

Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Taken from the www.nj.gov website Department of Children and Families

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Unexplained bruises and welts:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On face, lips, mouth• On torso, back, buttocks, thighs• In various stages of healing• Cluster, forming regular patterns• Reflecting shape of article used to inflict (electric cord, belt buckle)• On several different surface areas• Regularly appear after absence, weekend or vacation Unexplained burns:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cigar, cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks• Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like doughnut shaped on buttocks or genitalia)• Patterned like electric burner, iron, etc.• Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso Unexplained fractures:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To skull, nose, facial structure• In various stages of healing• Multiple or spiral fractures Unexplained laceration or abrasions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To mouth, lips, gums, eyes• To external genitalia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wary of adult contactsApprehensive when other children cry Behavioral extremes:AggressivenessWithdrawalFrightened of parentsAfraid to go home Reports injury by parents

Physical Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dressConsistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities or long periodsConstant fatigue or listlessnessUnattended physical problems or medical needsAbandonment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Begging, stealing foodExtended stays at school (early arrival and late departure)Constantly falling asleep in classAlcohol or drug abuseDelinquency (e.g. thefts)States there is no caregiver

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Difficulty in walking or sitting Torn, stained or bloody underclothing Pain or itching in genital area Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens Pregnancy	Unwilling to change for gym or participate in PE Withdrawn, fantasy or infantile behavior Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge Poor peer relationships Delinquent or run away Reports sexual assault by caregiver

Emotional Maltreatment

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.) Conduct disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.) Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, speech disorders, inhibition of play)	Behavior extremes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliant, passive• Aggressive, demanding Overly adoptive behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriately adult• Inappropriately infant

Definition of Child Psychological Abuse

Psychological abuse of a child is a pattern of intentional verbal or behavioral actions or lack of actions that convey to a child the message that he or she is worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or only of value to meet someone else's needs. Withholding emotional support, isolation, or terrorizing a child are forms of psychological abuse. [Domestic violence](#) that is witnessed by a child is also considered a form of psychological abuse.

Types of Child Psychological Abuse

Psychological abuse of a child is often divided into nine categories:

1. **Rejection:** to reject a child, to push him away, to make him feel that he is useless or worthless, to undermine the value of his ideas or feelings, to refuse to help him.
 2. **Scorn:** to demean the child, to ridicule him, to humiliate him, to cause him to be ashamed, to criticize the child, to insult him.
 3. **Terrorism:** to threaten a child or someone who is dear to him with physical violence, abandonment or death, to threaten to destroy the child's possessions, to place him in chaotic or dangerous situations, to define strict and unreasonable expectations and to threaten him with punishment if he does not comply.
 4. **Isolation:** to physically or socially isolate a child, to limit his opportunities to socialize with others.
 5. **Corruption or exploitation:** to tolerate or encourage inappropriate or deviant behavior, to expose the child to antisocial role-models, to consider the child as a servant, to encourage him or coerce him to participate in sexual activities.
 6. **The absence of emotional response:** to show oneself as inattentive or indifferent towards the child, to ignore his emotional needs, to avoid visual contact, kisses or verbal communication with him, to never congratulate him.
 7. **Exposure to domestic violence:** to expose a child to violent words and acts between his parents.
- The behavior of an emotionally abusive parent or caregiver does not support a child's healthy development and well-being-instead, it creates an environment of fear, hostility, or anxiety. A child is sensitive to the feeling, opinions, and actions of his or her parents. Emotionally harmful attitudes may include the following:
8. **Showing a lack of regard for the child**

This behavior often includes rejecting the child by:

- Not showing affection.
- Ignoring the child's presence and obvious needs.
- Ignoring the child when he or she is in need of comfort.
- Not calling the child by his or her name.

9. Saying unkind things to the child

Emotionally abusive parents say things or convey feelings that can hurt a child deeply. Common examples include:

- Making the child feel unwanted, perhaps by stating or implying that life would be easier without the child. For example, a parent may tell a child, "I wish you were never born."
- Ridiculing or belittling the child, such as saying, "You are stupid."
- Threatening the child with harsh punishment or even death.
- Continuous verbal abuse.

Symptoms of Child Psychological Abuse

Symptoms of psychological abuse of a child may include:

- Difficulties in school
- [Eating disorders](#), resulting in weight loss or poor weight gain
- Emotional issues such as low self esteem, [depression](#), and [anxiety](#)
- Rebellious behavior
- Sleep disorders
- Vague physical complaints

Letter For The Wounded

By Ann Voskamp

Hello Friend! This article is a portion of the full letter written by Ann Voskamp, and the reason I decided to attach it to the Child Abuse packet was simple. While the other reading covered your duty regarding the physical nature of child abuse, I was also desperate to include something about the heart of child abuse. Because, as I'm sure you're away, the wounds of child abuse are never just physical ones.

It's hard to understand how to help in the emotional aspects.

In this writing, I saw the key to that emotional side. It's not up to us to heal somebody's pain. We aren't capable of shattering years of shame and guilt. That is the business of our King. But oh, because of His scars, we are capable of loving broken people in incredible ways. I'm praying that this letter will encourage you to push aside your fear of your own inadequacy and follow the example of our Savior.

It's hard to talk about these things, especially for those involved directly, but I pray that we can have open, loving hearts towards those suffering in silence and fear.

In Christ, The Administration Team at Upon The Rock

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I've seen your wounds.

Not that you badge-flash your scars. Or try to hide them, ashamed. It's just sometimes I see a passing flicker in your eyes, old pain shooting white right through. But mostly, quietly, **the scars just become you, who you are, they just become the way your skin pulls mottled and raised over your soul and this is how you fit.**

How you can look healed and thickened and still feel so thin?

If someone brushed by you just a certain way? You'd blue tender and sore all over again or just spill without a sound.

Inside, the warrior is small. The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

I just — I just wanted to reach out and — just touch, glance, your wounds. You don't have to say anything. Explain anything, excuse anything. I just wanted to touch them — you— acknowledge them. You. Bless them, you, without a sound.

Because **Wounded Warriors win. There is no remission of sins or the crossing of finish lines without things getting bloody.** You are so brave to keep facing the light. To keep walking toward Home.

The Scarred Savior will know you're His — by yours.

And when He cups your face, that moment when His scars touch your skin, you'll be wholly healed.

Hang on.

Press in.

Look up.

Can I just whisper? I know you must feel like people have wanted you to go away. Sweep your scars under the proverbial rug. Erase you, avoid you, silence you.

Because it's too uncomfortable for us, the neighbors, the church, the Body, to face our own culpability in scars. Face our own fallen disfigurement. Pollyanna wasn't the only one who wore rose-colored glasses. Few like to admit that we come from a long line of Roman soldiers. And when it comes to the bloodied and wounded, we suddenly all lose our thin, bare necks and become turtles, shirk back into our see-nothing shells. We don't want to know details or listen to wounds weep or wade into the bloody mess. Christ is the Truth but too many of His people run from that.

If Christ is The Truth, then where there isn't Truth, there isn't Christ. *Why ever be afraid of the Truth?* You only need fear the Truth of anything if you think Christ isn't capable of redeeming everything.

If we believe in the sovereign grace of God, the redemptive restoration of God — then we are never afraid of the Truth.

And maybe our deafening silence is just this: Truth necessitates confrontation, and a whole lot of us are more chicken than Christian. We'd rather save our own skin, than the skin of the bruised and battered and beaten. We're more in love with self-preservation than with Savior-glorification.

We'd rather make pain invisible than say injustice is intolerable. So the injustice continues.

So we pretend you don't exist, so we can pretend the sin that caused this wound doesn't exist — because ultimately, our actions prove it, *we don't really think the Wounded Healer exists.*

That God can raise up phoenixes from ashes, that *He is and this. is. what. He. does.*

And that which we refuse to thank Christ for, we refuse to believe Christ can redeem.

There's a whole lot of us who believe. Who are getting to our feet and sticking out our necks and we want you to know: *we want you.* You not masked, you not prettified, but you with your messy scars and your tender blue places and all that just-below-the-skin-hurt.

Because when we ignore suffering — we ignore the Suffering Savior.

We need you. We need to cup your tears, to water hard and crusted places, or there's no growth in the Kingdom of God. We need your raw story — or we lose any hope of the redemptive Story. We need to hold your broken heart — *or we have no heart.*

I. am. sorry. I am sorry for how alone you have felt. How abandoned, how ignored.

We need you. It is the scarred ones who make the Body of Christ sensitive.