

Promise Protected

What must be reported?

The Standard for reporting suspected abuse/neglect in Pennsylvania is a "reasonable cause to believe" that a child is the victim of abuse/neglect. First hand observation of abuse is not required.

Indicators of Abuse (Source: PA Family Support Alliance)

As mandated reporters, it is important that you are able to recognize indicators of abuse.

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises, welts, human bite marks, bald spots
- Numerous bruises in various stages of healing
- Marks on many surfaces of the body
- Unexplained burns, especially cigarette or immersion burns
- Withdrawal or aggression—behavioral extremes
- Uncomfortable with physical contact
- Afraid to go home
- Dressed inappropriately for the weather
- Cringes when approached by an adult (fears getting hit)
- Overreacts to accidents such as spilling milk
- Does not want to talk about home life
- Extreme attachment to parents
- Extreme attentiveness to needs of parents

Signs of Neglect or Psychological Abuse

- Unattended medical needs
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Persistent hunger, poor hygiene or inappropriate dress
- Distended stomach or emaciated body
- Delayed physical development
- Substance abuse
- Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness
- Steals food or begs
- Habit disorders (sucking, rocking, etc.)
- Passive or aggressive behavior extremes
- Neurotic traits such as sleep disorders or inhibition of play

Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- A child's report or self-disclosure
- Sexual knowledge beyond what is natural for a child
- Preoccupation with their body
- Acting out sexual behavior
- Withdrawal, chronic depression
- Self devaluation and lack of confidence
- Problems with bedtime or afraid to go to bed
- Bedwetting — especially if it begins in a child who has been dry



How do I make a report if I suspect abuse?

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, the follow three steps must be followed:

1. Call Childline at 800-932-0313
2. Within 48-hours of your report, submit a written CY-47 report with the county Children & Youth services where the alleged abuse took place.
3. Notify the head of your institution immediately.