

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION C: STUDENTS

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Taken from:

- a) Abuse: A Handbook for Early Childhood Education
- b) Child Abuse Handbook for Social Workers in Ontario
- c) Child Abuse, Neglect, and Deprivation: A Handbook for Ontario Nurses

Child abuse can be subdivided into four categories:

- (i) Physical Abuse, (ii) Sexual Abuse
- (iii) Emotional Abuse, and (iv) Neglect

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse consists of any non-accidental form of injury or harm inflicted on a child. This includes but is not necessarily restricted to physical beating, corporal punishment that causes bruises or leads to an injury that requires medical treatment; wounding, burning, kicking, shaking or throwing the child; use of a closed fist or instrument on a child, poisoning or drugging the child and related assaults causing visible or not visible physical harm. Abusive malnutrition is a deliberate withholding of sufficient nourishment from a child.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained bruises and welts, especially those: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the face, back, buttocks, thighs • In stages of simultaneous healing • In the shape of an instrument such as belt, hairbrush, etc. • Appearing after the child's absence, weekend, vacation <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained burns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cigarette burns (hands, feet, back, buttocks) • Immersion burns (sock-like or glove-like in shape) • Burns patterned like electric burner (arms, legs, torso) • Rope burns (arms, legs, torso) <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained fractures, especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To skull or facial structure • In stages of multiple healing • Multiple of spiral fractures <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate dress, especially long sleeved clothing in hot weather (parent/guardian may be concealing marks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reports of injury by parents <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme wariness of parents <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme wariness of adults in general <input type="checkbox"/> Wariness of physical contact, especially when initiated by an adult <input type="checkbox"/> Resistance to being touched <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme watchfulness, sometimes described as "frozen watchfulness" <input type="checkbox"/> Apprehension when other children cry <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of going home <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained prolonged absence (parent/guardian may keep child at home while injury heals) <input type="checkbox"/> Denial that bruises exist <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme range of behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g., extreme withdrawal → extreme aggressiveness • extreme fearfulness → extreme fearlessness • extreme attention-seeking → extreme attention avoidance • extreme crying → no expectation of comfort

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SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is the use of a child for the sexual or erotic gratification of a caregiver or other person, performed with or without resistance on the part of the child and with or without accompanying physical abuse. Sexual abuse can range from a parent/caregiver permitting or exposing a child to sexual acts such as prostitution, to actual molestation; including exposure, fondling or masturbation and intercourse; including incest and rape. It also includes exploitation of children for pornographic purposes, including posing children for photographs which are sexual or erotic in content. Most sexual misuse of children occurs at home with persons known to the child.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> difficulty in walking or sitting <input type="checkbox"/> torn, stained or bloody underwear <input type="checkbox"/> pain or itching in genital area <input type="checkbox"/> bruises or bleeding in genital, vaginal, or anal areas <input type="checkbox"/> venereal diseases, especially in pre-teens <input type="checkbox"/> pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> fear of male parent/guardian; fear of all males <input type="checkbox"/> wariness of physical contact, especially when initiated by an adult <input type="checkbox"/> fear of the night, the dark <input type="checkbox"/> sophisticated or bizarre sexual behaviour or knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> seductive behaviour for approval <input type="checkbox"/> unwillingness to change for physical education, or to participate in active sports or games <input type="checkbox"/> reports sexual contact with parent or guardian

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse includes ignoring or passively rejecting the child, overtly “disowning” of a child, scapegoating, criticizing and often, making excessive or unreasonable demands of performance and competence for a child’s age and ability. Severe verbal abuse, threatening, constant yelling, berating and withholding of comfort from an upset or distraught child, are included in emotional maltreatment of a child. Psychological terrorism is present in some cases (for example, locking a child in a dark cellar or threat of malnutrition). When a child’s future psychological development is at risk because of a caregiver’s actions or failure to act, this is child abuse.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> bed wetting that is non-medical in origin <input type="checkbox"/> frequent psychosomatic complaints, headaches, nausea, abdominal pains <input type="checkbox"/> child fails to thrive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> developmental lags: physical, mental or emotional <input type="checkbox"/> habit disorders: sucking, biting, rocking, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> conduct disorders: antisocial and destructive behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> speech disorder, sleep disorders, inhibition of play <input type="checkbox"/> extreme passivity/extreme aggressiveness <input type="checkbox"/> extreme infantile behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> extreme adult behaviour: appearing to “take over” and care for parents <input type="checkbox"/> hysteria, obsession, phobias, hypochondria <input type="checkbox"/> extreme depression, attempted suicide

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NEGLECT

Child abuse covers acts of omission, on the part of the parent/caregiver: failure to provide for a child's basic needs and appropriate level of care with respect to food, clothing, shelter, sleep, health hygiene, safety and education. This includes the failure to provide adequate supervision, anticipatory prevention of injury and medical attention. Emotional neglect refers to the failure to provide adequate psychological nurturance necessary for a child's growth and development.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> consistent hunger, malnutrition, underweight, dehydration <input type="checkbox"/> poor hygiene, dirtiness, lice, skin disorders associated with improper hygiene <input type="checkbox"/> inappropriate dress, exposure symptoms, e.g. sunburn, frostbite, recurrent colds, pneumonia <input type="checkbox"/> consistent fatigue, listlessness <input type="checkbox"/> unattended health problems <input type="checkbox"/> inadequate supervision, child left in the care of another child too young to protect his/her abandonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> begging, stealing food <input type="checkbox"/> theft in general <input type="checkbox"/> verbal evidence that there is no caregiver, no one at home, arriving early, staying late at school <input type="checkbox"/> falling asleep in class <input type="checkbox"/> delinquency, drugs, or alcohol