

As a Mandated Reporter: If You Suspect, You Must Report.

The law states:

When one has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity, or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she **knows or reasonably suspects** has been the victim of child abuse or neglect..."

Please Note: Proof of abuse is not required; that will be determined through investigation by child welfare professionals or law enforcement.



Physical Abuse

The child has suffered, or there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer, serious physical harm inflicted non-accidentally upon the child by the child's parent or guardian.

Examples:

- Bruises
- Bites
- Bone Fractures
- Cuts
- Welts
- Burns



Red Flags: Physical Abuse

The Manner

- Child reports being hit with a shoe.



A Delay in Care

- Child needs medical care for an injury that was clearly sustained days prior, such as:
 - Healing Burn
 - Healing Fracture.



A Changing History

- Child says the injury was caused by a fall from a bike, but later says the injury was caused by a fight with a sibling.



An Implausible History

- Child has a bruise and says it was caused by skidding and falling off a bike.
- Such injuries typically result in abrasions, not bruises.



General Neglect

The child has suffered, or there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer, **serious physical harm or illness.**



Result of the failure/inability of parent/guardian to:

- Adequately **supervise or protect** the child.
- **Protect the child from the conduct of the custodian** with whom the child has been left.
- Provide the child with **adequate food, clothing, shelter or medical treatment.**

Red Flags: Neglect- Physical Appearance

Seems inadequately dressed for the weather.

Wears soiled or wrong size clothes, or clothes in need of repair.

Often appears listless and tired with little energy.

Poor Hygiene.

Red Flags: Neglect- Health and Safety

Lack of Medical Care

- Chronic Illness
- Poor Dental Hygiene

Always Hungry

- Hoards
- Steals
- Beggars
- Not Enough Food

Chronic Tardiness or Excessive Absences or Reports Being Left Alone

Red Flags: Neglect- Parental Behavior

Appearance of Poor Parent/Child Attachment or Parent not Meeting Child's Developmental Needs.

Unsafe Housing Conditions

- Severely Exacerbated Asthma
- Multiple Bites From Pest Infestations

Poor Mental Health Status

- Intoxication
- Substance Abuse
- Danger to self or others

Sexual Abuse

Sexual Assault

- Sex acts with children
- Child molestation
- Inappropriate sexual behavior in presence of child

Sexual Exploitation

- Preparing, selling or distributing pornographic materials involving children
- Performances involving obscene sexual conduct
- Child trafficking



Red Flags: Sexual Abuse

Disclosure of sexual abuse by the child

Sexual knowledge beyond developmental expectations.

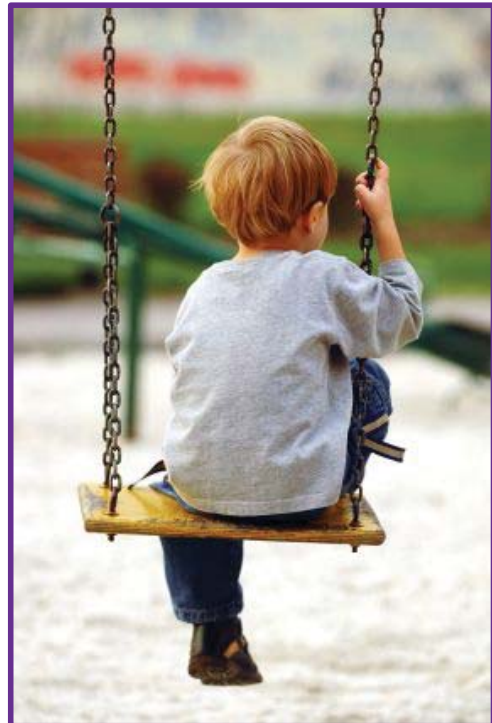
Acting out Sexual Behavior

- On other children
- Toys
- Sexually explicit drawings

Physical injury or STI

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is **non-physical mistreatment**, by the parent/guardian that has caused, or could cause: serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders.



Red Flags: Emotional Abuse

Lack of
Parent/Child
Attachment or
Bond

Parent
endangering
child's emotional
well-being

Unusual Forms of
Discipline:

- Humiliation
- Fear
- Intimidation

Child Behaviors:

- Anxiety or hyperactivity
- Depression
- Aggressive behavior

Suggested Open-Ended Questions

1. What happened?
2. How did that happen?
3. Tell me about what you saw/heard/felt.
4. Do you have a bruise or a mark?
5. Tell me more.
6. Who did this?
7. Where were you?
8. Does it hurt?
9. Are you afraid?



Risk Factors

Each factor alone might not fit the criteria for abuse or neglect but they **may put children at risk** for abuse and should be a cue to offer community support services to the family

- Homeless family
- Substance abuse by a child or family member
- Unsupervised child
- Mental illness of a child or family member
- Truancy / lack of school attendance
- Delinquent or criminal behavior of a child
- Mutual fights between minors

How Do I Report?

Step 1: Call ASAP

Make a verbal report to:

- Intake Hotline (24/7)
(707) 565-4304
- Law Enforcement: **9-1-1**

Step 2: Write

Submit written within 36 hrs:

- Forms and instructions also available online
- Fax or mail forms to Family, Youth and Children's Services
- Email: FYCSCAR@schsd.org

How can we keep children safe?



Connect. Support. Report.



CARING ADULTS
make great Foster Parents.

(707) 565-4274 SonomaFosterCare.org

MANDATED
SUPPORTERS
REPORTERS

Thank you for helping children and families

If you have questions, need materials or certificates or
would like to schedule a presentation:

Email: FYCmandatedreporter@schsd.org

Phone: (707) 565-4329

Like us on Facebook: [Connect.Support.Report](https://www.facebook.com/Connect.Support.Report).



Family, Youth and Children's Division
Child Protection Hotline: (707) 565-4329