

Our Children First Inc.

# Prevention: “How to’s”

BY Our Children First Team

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## Inform. Assist. Educate

### Introduction

This document is to aid our community and volunteers with prevention skills and knowledge to know when a child maltreatment situation can and should be prevented. Prevention and awareness is pivotal in the mission of our advocacy in Our Children First Foundation Inc.

In this document you will learn:

- The basics of prevention
- How to recognize abuse
- What to do in a child maltreatment situation
- How to report abuse
- The importance of children's advocacy centers

and you will be given:

- Sources
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- Evidence based statistics
  - Local resources for help

### **What is Child Abuse Prevention?**

Prevention is the act of prohibiting a specific problem or behavior, but when discussing the issue of child abuse, the goal is to prohibit any form of sexual, neglect, physical, or emotional abuse in or outside the child's home. Promoting child and family well being will help save lives of children everywhere and far into the future.

### **How to Recognize abuse**

The first step in prevention is recognizing abuse. To recognize abuse there are signs of behavior to look out for. For those experienced in childcare or social work, it's possible they have had training on this topic and have noticed one or more signs. However, It's easy to look past abnormal behavior, especially if it's behavior you are not used to. Below are behaviors listed from [Prevent Child Abuse America](#) to increase awareness in your community.

### **The Child:**

- ★ **Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance;**
- ★ **Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention;**
- ★ **Has learning problems that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes;**

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- ★ **Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen;**
  - ★ **Lacks adult supervision; Suicidal Behavior**
  - ★ **Is overly compliant, an overachiever, or too responsible; or**
  - ★ **Comes to school early, stays late, and does not want to go home.**

### **The Parent:**

- ★ **Shows little concern for the child, rarely responding to the school's requests for information, for conferences, or for home visits;**
- ★ **Denies the existence of — or blames the child for — the child's problems in school or at home;**
- ★ **Demands perfection or a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve;**

The Importance of recognizing child abuse goes a long way in helping the mental state of children and their future. Showing a child that they are not alone will help efforts to promote healthier lifestyles for children in need.

### **Warning Signs of Child Abuse:**

#### **1. Child Sexual Abuse**

- Trouble walking or sitting
- Displays knowledge of sexual behavior that is not appropriate for their age
- Child may have a difficult time participating in physical activities or changing clothes in front of others of same sex.
- Runs away from home

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- Pregnancy under the age of 14

## **2. Emotional Abuse**

- Fearful of doing something wrong
- Extremes in behavior (aggressive, passive, overly compliant)
- Displays behavior that is entirely too adult like or behavior that is too infantile like for age.
- No attachment to parent or caregiver

## **3. Physical Abuse**

- Frequent bruising, unexplained injuries, marks with patterns.
- Sensitive or fearful of touch and seems afraid to go home
- Wears long sleeves, turtle necks, or other clothing that seem suspicious in order to cover up bruising or marks.

## **4. Child Neglect**

- Hygiene is consistently bad
- Clothing is too small or dirty
- Ongoing illness or injury without treatment
- Frequently late or missing school
- No supervision

## **Reporting:**

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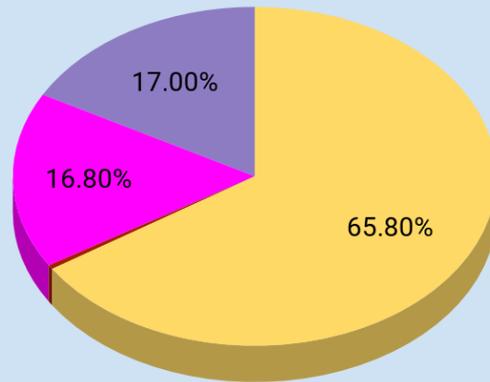
Reporting a case of possible child abuse is the single most selfless act anyone could perform. Reporting is for everyone, not just mandated reporters. Under statute §39.201(1)(a), "Mandated reporters in the state of Florida is any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare." Professional mandated reporters include anyone who is legally obligated to report abuse and identifying themselves at the time of the report. These professionals include teachers, social workers, daycare workers, health providers, law enforcement, mediators, judges and more. For more information click [here](#).

## **How Big is the Problem?**

In the most recent annual report published on January 28, 2019, conducted by the [Children's Bureau](#), an office of the administration for children and families. We have been given public information that states, out of 2.4 million referrals of child abuse reported, only 0.4% were reported by the victim. This is the underlying reason why prevention and reporting is key for all children. As citizens and advocates for our growing generations we must make child suspicious activity our business.

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## Child Abuse Reports 2017



● Reports by Professionals ● Reports by Victim ● Reports by Relatives  
● Reports by Non-professionals

## How To Report Child Maltreatment

Call the Florida Abuse Hotline ( **1-800-ABUSE or 1-800-962-2873**)

TDD (Telephone device for the deaf) : 1-800-453-5145

Report online at **<https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>**

Florida Relay 711 or TTY 800-955-8771

fax your report to 800-914-0004

Call 911 for children or adults in immediate danger

National Child Abuse Hotline (**1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453)**)



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## Sources

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/features/healthychildren/index.html>

<https://preventchildabuse.org/resource/preventing-child-neglect/>

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Child-Abuse-Prevention.aspx>

<https://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/understanding-child-abuse>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/What-to-Know-about-Child-Abuse.aspx>

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<http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/child-maltreatment-prevention.aspx>

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/world\\_report/factsheets/en/childabusefacts.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/en/childabusefacts.pdf?ua=1)

[https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/child/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/en/)

<https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/media-room/nca-digital-media-kit/national-statistics-on-child-abuse/>

<https://preventchildabuse.org/resource/recognizing-child-abuse-what-parents-should-know/>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/signs.pdf>

<https://americanspcc.org/child-abuse-statistics/>