burns, or showing shape of object e.g. iron.
- Scalds inconsistent with an accident.
- Poisoning

Behavioural Indicators

- Wary of adults
- Watchful of adults behaviour
- Shying away from physical contact.
- Withdrawn or aggressive behaviour
- Changes in normal behaviour, for instance from a happy outgoing attitude to withdrawn behaviour
- Over compliant
- Afraid to go home

Neglect

- Poor hygiene.
- Inadequately clothed - dirty, torn or inappropriate clothing for prevailing weather conditions.
- Inadequate heating at home including inadequate bedding.
- Failure to ensure safety in the home - fireguards, stair gates etc.
- Failure to offer appropriate supervision at home, resulting in accidents
- Untreated medical problems.
- Poor nourishment.
- Emaciation.
- Tired or listless.
- Developmental delay
- Low self esteem.
- Unattended medical problems
- Poor attendance
- Arriving very late
- Always hungry.
- States that no one is at home to care or protect.
- States that he or she is left unattended at home.