

Child Abuse Definitions:

Child abuse comes in many different forms such as neglect, physical abuse, fetal abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and spiritual abuse. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) has these definitions:

- **Child abuse and neglect** - At a minimum, any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.
- **Sexual abuse** - the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

NEGLECT

- **Physical neglect** – Includes abandonment or inadequate supervision, and failure to provide for safety or physical needs. Includes failure to thrive, malnutrition, unsanitary conditions, or injuries from lack of supervision.
- **Educational neglect** – Includes not enrolling child in school, or allowing child to engage in chronic truancy.
- **Emotional neglect** - Includes withholding of affection or attention, failure to provide psychological care, ignoring the child's emotional needs.
- **Medical neglect** – Includes delay or denial of dental or health care, or withholding medical care due to religious beliefs. Some states will not prosecute due to withholding of health care due to religious beliefs but court orders are occasionally obtained to save a child's life.

Neglect Indicators

- Poor hygiene, including lice, scabies, severe or untreated diaper rash, bedsores, body odor
- Squinting
- Unsuitable clothing; missing key articles of clothing (underwear, socks, shoes); overdressed or underdressed for climate conditions
- Untreated injury or illness
- Lack of immunizations
- Indicators of prolonged exposure to elements (excessive sunburn, insect bites, colds)
- Height and weight significantly below age level