

Child Abuse – Know the signs and what to do.

Signs of abuse: what to do

If you suspect a child is being (or has been) physically, emotionally or sexually abused



Look

- Toddlers & older children: Unusual, frequent bruises
- Infants: Any bruises
- Exhibits severe sleep or toileting issues
- Is consistently dirty or has severe body odor
- Has frequent broken bones
- Shows extremes in behavior (i.e., withdrawn, compliant, demanding, aggressive, etc.)
- Makes strong efforts to avoid a specific person, without an obvious reason



Ask

Begin with open-ended questions, such as what happened, can you tell me more about that? Always listen and believe the child.



Tell

Err on the side of filing a report if you have a gut feeling something isn't right. Call Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400



Child abuse and neglect can have a lasting effect. Even years after the abuse, many children can have depression, anxiety, higher rates of drinking and smoking and other health risks.

See the graphic above to recognize signs of abuse. You can also view more resources and signs of abuse from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, Texas state law requires that you report it. Remember, look, ask, and tell. You might save a child's life.

Learn more

Beyond ABC provides an in-depth look at the quality of life for children in North Texas. This is based on four reports: health, education, economic security, and safety. [Learn more and see the report.](#)

For additional resources on child abuse, visit healthychildren.org.