



Child & Teen Safety

Parent Inservice Material

2017-2018

Office for the Protection of Children and Youth
Diocese of Erie
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd.
Erie, PA 16504
814-824-1195



Knowing the Facts is the first step in making a difference.

- There were an estimated 1,520 child fatality victims in 2013 due to maltreatment in the U.S., an average of 29 children per week.
- 74% of child fatalities were under three years old.
- 46.5% were less than one year old.
- 37% of states restrict information on child deaths and near deaths.
- 79% of child fatalities involved parents.

Statistics from www.firststar.org

Learning to recognize the signs or symptoms of abuse is the responsibility of all adults. The presence of a single sign does not mean that child maltreatment is occurring in a family, but a closer look at the situation may be warranted when these signs appear repeatedly or in

Signs of Physical Abuse

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:

- * Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- * Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- * Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- * Shrinks at the approach of adults
- * Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver
- * Abuses animals or pets

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- * Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury, or provides an explanation that is not consistent with the injury
- * Describes the child as "evil" or in some other very negative way
- * Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- * Has a history of abuse as a child
- * Has a history of abusing animals or pets.

Signs of Emotional Maltreatment

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the child:

- * Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- * Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- * Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- * Has attempted suicide
- * Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- * Constantly blames, belittles or berates the child.
- * Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
- * Overtly rejects the child

Signs of Neglect

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- * Is frequently absent from school
- * Begs or steals food or money
- * Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- * Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- * Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- * Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- * States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- * Appears to be indifferent to the child
- * Seems apathetic or depressed
- * Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- * Is abusing alcohol or other drugs

Signs of Child Abuse

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- * Has difficulty walking or sitting
- * Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
- * Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- * Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- * Demonstrates bizarre sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- * Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
- * Runs away
- * Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver
- * Attaches very quickly to strangers or new adults in their environment

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- * Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- * Is secretive and isolated
- * Is jealous or controlling with family members.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand where it gives light to all in the house.

Matt. 5:13

Diocese of Erie Office for Protection of Children and Youth
<http://www.eriecd.org/protectyouth.htm>

Material adapted from
Child Welfare Information Gateway
www.childwelfare.gov