

# REPORT CHILD ABUSE

1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)

<http://www.def.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>

**ANY SIGNS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT ARE TO BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.**

## Signs of Physical Abuse

The child may have unexplained:

- bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries
- broken bones
- burns
- poor attendance

A child experiencing physical abuse may:

- seem withdrawn or depressed
- seem afraid to go home or may run away
- shy away from physical contact
- be aggressive
- wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries

## Signs of Sexual Abuse

The child may have:

- torn, stained or bloody underwear
- trouble walking or sitting down
- pain or itching in genital area
- a sexually transmitted disease
- poor attendance

A child experiencing sexual abuse may:

- have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively
- fear a particular person
- seem withdrawn or depressed
- gain or lose weight suddenly
- shy away from physical contact
- run away from home

## Signs of Neglect

The child may have:

- unattended medical needs
- little or no supervision
- poor hygiene
- appear underweight
- poor attendance

A child experiencing neglect may:

- be frequently tired or hungry
- steal food
- appear overly needy for adult attention

## Who must report suspected abuse or neglect?

Doctors

Nurses

Social Workers

Police Officers

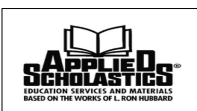
Child Care Workers

Any Witnesses

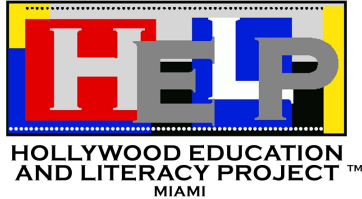
Any/All School Personnel

[helpmiami.org](http://helpmiami.org)

13828 SW 56 Street Miami, Florida 33175 305-752-4003 Fax:305-752-2611



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## Look for the patterns

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

## If a child tells YOU about abuse:

Be a good listener. Show that you understand and believe what the child tells you. Encourage, but don't pressure him/her to talk. Ask open ended questions.

Be supportive. Tell the child he/she did the right thing by coming to you. Stress that he/she is not to blame. Let the child know that you want to help.

Don't overreact. This can frighten the child or prevent him/her from telling you more. Do not talk negatively about the suspected abuser in front of the child.

Document and report it. Document your conversation as soon as you can. If possible, write down the child's exact words.

Don't delay. Never assume someone else will report the abuse. The sooner it's reported, the sooner the child and their family can be helped.

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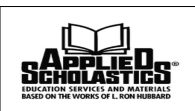
Doctors	Nurses	Social Workers	Police Officers
Child Care Workers	Any Witnesses	Any/All School Personnel	

**Liability Protections** Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (F.S. 39.203)

**Failure to Report Misconduct by Instructional Personnel, Administrators and Staff** In Florida, the crime of Failure to Report Child Abuse or Neglect is a Third Degree Felony and punishable by up to five (5) years in prison, five (5) years of probation, and a \$5,000 fine.

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