

Identifying Child Abuse

While it is impossible to determine the presence of abuse or neglect by behavior, the following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect:

The Child:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention
- Has learning problems or difficulty concentrating that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

The Parent:

- Shows little concern for the child
- Denies the existence of, or blames the child for the child's problems in school or at home
- Asks teachers or other caretakers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
- Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs

The Parent and the Child:

- Rarely touch or look at each other
- Consider their relationship entirely negative
- State that they do not like each other