

What is Sexual Abuse?

- Sexual Abuse involves inappropriate behavior that violates a child's boundaries.
- Typically occurs across a power differential
- Spans in person and online world
- Can include
 - Sexual Acts
 - Sexual Contact
 - Sexual Behavior without Contact
 - Showing Sexual images
 - Creating Child Sexual abuse material

Children may react to sexual abuse in different ways. The following are some common signs that could indicate a child has experienced abuse.

Physical Signs

- Bleeding, bruises or swelling in the genital or anal regions
- Bruises on roof of mouth
- Bloody, torn or stained underclothes
- Difficulty walking, standing, or using the bathroom
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections or STI's
- Pain, itching or burning in the genital area

Behavioral Signs

- Suddenly loses interest in an activity or expresses not wanting to see an individual
- Sexual knowledge or behaviors that are not developmentally appropriate
- Nightmares or bed-wetting
- Unusually withdrawn or aggressive
- Returns to regressive behaviors, like thumb sucking

Signs of Sexual Abuse (cont.)

- Appears withdrawn, sad or fearful, particularly after going somewhere or seeing someone
- Changes in hygiene- either refusing to bathe or bathing excessively
- Overly protective and concerned for siblings, potentially assuming a caretaker role
- Runs away from home or school
- Receives special attention from an adult or older peer – such as gifts, one-on-one practices, excessive compliments

Abuse also happens over the internet

Signs of online abuse may also include:

- Secrecy around devices and online habits
- Sudden changes in internet use
 - Using devices late at night
 - Using devices more than normal
 - Only using devices in private
- Defensive or angry when you ask them about their online activities

