

**What are the signs that a child may be abused or neglected?**

There are usually signs that a child is being abused or neglected. The signs may be physical and in other cases, the child's behavior may lead to Concerns about abuse. Often once sign is not enough to suggest abuse or neglect, but several signs make it more likely that abuse or neglect may exist. If you feel that a child may be being abused, please report it.

The following are abuse indicators:

	Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injuries (Bruises, cuts, burns, bite marks, fractures, etc.) that aren't consistent with explanation offered.</li> <li>The presence of several injuries over a period of time.</li> <li>Any bruising on an infant</li> <li>Facial injuries in preschool children</li> </ul> <p>Injuries inconsistent with the child's age and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't recall how injuries an inconsistent explanation</li> <li>Wary of adults, reluctant to go home, absences from school</li> <li>May cringe or flinch if touched unexpectedly</li> <li>May display a vacant stare or frozen watchfulness</li> <li>Extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn</li> <li>Wears long sleeves to hid injuries</li> <li>Extremely compliant and or eager to please</li> </ul> <p>Sad, cries frequently</p>
Emotional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bedwetting and or diarrhea which is non-medical in origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness, mood swings</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent psychosomatic complaints</li> <li>(Headaches, nausea, stomach aches)</li> <li>Child fails to thrive</li> </ul> <p>*Rarely is any one indicator conclusive proof that a child has been harmed. In most instances, children present a cluster of behavioral and physical indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overly compliant: too well-mannered: too neat and clean</li> <li>Extreme attention seeking behaviors</li> <li>Displays extreme inhibition in play</li> <li>Severe depression (Often Suicidal)</li> <li>Running away from home</li> <li>Constantly apologizes</li> </ul>

Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unusual or excessive itching in the genital or anal area</li> <li>Torn, stained or bloody underwear</li> <li>Pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease</li> <li>Injuries to the vaginal or anal areas(Bruising, swelling or infection)</li> </ul> <p>*While the above are not conclusive indicators of sexual abuse, one or more could be a sign that a child is in need of help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-inappropriate sexual play with toys, self or others(replication of explicit drawings and or descriptions</li> <li>Bizarre sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge</li> <li>Promiscuity</li> <li>Prostitution</li> <li>Seductive behaviors directed toward members of the opposite sex</li> <li>Fear of home excessive fear of men/women</li> <li>Depression</li> </ul>
	Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abandonment</li> <li>Unattended medical or dental needs</li> <li>Consistent hunger. Inappropriate dress, poor hygiene</li> <li>Persistent conditions (Scabies, head lice, diaper rash or other skin disorders)</li> <li>Development delays (Language, weight)</li> </ul>



# KEYANOW CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE INC.

## CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

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## Child Protection Services

We all share in the responsibility for making sure that every child is safe and cared for. When parents cannot or will not care for, supervise, and protect their children, someone else may have to step in to make sure the child's needs are being met.

Keyanow Child and Family Centre Inc. and the Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE) provides child protection services. They are given the authority to do this by *The Child and Family Services Act*. First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies, like Keyanow Child and Family Centre Inc., provide similar services to children and families living on reserve. DCRE provides these services off reserve.

### What is child abuse or neglect?

There are many forms of child abuse. Generally, abuse means anything that may be harmful to a child's physical, emotional or psychological health, or takes advantage of a child. According to *The Child and Family Services Act*, a child means an unmarried person under the age of sixteen (16) years – unless it is otherwise stated.

### Why do parents abuse or neglect their children?

Parenting can be a tough job. Some people have trouble handling all of the responsibility and pressure that comes with being a parent. Some parents do not understand that their children are not always able to do the things they expect of them. Sometimes this leads to abuse or neglect.

Being abused or neglected may lead to lifelong problems. There are many things that can lead a parent to abuse a child, including:

- Marriage, personal or financial problems
- Alcohol, drug or other substance abuse
- Lack of family or friends
- Poor or over-crowded housing
- Lack of knowledge about how children develop
- Inappropriate discipline
- Little or no experience caring for children
- Demands of a child with a special need and
- Being abused or neglected as a child

## Can abuse or neglect be prevented?

Yes, helping parents can prevent child abuse and neglect:

- Learn about what is normal in terms of their child's development and what they can expect at certain ages
- Improve their parenting skills, including how to use proper discipline
- Learn how to settle family conflicts
- Learn to deal with stress, and
- Recognize and seek help for drug, alcohol, gambling or other addictions

### How can I help stop child abuse and neglect?

If you have reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected, it is very important to remember that it is **NEVER THE CHILD'S FAULT**.

**As a parent** – If you think you may be abusing your child (ren) or you are afraid you may abuse your child (ren), or if you would just like information or someone to talk to, call the nearest Nations Child and Family Services Agency or DCRE office.

**As a member of the community** – If you have reason to believe a child may be neglected or abused, you have a legal responsibility under *The Child and Family Services Act* to report your concerns. You may report them to any DCRE office, a community crisis center or unit (check the inside cover of your phonebook), the police, or a First Nations Child and Family Services Agency (like Keyanow Child and Family Centre Inc. – see number on front cover).

If you are not sure whether or not you should report a particular situation, you may wish to discuss it with a child protection worker, a police officer or family services worker.

Anyone who has a reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected has a legal duty to report it. You are not expected to determine if a child is being abused or neglected, a trained social worker will make that determination. Members of the public are simply obligated by the law to report suspected abuse or neglect. If you do not report a suspicion of abuse or neglect, you could be fined up to \$25000.00, or get a jail term of up to 24 months, or get both a fine and a jail term. Reports can be made anonymously also.

## How do I know if a child is being abused or neglected?

In Saskatchewan, *The Child and Family Services Act* defines abuse and neglect.

Child abuse is defined under section 81 as:

- Physical injury
- Substantial impairment of a child's mental or emotional functioning
- Exploiting a child or treating a child cruelly
- Contacting a child for a sexual purpose and
- Allowing or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution

Section 11 of the *Act* addresses child neglect, which includes:

- Not providing enough food, clothing, shelter or healthcare for the child and
- Leaving a child alone or without proper supervision or care

The law also protects children who may suffer physical or emotional harm because of family violence.

### If I make a report – what happens next?

Trained, professional staff investigates all reports of abuse or neglect; they will usually discuss the situation with the family and decide what would be the best plan for the child and the family.

As noted previously, everyone has a responsibility to report a situation where they believe a child may be in need of protection. Most people who report possible abuse or neglect do so because they have a real concern about the child's safety and well-being.

Sometimes, though, a person may make a false report out of spite, anger, revenge or a desire to cause problems for a parent. Any person who does this may have legal action taken against them by the person against whom the false report is made.

