

## INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

### COMPARISON OF GOOD-POOR NUTRITION

Well developed body	Undersized, slow
Average weight	Usually thin, but may be normal or overweight, flabby, soft fat
Muscles well developed, firm	Small, soft, poor coordination
Skin of healthy fullness, color, firm	Skin loose, pale, waxy, sallow
Hair smooth, glossy	Rough, straw-like, w/o luster
Eyes clear w/o dark circles	Dark hollows or blue circle under eyes
Facial expression alert w/o strain	Facial expression drawn, worried or old, animated but strained
Good posture: head erect, chest up, shoulders flat, abdomen in	Fatigue posture: head thrust forward, chest narrow/flat, shoulders rounded, abdomen protruding
Good-natured full of life, energetic	Irritable, overactive, fatigued; listless unable to concentrate; depressed
Sleep soundly, adequately	Restless; difficulty getting to sleep
Digestion-elimination good	Nervous indigestion, constipation
Good appetite	“Finicky” about food, poor appetite
Good general health	Low resistance to infection; lack of endurance & vigor

### CHILD’S PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Often tired and listless
- Lack of adequate clothing, i.e. coats, gloves, underclothes, shoes that fit, clean clothes
- Illnesses associated with excessive exposure and poor hygiene (home or person, persistent scabies, bacterial infections, persistent head lice), frequent untreated cuts, bruises
- Persistent diaper rash or other skin disorders
- Chronically dirty or unbathed, body odor
- Developmental delays
- Consistently low blood count, low iron level
- Improper growth patterns. Low weight or weight loss without medical cause
- Failure to thrive

### PHYSICAL CONDITION OF HOME

- Exposed wiring, frayed electrical cords, dangerous electrical outlets
- Inadequate heating
- Broken windows and/or screens over windows
- Unsanitary housing conditions
- Exposed heating elements or fan blades without appropriate guard
- Chemical substance (drugs, household or farm chemicals) or dangerous objects in reach of the child (knives, guns improperly stored)
- Inoperative indoor or outdoor bathroom facilities, utilities not serviceable
- Inadequate, insufficient or unsanitary sleeping provisions

- Infestation by rodents or vermin
- Chaos, no order or routine
- Vicious or uncontrolled animals in home accessible to child
- Inoperable electricity, heating, ventilation
- Inadequate space to provide some privacy to family members of various ages/sexes
- Consistently small objects that can be swallowed within the reach of child
- Insufficient quantity of nutritious and edible food – not rotten, molded, insect infested
- Inadequate equipment/provisions for cooking and refrigerating food
- Inadequate or unsafe water supply
- Inadequate or unsafe sewer system
- Consistent fire hazards

### **Behavioral Indicators**

- Child begs or steals food
- Child assumes an excessive amount of responsibility or relies heavily on another child
- Child remains home alone for extended hours
- Child falls asleep, if fatigued, listless in school
- Child abuses drugs/alcohol
- Child engages in delinquent or status offender behaviors
- Extended stays in school (arrives early and stays late without before/after school program) or other places care is provided
- Child states there is no caregiver
- Child unable to form appropriate relationships with peers and adults
- Eating disorders, over-eating/hoarding food

### **Family/parental Characteristics**

- Highly stressful family situation
- Poverty
- Single Parent
- Several children without necessary resources
- Recent/continuing marital/relationship problems
- Insufficient financial and other resources
- Substance abuse in home
- Isolated within the neighborhood
- Developmentally delayed, untreated mental illness
- Lack of bonding with the child
- Coldness, inability to empathize with child's needs
- Loneliness, depression
- Poor self-esteem, immaturity, dependent, unable to carry continuing responsibility poor or distorted judgment
- Parental history of neglect
- Caregiver(s) indifferent, emotionally detached from each other and/or child(ren)
- Unwilling to accept or follow-through with tangible resources

- Unable to give information on child(ren)'s immunization, illnesses, childhood milestones, educational background
- Long-term chronic illness within "family unit"
- Parent(s) cannot be located
- Provides for self before providing for needs of child
- Child not adequately provided for
- Caregiver(s) apathetic, feels nothing will change, overwhelmed, feel hopeless
- Caregiver(s) have fewer interactions with child(ren)
- Children with special needs are at higher risk
- Lack of social skills
- Poor communication skills
- Lacks reliable transportation