

WARNING SIGNS

Potential Abuser

Warning signs of an offender include a person who:

Is constantly around children, often preferring the company of children to adults.

Unnecessarily touches children.

Breaks and argues that the rules do not apply to him or her.

Gives gifts without the parent's or caretaker's permission.

Talks to children in a child-like manner or does things adults would consider child-like or juvenile.

Entices a child to keep secrets. Takes photographs or keeps mementos of other people's children.

Becomes angry when confronted about his or her interaction with children.

Talks about sex, tells sexual jokes, or discusses sex with a child.

Introduces or shows pornography to a child.

Provides a child with drugs or alcohol.

Singles out or gives special attention to one child while ignoring other children.

Seeks to be or is often alone with a child in a house, car or room.

BEHAVIORAL

Indicators

Some behavioral warning signs of child sexual abuse include:

Unexplained changes in sleeping patterns; like insomnia or increased sleeping.

Recurrent nightmares or sudden fear of the dark

Crying or complaining for no apparent reason

Unexplained fear of adults or certain people and/or increased dependency on a few safe, non-abusing adults.

Use of explicit language, acting out of sexual behaviors with other children or playthings, and/or creating sexually themed drawings or writings.

Sudden unexplained drop in grades or skipping of class

Not keeping clean or caring about hygiene.

Overly mature appearance—dressing like an adult or dressing provocatively.

Indiscriminate sexual activity and seductive behavior.

Withdrawal from friends, isolation from peers, preference for adult companionship.

Increased anger, aggressiveness. Moodiness or hostility.

Poor self-esteem or image.

Excessive bathing.

Contemplation of suicide or suicide attempts.

PHYSICAL

Indicators

Some physical warning signs of child sexual abuse include:

Bruising or discharge around the mouth, vagina or anus.

Recurring urinary tract infections or a sexually transmitted disease especially in a young child.

Wet or soiled bedding.

Torn or soiled undergarments.

Rashes, itching, or other signs or trauma in the genital area.

Unusual odor around the genital area.

Frequent touching or scratching of the genital area.

Touching themselves sexually or touching others sexually in public—this especially applies to young children.

Difficulty walking or sitting.

Self-abuse where children deliberately inflict pain on themselves.

Unexplained increase in health-related complaints, such as headaches, vomiting, stomachaches, and other physical complaints.