
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION & REPORTING:

Roles and Responsibilities



**A community information guide to
stopping the cycle of child abuse.**

2016

Booklet Funded by:

Delaware County Child Abuse Prevention Council

Report child abuse 1-800-800-5556



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INTRODUCTION

This booklet describes the various roles of an individual in prevention, identification, assistance and reporting of child abuse, either physical or sexual or neglect. It is designed for use by adults who come into contact with children .

This booklet will focus on the following areas:

- * The nature and extent of child abuse and neglect
- * How to detect child abuse and neglect
- * Steps to take when reporting suspected child abuse and neglect

PREVENTION

The opportunities are limitless for an individual who is interested in assuming a role in community efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect. Individuals can serve on consulting teams, help with educational policies and procedures, or be a part of public awareness through Prevent Child Abuse Council. Community Partners for Child Safety, 866-800-8115.

You can help prevent abuse:

- * Reach out to parents you know.
- * Volunteer time to programs that help parents.
- * Let all the children in your life know they can depend on you.
- * Advocate for community services to help families.
- * Report suspected abuse or neglect
- * Consider being a foster parent
- * Consider being a CASA volunteer
- * Community Partners for Child Safety, 866-800-8115

Everyone including parents, grandparents, volunteers, youth workers, educators, and other professionals play a role in the effort to prevent the abuse and neglect of children.

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UNDERSTANDING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

Child abuse is any mistreatment or neglect of a child by an adult or another child that results in non-accidental harm or injury and which cannot be *reasonably* explained. Child abuse can include: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.



Physical abuse - Any non-accidental injury to a child. This may include hitting, kicking, slapping, shaking, burning, pinching, hair pulling, biting, choking, throwing or shoving.

Sexual abuse - Any sexual act between a person and child. This includes fondling, penetration, intercourse, exploitation, pornography, exhibitionism, child prostitution, group sex, oral sex, or forced observation of sexual acts.

Emotional abuse - Any attitude or behavior which interferes with a child's mental health or social development. This includes yelling, screaming, name-calling, shaming, negative comparisons to others, telling them they are "bad, no good, worthless" or "a mistake". It also includes the failure to provide the affection and support necessary for the development of a child's emotional, social, physical and intellectual well-being.

Neglect - Failure to provide for a child's physical needs. This includes lack of supervision, inappropriate housing or shelter, inadequate provision of food, inappropriate clothing for season or weather, abandonment, denial of medical care, education and inadequate hygiene.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)- A type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power, or status.

CAUSES OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Why does child abuse happen?

There is no single known cause of child abuse and neglect. Nor is there any single description that captures all families in which children are victims of abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect occurs across socio-economic, religious, cultural, racial and ethnic groups. While no specific causes definitively have been identified that lead a parent or other caregiver to abuse or neglect a child, research has recognized a number of risk factors or attributes commonly associated with maltreatment. Some of these include:

- * Poverty
- * Lack of education
- * A family that is socially isolated
- * Lack of support from extended family
- * Very high expectations of the child and what the child should achieve
- * Adults who were abused or neglected as children and did not receive help for their childhood abuse
- * Drug or alcohol abuse



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THE AFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

No one escapes childhood abuse unharmed. Many abuse survivors are highly competent in their professional and personal lives, compensating for the adverse effects of an abusive childhood until some added stress is introduced, perhaps a physical illness, birth of a child, or the death of a family member. While some children show resilience to abuse, some may develop emotional problems immediately, while others may have delayed effects triggered by subsequent stressors.

Compared with people without a history of childhood abuse, adults with a history of childhood abuse are more likely to have:

- * A partner with a substance abuse problem
- * Anxiety Disorders; including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- * Chronic head, face or pelvic pain;
- * Eating disorders
- * Musculoskeletal complaints
- * Depression
- * Gastrointestinal distress or symptoms
- * Asthma or other respiratory ailments
- * Insomnia
- * Panic
- * Sexual dysfunction
- * Substance abuse
- * Suicidal ideation or behavior
- * Pseudo-neurological symptoms (dizziness, etc.)
- * Unintended pregnancy
- * Self-injury
- * Abused their own children
- * Abusive behavior

HOW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECTS CHILDREN

- * Research by the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect suggest that domestic violence may be the single major precursor to child abuse and neglect in the country.
- * Children from birth to 3 years old are most often neglected.
- * Between 80-90% of children are aware of their parents' violence. Even if they don't see the violent episode they may hear screams, see bruises, broken bones and abrasions. Children are directly affected by their parent's emotional pain in the aftermath.
- * Often children are injured, either intentionally or accidentally, when they are caught in the "cross-fire" of their parents fighting.
- * Abusers are 6 times more likely to have witnessed domestic violence
- * Domestic violence is the leading cause of birth defects
- * Studies indicate children of abusive families are at greater risk for developing self-destructive problems such as self-harming, promiscuity, and alcohol/and or drugs.

Children model what they see, and many of the long-term effects of growing up in violent homes can be devastating:

- * Children learn, through their parents or parent figures, and also through their own experience, to equate love with pain or violence.
- * Abusive behavior and violence can become their primary method of conflict resolution.



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HOW SUBSTANCE ABUSE AFFECTS CHILDREN

- * The strong connection between parental substance abuse and child abuse is well established. Parental substance abuse is a factor in a significant percentage of child abuse cases nationwide.
- * When parents abuse alcohol, prescription, and/or illicit drugs, their children are at a much higher risk of all forms of abuse. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, “children of substance-abusing parents were almost 3 times likelier to be abused and more than 4 times likelier to be neglected than children of parents who are not substance abusers.”
- * Fetal alcohol syndrome is the leading cause of mental retardation and birth defects. In addition to visible birth defects, babies born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome can also suffer abnormalities to the heart, lungs, kidneys, and liver. These babies also suffer problems with their central nervous system, causing lifelong problems with learning, memory, communication, vision, and/or hearing.
- * Drug affected babies are born with similar challenges. Abusing prescription or illicit drugs while pregnant can cause visible and internal birth defects. Drug affected babies begin showing signs of withdrawal at 24-48 hours after birth. They are at higher risk of premature birth, low birth weight, seizures, brain damage, and vision and hearing problems. The long-term consequences for drug affected babies can also be lifelong, causing problems in school, work, and relationships.
- * Prevent Child Abuse of Delaware County and Indiana Department of Child Services created a 12-minute video documenting these problems. “When I Use, We Both Lose” can be found online: <https://vimeo.com/64140208>



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PHYSICAL & BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT*

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Unexplained bruises and welts in various stages of healing * Unexplained fractures * Unexplained burns (cigarette or immersion burns) * Unexplained lacerations or abrasions * Evidence of delayed or inappropriate treatment of injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Wary of adult contacts * Apprehensive when other children cry * Behavioral extremes (aggressive/withdrawn) * Afraid to go home (arrives early or stays late at school) * Reports injury by parents * Self destructive * Chronic runaway * Wears clothing inappropriate to weather to cover body * Self Mutilating

Physical Neglect

Physical Indicator	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Consistent hunger * Poor hygiene * Inappropriate dress * Consistent lack of supervision * Unattended physical problems or medical needs * abandonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begging or stealing food * Extended stays at school * Constant fatigue or falling asleep in class * Alcohol or drug abuse * Delinquency * States there is no caretaker * Self destructive * Self mutilating

*Information from Prevent Child Abuse Indiana

PHYSICAL & BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT*

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
* Difficulty walking or sitting	* Upset stomach
* Torn, stained or blood underclothing	* Change in school performance
* Pain or itching in genital area	* Anger and mood changes
* Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia	* Sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
* Venereal disease	* Poor peer relationships
* Pregnancy	* Delinquent or run away
	* nightmares
	* Self mutilating

Domestic Violence/Emotional Maltreatment

Physical Indicators	Behavior Indicators
* Lags in physical development	* Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking)
* Failure to thrive	* Conduct disorders (antisocial, destructive)
* Speech disorders	* Neurotic traits (inhibition of play, sleep disorders)
* Unexplained anger or behavior	* Psychoneurotic reactions
* Low self esteem	* Behavior extremes
* Bed wetting	* Inappropriately acting as adult
* Eating disorders	* Inappropriately acting as infant
* Stomach aches/ulcers	* Attempted suicide
* Insomnia	* Self mutilating
	* Separation anxiety
	* Doesn't invite friends over

*Information from Prevent Child Abuse Indiana

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

DO NOT INVESTIGATE THE SITUATION

Your role and responsibility is not to investigate, but to report the abuse,. If a child discloses abuse to you:

DO:

- * Remain calm
- * Believe the child
- * Allow child to talk
- * Show interest and concern
- * Reassure and support the child
- * Take action and report 1-800-800-5556

DON'T

- * Panic or over-react
- * Press the child to talk
- * Promise anything you can't control
- * Confront the offender
- * Blame or minimize the child's feelings
- * Overwhelm the child with questions

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REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In an Emergency dial 911

Indiana law requires the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. According to the Indiana State Code for Child Abuse, “a person commits a class B misdemeanor when he knowingly fails to make a report of child abuse or neglect.”

INDIANA CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT HOTLINE

1-800-800-5556

Available 24 hours day

The Hotline, a central reporting center for Indiana, is staffed with trained Child Abuse Intake Specialists and at least one supervisor every shift, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year.



If for some reason you are unable to get through, you may also contact your local law enforcement agency to report abuse or neglect.

Local Police Department:

- * Muncie Police: 765-747-4838
- * Delaware County Sheriff: 765-747-7878
- * Indiana State Police: 1-800-761-2985

When you call Department of Child Services (DCS), it is important that you have all of the identifying information in front of you: **name, ages of each child, address, phone number**. You may call without this information, but it helps DCS to quickly investigate. When you are describing a situation, remain calm and **report dates, eyewitness observations and direct conversations**.

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AFTER THE REPORT IS MADE

After the report is made a team of multidisciplinary professionals will join together to begin the investigation process. This Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) includes law enforcement officers (LEA), Department of Children's Services (DCS) Investigators, the Prosecutor's Office, representatives from mental health services, medical (SANE) and Victim Advocate. The investigation process may include several of the MDT team members. The child will be interviewed by a trained forensic interviewer at the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) located at Meridian's Suzanne Gresham Center.

You may also be asked to meet with a member of DCS at or before the CAC interview. It is the duty of DCS to make sure the child is in a safe environment.

After the interview, the investigators assigned to the case will complete the investigation. Once completed, it will be turned over to the Prosecutor's Office to determine if charges will be filed.

You may use the resources of the Muncie Police Department Victim Advocate Program throughout the investigation and after charges are filed. The Victim Advocate will be able to explain the legal process to you, keep you informed of court dates and be present with you and your child during the court process. MPD Victim Advocate's
765-747-4777.



CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER (CAC)

The Child Advocacy Center a division of Meridian Health Services is a safe and healing environment for children who have experienced abuse to meet with a trained forensic interviewer to share their story.

The CAC's goal is to ensure that the child is the main priority during their time at the center. They welcome them with a child-friendly waiting room and ensure that the forensic interviewers establish a positive relationship right from the start. The children are brought into a comfortable room with the interviewer and have a neutral conversation one on one. The other team members participate by watching and listening live in another room on a closed circuit television system. Through earpieces, the team members can communicate with the interviewer. This allows for a truly comprehensive, hopefully one time interview, where the child is at ease and the team gets all the information needed.



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COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN (CSEC)

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age.

Sex trafficking affects the children of our Communities!

Indiana Stats:

- 392 Midwest cases from 2007-2012
- 38 victims in 2014
- “Crossroads of America” = hub for travel and trafficking

National Stats:

- Some runaway groups estimate that 1 in 3 young people is solicited for sex within 48 hours of running away or becoming homeless in the U.S.
- The average age of entry into the sex trade is 13 years old ([Shared Hope](#)).
- At least 100,000 American children are being exploited through pornography or prostitution every year ([Shared Hope](#)).
- FBI estimates that nearly 300,000 American youths are at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

www.sharedhope.org

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CSEC WARNING SIGNS

Regardless of their demographics, victims are vulnerable in some way, and the traffickers will use their particular vulnerability to exploit victims. Some may include but not limited to; poverty, homelessness, a need to be loved, history of abuse, and involvement with child welfare system.

Warning signs that an individual is being trafficked:

- Signs of physical abuse such as burn marks, bruises or cuts
- Unexplained absences from class
- Running away from home/placement
- Less appropriately dressed than before
- Sexualized behavior
- Overly tired in class
- Withdrawn, depressed, distracted or checked out
- Brags about making or having lots of money
- Displays expensive clothes, accessories or shoes
- New tattoo (tattoos are often used by pimps as a way to brand victims. Tattoos of a name, symbol of money or barcode could indicate trafficking)
- Shows signs of gang affiliation? (ie: a preference for specific colors, notebook doodles of gang symbols, etc.)

If you suspect a person is being trafficked call the
National Human Trafficking Resource Center
(NHTRC)

1-888-3737-888

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Community Partners for Child Safety (CPCS)- 866-800-8115

Free and voluntary program helping families with children 0 to 18 years of age, not actively involved with the Department of Child Services or Healthy Families. Providing local resources for issues related to school, medical, mental health, basic needs, parent education and any other area of need.

A Better Way- (765)747-9107

A Better Way provides a safe, residential shelter for victims of domestic violence. A comprehensive service plan provides each man, woman and children with the advocacy, education, and support needed to move through the crisis period and on to more peaceful living.

Del. Co. Department of Child Services- (765) 751-9565

The mission of the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is to protect children from abuse and neglect. In addition, the DCS staff does this by partnering with families and communities to provide safe, nurturing, and stable homes.

Sexual Molest Abuse Response Team (SMART)- (765) 741-1350

Delaware County has a multi-disciplinary team who specialize in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. The team utilizes the Child First Protocol designed to obtain accurate information from the victim while minimizing additional trauma. Whenever possible victim interviews take place in the Child Advocacy Center a division of Meridian Health Services. The advocacy center is a neutral, child friendly location. Victims can feel safe during the interview and subsequent provision of services.



“Listening Tree”

Each leaf holds the name of a child that shared their story at the CAC!

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**National Child Abuse Hotline:
1-800-4-A-Child (1-800-422-4453) Available 24 hours**

**Domestic Violence Hotline:
765-747-9107**

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline:
1-800-273-8255**

**National Human Trafficking Hotline:
1-800-3737-888**

1-800-800-5556

You can report anonymously 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Local Police Department:

- * Muncie Police: 765-747-4838
- * Delaware County Sheriff: 765-747-7878
- * Indiana State Police: 1-800-761-2985

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911!

**** If you require more copies of this booklet...
Huffer Child Care Resource and Referral - 765-284-0887**

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