

MEDIA CONTACT

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10 WAYS TO STOP CHILD ABUSE

1. Act on your suspicions. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, trust your instincts. Suspected abuse is enough of a reason to make a report to the authorities. You do not need proof.

2. Be aware of unexplained injuries. Note unusual burns or bruises in the shape of objects, or unconvincing explanations of a child's injuries.

3. Notice changes in behavior. Abuse can lead to many changes in a child's behavior, ranging from becoming isolated and withdrawn to becoming overly aggressive.

4. Notice a child's fear of going home. If a child is a victim of physical or sexual abuse, he or she may display apprehension about leaving school or going places with the abuser.

5. Notice if a child is expressing inappropriate knowledge of sexual relations. If a child is a victim of sexual abuse, he or she may exhibit overly sexual behavior, or use explicit sexual language.

6. Notice unexplained weight loss or other signs that a child is not getting enough to eat. Underfed children may be unusually sluggish or fatigued.

7. Notice if there is an unexplained drop in a child's attendance at school. Children may be unable to attend school due to injuries from their abuse or intentionally held out of school to cover up visible signs of abuse.

8. Notice if a child is stealing or begging for food from fellow classmates or members of the community.

Children who do not get enough to eat may resort to trying to obtain food in whatever way they can.

9. Notice a child's lack of personal care or hygiene. Young children who have been neglected or abused may appear dirty or uncared for or have unsuitable clothing for the weather conditions.

10. Notice if there is a decline in a child's performance in school. Abuse may affect all aspects of a child's life, including their grades.

From safehorizon. Moving victims of violence from crisis to confidence. www.safehorizon.org

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