

# Protect Children — State of Arizona

## HOW TO REPORT

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If you suspect child abuse,  
**IMMEDIATELY** report by calling:  
▶ 1-800-SOS-CHILD (888-767-2445)

Call law enforcement to report  
emergencies and crimes:

- ▶ 911
- ▶ local police

## IF YOU ARE A VICTIM

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For free anonymous help 365 days  
a year, 24 hours a day, call:

 **Hotline:**

800-4-A-Child (800-422-4453) or  
visit [www.childhelp.org/pages/  
hotline-home](http://www.childhelp.org/pages/hotline-home)

# Quick Reference Guide



## HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT ABUSE?

### How to Talk to Children About Abuse

- repeat their words back to them
- do not ask leading questions that suggest answers
- tell them that you will take action that is in their best interests
- thank them for having the courage to talk to you
- be supportive
- write down what the child tells you as soon as possible

### What to Watch Out For

Predators groom adults by:

- creating an image of being kind and trustworthy
- offering unsolicited help and promises
- committing boundary violations

Predators groom children by:

- playing contact games (roughhouse, tickle, touch)
- keeping secrets and taking trips with children
- showering a child with gifts, attention, and praise

### How to Protect Children

- participate in their lives daily: know where they are and with whom
- enhance their confidence
- listen to what they say
- be alert to changes in their behavior
- warn against accepting gifts without their parents' knowledge
- teach them about potential threats
- teach them to say "no" to abuse and to run away from abusers
- teach them to report suspicious people and behavior
- teach them to seek help from safe adults (e.g. police or family)
- drop in unannounced at youth activities
- conduct background checks on childcare providers
- consult the [National Sex Offender Public Website](#)
- ensure multiple adult supervisors during youth events



## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

### Neglect

A parent or other person responsible for a child's care and protection:

- chronically fails to provide basic physical, medical, or supervisory needs
- exposes a child to hazards
- deserts a child

You should always report when a child's basic needs are not being met so the authorities can decide if a child needs protection, or a family needs services or support

### Emotional Abuse

A pattern of severe psychological mistreatment, including:

- humiliating, intimidating, or frightening a child
- withholding affection
- exposing a child to domestic violence or substance abuse
- encouraging a child's criminal or delinquent behavior

### Physical Abuse

Any intentional act that harms a child by any means, such as:

- striking, kicking, choking, shaking, throwing, or biting
- burning, binding, stabbing, whipping, or using a weapon
- excessive punishment that causes significant injury

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when an adult uses a child for sexual gratification. For example:

- sex acts or sexual contact
- incest
- indecent exposure
- having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner
- involving or attempting to involve a child in prostitution or pornography

## Recognizing the Warning Signs of Child Abuse

If a person with average judgment, who saw or heard what you did, would suspect child abuse, then you have a **reasonable suspicion** that you must report to the authorities.

### PHYSICAL CLUES

- multiple injuries in different stages of healing
- broken/fractured bones or other injuries indicating use of excessive force
- shapes of injuries, including glove-like or sock-like immersion burns or outlines of objects (belt or whip, iron, cigarette, etc.)
- clustered injuries or a pattern of injuries
- restraint injuries (rope burns on child's wrists/ankles or bruises at the corner of child's mouth)
- signs of sexual abuse (torn or blood-stained underwear, painful urination or defecation, sexually transmitted disease, chronic bladder infections)
- repeatedly dressed in filthy clothes or inadequately for harsh winter weather (no shoes or coat)
- chronically untreated infections or illnesses
- recurrent and severe hygiene problems
- malnutrition



### BEHAVIORAL CLUES



Some — but not all — children react to abuse with behaviors, such as:

- extreme fear of parents or physical contact
- extreme lags in development
- withdrawing or acting submissive, indicating they have learned that attention results in being hurt
- angry, aggressive, or destructive behavior to gain attention because they are starved for attention
- explicit sexual language or inappropriate sexual behavior
- dramatic change in school performance, or chronic truancy
- chronic hunger or eating disorders
- suicidal ideas or self-abuse

### PARENTAL CLUES

- overreacting (becoming hostile or defensive) or underreacting (showing little concern or indifference) to questions about a child's condition
- giving improbable or changing explanations for their child's injuries
- being overly critical and unable to say anything positive about a child
- having little understanding of a child's physical and emotional needs
- having rigid and unrealistic expectations about a child's development
- blaming the child for the parent's problems

### ENVIRONMENTAL CLUES

- structurally unsafe housing
- lack of utilities (heat, water, electricity)
- dangerous objects within child's reach (poisonous substances, guns, etc.)
- severe infestation of insects, mice, or rats
- uncontrolled vicious or dangerous animals
- exposure to bare or exposed electrical wires
- extremely unsanitary conditions
- dangerous persons in home
- yelling or screaming heard from outside, indicating domestic violence





## Why Make a Report?

In 2010, there were 695,000 confirmed cases of child abuse in the U.S., according to the Department of Health & Human Services. By most estimates, this represents only a small percentage of actual child abuse victims.

Everyone has a responsibility to protect children. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories require certain adults to report child abuse.

**Mandatory Reporters** are people who work in certain occupations and are required by law to make a report to the appropriate agency when they have a "reasonable suspicion" that a child is being abused.

**Ethical Reporters** are not required by law to report suspected abuse, but are concerned citizens who encounter suspected child abuse and want to do something to stop the abuse.



## PROTECTIONS & PENALTIES

### Immunity...

You cannot be sued or penalized for reporting your reasonable suspicions of mistreatment — even if you're mistaken.

### Criminal Penalties...

**Mandatory reporters** face penalties if they fail to report suspected child abuse when they should. Licensed professionals may also face disciplinary action for failing to report.

### Confidentiality ...

Your identity as reporter is confidential, and so is your report. To protect your privacy and the child's, do not disclose your report to anyone except on a need-to-know basis.

## HOW DO I MAKE A REPORT?

- ▶ Do **not** "investigate" suspected child abuse or neglect in an attempt to prove it. Leave the investigation to the experts. All you need to make a report is a **reasonable suspicion** which can be based on a single incident or multiple factors.
- ▶ Once you suspect abuse, **immediately** call:
  - **1-888-SOS-CHILD (888-767-2445)**
  - [Arizona Child Protective Services](#)
- ▶ To report crimes or emergencies, call **911** or [local police](#)
- ▶ Gather some or all of the following information before you report (form attached):
  - (1) the name, age, home address, and present location of the child
  - (2) the name of the child's parent or caregiver;
  - (3) names and ages of other children in the home
  - (4) nature and extent of current and previous abuse
  - (5) any potential risks to the investigator
  - (6) any information about the abuser

## WHAT WILL THE AGENCY DO?

The child protective agency or law enforcement will assess the report to determine if an immediate response is necessary based on the risk to the child.

The agency's goal is to **ensure the child's safety**. It may investigate if needed, and begin providing family services and support.

However, if a child is in danger at home, the child will be removed to safety.

Children in the agency's care are reunited with the family, so long as this is safe for the child.

# CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT REPORTING WORKSHEET

Reporter	Relationship to Alleged Child Victim(s)	Telephone Number
Street Address	City, State, and Zip Code	

Source of knowledge of situation:  Observed  Told by another party Who \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Have you addressed concern with the parent and/or caretaker?  Yes  No If yes, who \_\_\_\_\_

Type of alleged harm:  Neglect  Physical Abuse  Sexual Abuse  Emotional Abuse  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Alleged Child Victim(s)			
Name (last, first, middle initial)	Age	Sex	Child's Address

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Person(s) exercising custodial control or supervision over child			
Name	Age	Sex	Present Address

Alleged Perpetrator(s) [if different from Parent/Guardian/Person exercising custodial control or supervision]			
Name	Age	Sex	Present Address

When and where did the alleged abuse or neglect occur? Give details on the type, extent, and duration of the alleged abuse or neglect and the child's current condition:

Describe any visible evidence that leads you to suspect abuse or neglect (for example, physical injuries or visible trauma to the child's body):

Describe any information that may indicate the alleged perpetrator's past behavior. Include any previous injuries or charges of abuse or neglect to the child or his or her siblings that you know of:

List any actions that have been taken (e.g. medical attention, notification of law enforcement or other persons):

Provide any other information you believe will help the child or the family:

Attach extra sheets and any evidence of visible injuries (e.g., photographs or X-rays) if necessary.

Check here if you have attached additional pages or material