

Child, Youth and Enhancement Act “Interpretation” Section (2), (2.1), (3) (pg.10-13)

INDICATORS OF NEGLECT

The Child may:

- be underweight by more than 30%, and gain weight when offered proper nutrition
- show improvement of developmental delays following proper stimulation and care
- demonstrate signs of deprivation: diarrhea, vomiting, anemia, recurring respiratory problems
- be consistently dirty or dressed inappropriately for weather, or wear torn clothing
- often be hungry or thirsty
- often be tired or listless
- demand much physical contact and attention
- assume role of parent or adult in the family
- lack proper medical and dental care

The Adult may:

- maintain a chaotic home life with little evidence of health routines
- not supervise child for long periods of time or when child is involved in potentially dangerous activity
- leave child in the care of inappropriate persons
- give child inappropriate food, drink, medicine
- consistently bring child early and pick up late
- be apathetic towards child’s progress, hard to reach by phone and fail to keep appointments to discuss child and concerns
- overwork or exploit child
- show evidence of apathy, feelings of futility

INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical signs might include: bruises and welts, bite marks, burns, lacerations and abrasions, dislocation of shoulders, hips, etc., head injuries.

The Child may:

- be wary of physical contact with adults
- seem afraid of parent or other persons
- be frightened in the face of adult disapproval
- be apprehensive when others cry

- show extremes of behavior - aggressive/withdrawn
- be over-anxious to please
- may approach any adult including strangers

The Adult may:

- be angry, impatient; frequently lose or almost lose control
- appear unconcerned about child's condition
- view child as bad or as the cause of life's problems
- resist discussion of child's condition or family situation
- view questions with suspicion
- use discipline inappropriate to child's age, condition and situation
- offer illogical, contradictory, unconvincing or no explanation of injuries
- show poor understanding of normal child development (for example, may expect adult-like mature behavior from a young child)

INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The child's appearance may not indicate or suggest the extent of the difficulty. Child may appear clean, well groomed and well nourished. Child's facial expression and body carriage may indicate sadness, depression, timidity or held-back anger.

The Child may:

- appear overly compliant, passive, shy
- show episodes of very aggressive, demanding and angry behavior
- fear failure, have trouble concentrating or learning and give up easily
- be either boastful or negative about him/herself
- constantly apologizes

The Adult may:

- blame or belittle child in public and at home
- withhold comfort when child is frightened or distressed
- treat other children in the family differently and better, showing more acceptance and loving, and less criticism
- tend to describe child in negative ways: "stupid", "bad", "troublemaker", and see failure or poor future for child
- hold child responsible for parent's difficulties and disappointments
- identify child with disliked relatives

INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Physical evidence of sexual abuse is rare. Often with young children, abuse is not intercourse but touching, which may leave no physical signs. Where physical evidence is present it may be:

- torn, stained or bloody clothing
- pain or itching in genital area or throat, difficulty going to bathroom or swallowing
- bruises, bleeding or swelling of genital, rectal or anal areas
- vaginal odor or discharge

The Child may:

- display unusual interest in sexual matters
- use language and make drawings that are sexually explicit
- fantasize excessively
- show fear of closed spaces
- resist undressing
- masturbate excessively
- exhibit seductive behavior

The Adult may:

- often be domineering but emotionally weak
- suggest or indicate marital or relationship difficulties with adults
- indicate own social isolation, loneliness, especially as a single parent
- cling to child, both physically and emotionally; hold and touch the child in an inappropriate way
- tend to blame others for life's problems and child's sexual behavior - may even accuse child of causing sexual abuse