

Augustana College

EDUC/SPED 110 Foundations in American Education

Concepts addressed:

REPORTING SITUATIONS RELATED TO POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE

Teachers are required by federal law to report all suspected cases of child abuse. In many cases, teachers are the first defense in protecting children from abuse by parents and others. Teachers see children every day and are in a special caring relationship with them. Generally, schools and school districts have procedures for how and through what channels teachers are to report suspected cases of abuse. Teachers should familiarize themselves with the signs of physical abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional maltreatment of children. While teachers are required to report cases of abuse, they are also protected from being sued for reporting suspected cases. The table the follows outlines some of the indicators of child abuse:

	Physical indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Unexplained bruises or welts ▲ Unexplained burns ▲ Unexplained fracture or dislocations ▲ Bald patches on scalp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Child states s/he deserves punishment ▲ Wary of adults ▲ Fearful when others cry - Frightened of parents/caregivers ▲ Behavioral extremes such as aggression or withdrawal ▲ Needy for affection ▲ Inappropriate or immature acting out - Unable to focus ● Self-abusive behavior
Physical Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Basic needs unmet ▲ Failure to thrive ▲ Consistent hunger ▲ Poor hygiene ▲ Inappropriate seasonal dress ▲ Consistent lack of supervision ▲ Unattended medical problems ▲ Frequent illnesses ● Abandonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Begging or stealing food ▲ Early arrival or late departure to school ▲ Frequent visits to school nurse ▲ Difficulty with vision or hearing ▲ Poor condition ▲ Takes on adult roles and responsibilities ▲ Substance abuse ▲ Acting out behavior ● Child verbalizes a lack of caretaking
Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Difficulty walking or sitting ▲ Torn, stained, or bloody undergarments ▲ Pain, swelling, or itching in genital area ▲ Pain when urinating ▲ Bruises, bleeding, or tears around genital area ▲ Vaginal or penile discharge ▲ STD's ▲ Excessive masturbation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Unwilling to change for gym or participate in PE ▲ Sexual behavior or knowledge inappropriate to child's age - Sexual acting out - Poor peer relations ▲ Delinquent or runaway behavior ▲ Report of sexual assault ▲ Drastic change in school performance ▲ Sleep disorder, nightmares ▲ Eating disorder ▲ Aggression ▲ Withdrawal, fantasy, infantile behavior ▲ Self-abusive behavior - Substance abuse ● Repetitive behavior
Emotional Abuse and Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Speech disorder ▲ Failure to thrive ▲ Hyperactivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Learning disabilities ▲ Sleep disorders ▲ Poor social skills ▲ Extreme reactions to common events ▲ Unusually fearful ▲ Overly compliant behaviors ▲ Suicidal thoughts/actions ▲ Difficulty following rules or directions ● Child expects to fail so does not try