

Recognising signs and symptoms of abuse

	Physical Signs and Symptoms	Changes in Behaviour
Physical Abuse	Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body Multiple bruises - in clusters, often on the upper arm, or outside of the thigh Cigarette burns Human bite marks Broken bones Scalds Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge	Fear of parents being approached for an explanation Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts Flinching when approached or touched Reluctance to get changed, e.g. in hot weather Depression Withdrawn behaviour Running away from home
Sexual Abuse	Pain or itching in the genital area Bruising or bleeding near genital area Sexually transmitted disease Vaginal discharge or infection Stomach pains Discomfort when walking or sitting down Pregnancy	Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people Having nightmares Running away from home Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level Sexual drawings or language Bedwetting Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempt Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about Substance or drug abuse Suddenly having unexplained sources of money Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence) Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults
Emotional Abuse		Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair-twisting, rocking Aggressive or hostile Being unable to play Fear of making mistakes Anxiety and mood swings Sudden speech disorders, language delays Self-harm Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
Neglect	Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others Constantly dirty or 'smelly' Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight Inappropriate clothing for the conditions	Complaining of being tired all the time Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments Having few friends Perceived as aggressive or disruptive Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised Learning and language delays