

Do you know the signs of child abuse?

You would think people could never hurt children, but they do. Approximately 30,000 children are on protection registers and those are cases that have been reported. At least one child dies each week from child abuse. Even with all child protection laws we have.

In 2006 alone, four children died at the hands of their caretaker or parent (mcbw femicide report, 2006). Ninety percent of the sufferers know their abuser well. It could be family, friend, babysitter...a parent.

At least one in 10 children are sexually abused during childhood. There are some ways that might be an indication that a child is being abused. I am going to cover the four main types of abuse: sexual, physical, neglect, and emotional.

Sexual Abuse

- ❖ overly knowledgeable in sex for their age
- ❖ medical problems such as venereal disease
- ❖ extreme reactions such as suicide attempts
- ❖ becoming clingy or insecure regressing to younger behavior
- ❖ lack of trust or fear of someone they know

Physical Abuse

- ❖ Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- ❖ unlikely excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- ❖ refusal to undress for gym
- ❖ fear of medical help or examination
- ❖ self destructive tendencies fear of physical contact
- ❖ shrinks back if touched fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Neglect

- ❖ Constant hunger
- ❖ poor personal hygiene
- ❖ constant tiredness
- ❖ poor state of clothing
- ❖ untreated medical problem
- ❖ compulsive scavenging

Emotional Abuse

- ❖ physical, mental and emotional development
- ❖ lags sudden speech disorders
- ❖ continual self depreciation
- ❖ overreaction to mistakes
- ❖ extreme fear of any new situation
- ❖ inappropriate response to pain
- ❖ extreme of passivity or aggression

Children may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. They may show no outward signs, hiding what is happening from everyone, making it so hard for us to know and put a stop to it. We must do what we can to put a stop child abuse. If you are being abused, however hard it may be, try and talk to someone, a friend, someone you know and trust.

Let's do what we can to put a stop to it before any more lives are lost.

For more information on child abuse please call the national child abuse hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453). Or call the Dove Program at (218) 935-5554. In a crisis situation call our 24-hour crisis line at 1-877-830-3683.