



INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE MALTREATMENT*

<i>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</i>	<i>BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS</i>
PHYSICAL ABUSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unexplained bruises (in various stages of healing), welts, human bite marks, bald spots, burns, especially cigarette burns or immersion burns (glove like) • unexplained fractures or abrasions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-destructive behavior • withdrawn or aggressive behavioral extremes • uncomfortable with physical contact • complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably • wears clothing inappropriate for weather to cover body
PHYSICAL NEGLECT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unattended medical needs • consistent lack of supervision • consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene • lice, distended stomach, emaciated look 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly displays fatigue or listlessness, falls asleep in class • steals food, begs from classmates • reports that no caretaker is home • frequently absent or tardy • self-destructive
SEXUAL ABUSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • torn, stained or bloody underclothes • pain or itching in the genital area • difficulty walking or sitting • bruises or bleeding in the external genitalia • presence of a sexually transmitted disease • frequent urinary or yeast infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdrawn or chronically depressed • overly concerned for siblings • problems with peers, resists involvement with peers • sudden massive weight change (loss or gain) • hysteria, lack of emotional control • sudden school difficulties • threatened by physical contact or closeness • exhibits inappropriate sex play or has advanced sexual knowledge • promiscuity
EMOTIONAL ABUSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speech disorders • delayed physical development • substance abuse • increased severity in existing conditions, such as asthma or allergies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • habit disorders (sucking, rocking) • anti-social or destructive behavior • neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition to play) • passive or aggressive behavioral extremes • delinquent behavior • developmental delays

* Adapted in part from Broadhurst, D.D.; Edmunds, M.; and MacDicken, R.A. *Early Childhood Programs and Prevention Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect*, the User Manual Series, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1979

WORKING TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing child abuse. Through its network of programs, training, resources, and support, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia implements the following prevention strategies:

Parent Support. Through programs like First Steps, Healthy Families Georgia, a statewide helpline, parenting groups, and others, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia is giving parents the support they need to improve parenting skills.

Support to Children. Personal safety and abuse prevention education, and a special helpline initiative for teens are among Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's programs that help protect children.

State Prevention Network. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's five regional offices offer training, guidance, and support to Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's chartered councils, which provide direct services in their communities throughout Georgia.

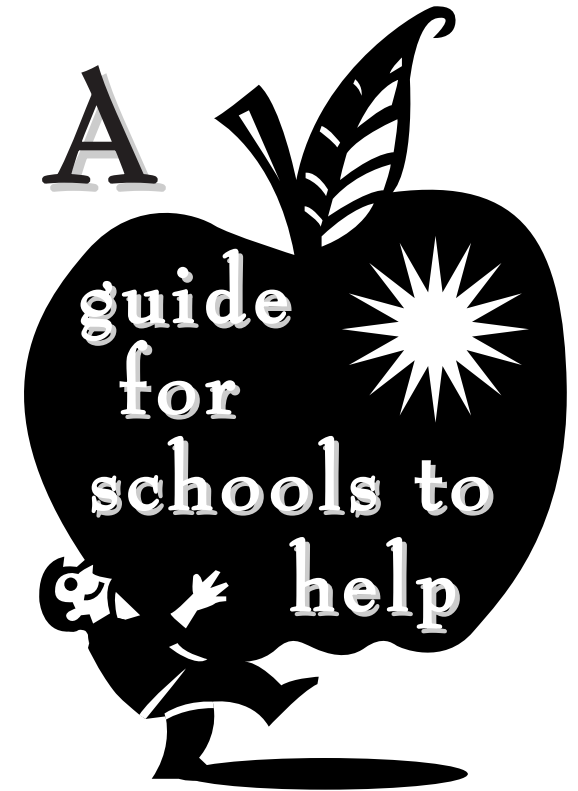
Advocacy. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia works with elected officials, participates in the fatality review process, and supports state and national prevention initiatives. For example, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia is instrumental in the passage of state laws impacting children and helps advocate for the funding of prevention programs throughout the state. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia also works with other national organizations like its national affiliate, Prevent Child Abuse America, to push national child protection initiatives.

Training. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia trains professionals through its annual symposium, survivor support clinical training, child abuse investigation training and education (in collaboration with Georgia's Department of Human Resources), and much more.

Public education/awareness. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's special events, community presentations, public service campaigns, and an array of educational materials help keep child abuse issues before the public.

Evaluation and research. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia continually evaluates its services and participates in statewide and national research evaluation activities.

FOR INFORMATION ON CHILD ABUSE OR PARENTING ISSUES, CALL
1-800-CHILDREN



PREVENT CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

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Georgia



CHILD ABUSE IS EVERYONE'S PROBLEM

When children are victimized by the very people responsible for their care, we as a society must not also fail them. Together, we can protect children and help strengthen many vulnerable families by acknowledging that abuse can and does happen in all types of families within our society.

Effective child protection must involve all segments of the community -- including educators, social services and public health professionals, the legal and law enforcement community, as well as civic groups, the religious community, child advocacy groups, and volunteers.

Recognizing and reporting abuse or neglect, however, is the *second* half of the solution to the problem. The first step requires communities to work together to put family support systems in place so that child abuse can be prevented before it starts.



SCHOOLS: CRITICAL LINK IN CHAIN OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Teachers come into frequent contact with children who are neglected or abused. Such troubled children may be found in families at any economic or social level in the community. Common underlying factors are the following:

- emotional immaturity of parents
- marital friction
- financial difficulties
- alcoholism or drug use
- severe stress
- emotional disturbances

If children are identified at the earliest signs of abuse or neglect, help can be made available at a stage when their problems can be more readily resolved. Too often referrals to protective services are not made until the conditions of neglect or abuse become acute and intolerable. Such referrals may come too late to help some children remain safely in their own homes.



HOW CAN MY SCHOOL HELP?

Because schools are concerned with the whole child, seeking help for a child in trouble is compatible with educational objectives. Educators have daily contact with children, which places them in a unique position to observe and influence a child's development.

- Make sure all staff and volunteers know how to recognize signs of maltreatment.
- Make sure all staff and volunteers know the school's procedure for reporting child maltreatment.
- After a report is made, continue communicating with all involved parties (social workers, counselors, teachers) to monitor the child's progress academically and emotionally.
- Support the child: Help improve his/her self-image and teach constructive methods of expressing emotions.
- Select and facilitate child abuse prevention and personal safety programs in your school.



THE IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING

If you *suspect* a child *may* be abused or neglected, this must be reported to your local child protective agency. Your school system has a procedure to help you with reporting. Familiarize yourself with this process. Remember, it is **not** your responsibility to determine whether abuse or neglect has occurred before you make a report.

Teachers in all states are mandated to report child abuse and can be held liable for failure to do so.



PARENTAL ATTITUDES MAY BE IMPORTANT INDICATORS

- Are the parents aggressive or defensive when approached about problems concerning their child?
- Are they apathetic or unresponsive?
- Is parental behavior, as observed by you or your staff or related by the child, bizarre or strange?
- Do the parents appear to be overly severe in their reaction to the child's misbehavior?
- Do the parents show little concern about the child?
- Do they fail to participate in school activities or to permit the child to participate?

These are attitudes that should alert you to **potential** child maltreatment.



REASONS FOR ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse and neglect of children are rarely willful or deliberate. They usually reflect the inadequacy or incapacity of parents to live up to parental roles. Most parents want to be good parents.



THE ROLE OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The presence of one or more of the indicators in the included chart should arouse your concern for the child's welfare. Whether there is truly a need for protection, however, is a determination that protective services will make after it has explored the situation. But child protective services cannot make such an exploration unless, and until, a person in contact with the child reports the circumstances pointing to the possible need for protection.



HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Please contact Prevent Child Abuse Georgia (PCA Georgia) if you need additional information about child abuse and neglect. PCA Georgia provides a variety of services, including a statewide toll-free helpline for support and referrals; education and training for professionals and concerned citizens; and education and support programs for parents and children.

1-800-CHILDREN