



## Signs and Indicators of Child Abuse

| <b>Physical Abuse</b>                                 |   |
|---|---|
| Actions and behaviour of adult/carer                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor injuries</li> <li>Serious injuries e.g. those resulting in fractures or head injuries</li> <li>Premeditated sadistic injuries</li> <li>Burns and scolds</li> <li>Bites</li> <li>Repeated abuse resulting from lack of control</li> <li>Injury resulting from physical chastisement</li> <li>Genital / anal area injuries</li> <li>Shaking</li> <li>Poisoning</li> <li>Physical assaults regarded as bullying</li> <li>Suffocating</li> <li>Factitious illness – parent /carer manufactures the symptoms of an illness in the child</li> <li>Female circumcision</li> <li>Death</li> </ul>  |
| Physical signs on child / young person                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unconscious</li> <li>Multiple bruising / scratching</li> <li>Injuries of different ages</li> <li>Adult bite marks</li> <li>Outline bruising, e.g. belt, hand print, shoe mark</li> <li>Bruises to eyes and ears</li> <li>Finger tip bruises</li> <li>Burns and scalds on hands, feet, buttocks, groin, cigarette burns</li> <li>Difficulty in moving limbs</li> <li>Blood in white of eyes, small bruises on head, bruises on rib cage – may be associated with shaking injuries</li> <li>Injuries and / or fractures in babies and children who are not mobile</li> <li>Torn fraenum</li> <li>Drowsiness e.g. from head injury or poisoning</li> <li>Female genital mutilation</li> </ul> |
| Behaviour and emotional state of child / young person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggressive</li> <li>Withdrawn</li> <li>Fearful: 'frozen watchfulness'</li> <li>Low self esteem</li> <li>Poor concentration</li> <li>Poor self image</li> </ul>   |



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| <b>Neglect</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Actions and behaviour of adult / carer</p>                | <p>Abandonment or desertion<br/>           Living alone<br/>           Malnourishment, lack of food, inappropriate food or erratic feeding<br/>           Lack of warmth<br/>           Lack of adequate clothing<br/>           Unhygienic home conditions<br/>           Lack of protection or exposures to dangers, including moral danger or lack of supervision appropriate to child's age and development stage<br/>           Persistent failure to attend school<br/>           Non-organic failure to thrive<br/>           Leaving child alone to care for younger brothers / sisters<br/>           Lack of appropriate stimulation<br/>           Lack of protection from dangerous substances, e.g. fire, drugs, household chemicals<br/>           Lack of appropriate medical care when required</p> |
| <p>Physical signs on child / young person</p>                | <p>Delayed physical development; underweight and of small stature<br/>           Hands and feet which are cold and puffy<br/>           Chronic nappy rash<br/>           Slow growth in both height and weight<br/>           Frequently smelly<br/>           Persistently dirty, unkempt appearance<br/>           Persistently hungry<br/>           Non-organic failure to thrive<br/>           Impairment of health<br/>           Death</p>   |
| <p>Behaviour and emotional state of child / young person</p> | <p>Low self esteem<br/>           Destructive tendencies<br/>           Neurotic behaviour<br/>           Running away<br/>           Stealing and / or hiding food<br/>           Indiscriminately seek affection from unfamiliar adults<br/>           Impairment of intellectual behaviour<br/>           Long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational; progress.</p>   |



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| <b>Sexual Abuse</b>  |  |
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| <p>Actions and behaviour of adults / carer</p>               | <p>Inappropriate fondling<br/>Mutual masturbation<br/>Digital penetration<br/>Oral / genital contact<br/>Anal or vaginal intercourse<br/>Exploitation from pornography<br/>Encouraging children / young people to become prostitutes<br/>Encouraging children to witness intercourse or pornographic acts<br/>Leaving a child in the care of a known sex offender<br/>Internet child pornography</p>   |
| <p>Physical signs on child / young person</p>                | <p>Injuries to the genital / anal area<br/>Sexually transmitted diseases<br/>Pregnancy<br/>Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks<br/>Eating disorders<br/>Self Harm e.g. suicide, self mutilation, substance misuse<br/>Bleeding from vagina or anus<br/>Pain in passing urine or faeces<br/>Persistent discharge<br/>Warts in genital or anal area</p>  |
| <p>Behaviour and emotional state of child / young person</p> | <p>Frequent masturbation<br/>Nightmares and disturbed sleeping patterns<br/>Persistent offending, non school attendance, running away<br/>Wetting, soiling, smearing excreta<br/>Significant changes in child's behaviour<br/>Sexual awareness which is inappropriate to child's age and developmental stage<br/>Sexual aggressive towards other children<br/>Low self esteem<br/>Limited attention span<br/>Aggression<br/>Withdrawn<br/>Isolation<br/>Depression</p> |



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| <b>Emotional Abuse</b>                                |  |
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| <p><b>Actions and behaviours of adult / carer</b></p> | <p>A child is rejected by parent / carers<br/>           Parents behave in a cold, hostile and / or unpredictable way towards the child<br/>           Parents behave in an emotional inconsistent way towards the child<br/>           A child is criticised and blamed unreasonably.<br/>           Scapegoating may occur within families where the same child receives more than his fair share of blame and is seen to be the cause of all the family's problems<br/>           A child is ridiculed and mocked<br/>           A child is denied opportunities to gain new experiences<br/>           A child is denied opportunities to relate to others<br/>           Lack of opportunity to fulfil intellectual development<br/>           A child is denied the opportunity to organise and achieve levels of responsibility appropriate to their age.</p> |
| <p><b>Effects of emotional abuse</b></p>              | <p>The child may become timid and withdrawn and avoid making relationships with peers and adults. There may be little spontaneous conversation and avoidance of eye contact<br/>           The child appears frightened, easily startled by loud noises. He/she is soon in tears and may twitch and tremble<br/>           The child has outbursts of verbally or physically aggressive behaviour<br/>           The child seeks affection inappropriately<br/>           The child feels confused and insecure<br/>           The child has difficulty in making and sustaining relationships</p>   |