



CHILD PROTECTION CENTER

Signs of Child Abuse and How to Report

The signs of child abuse are often seen in behavioral changes, such as:

Aggressiveness, passiveness, withdrawal, sexually inappropriate behaviors or knowledge, use of alcohol or drugs at an early age, and acting abnormally adult or infantile.

Direct physical signs of abuse are not always common, but can include:

Unexplained bruises or welts in various stages of healing, burns, fractures, bleeding, consistent hunger, poor hygiene, fatigue, and difficulty walking or sitting.

Victims of child abuse often show indirect physical signs, such as:

Anxiety, chronic stomach pains, nightmares, and bedwetting.

In Florida, everyone is a mandatory reporter. Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected, is mandated by law to place a report.

**Florida Abuse Hotline:
1-800-96-ABUSE
(1-800-962-2873)**



If you see something, if you hear something, if you suspect something- *report it*. Don't wait for someone else to speak up- it could mean the life of a child.

Many reporters find it helpful to organize their thoughts and information by writing it out before calling the hotline. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

A child has directly disclosed abuse to you- now what?

When a child discloses abuse, they are seeking support and safety from someone they trust. While this is an extremely difficult conversation to have, it is important to remain calm, listen patiently, and reassure them that they're doing the right thing by telling you. As quickly as possible, call the Florida Abuse Hotline to file a report.

