

Keeping Kids Safe

A community resource guide to help prevent child abuse



The goal of the Keeping Kids Safe Initiative is to raise awareness of the warning signs of possible child abuse and empower people across our community to act as advocates for the safety and well being of children.

In eight out of ten reported cases of abuse, the offender is an authority figure whom the child knows and trusts. Child abuse occurs in all segments of our society and most often occurs in the family home. The risk of abuse is greater in homes where:

- Alcohol or drugs are abused
- Families are having serious economic, housing, or personal problems
- Families are isolated

Family members and teachers are frequently the first to observe the warning signs of abuse, but we all should be aware of the symptoms. This guide was designed to provide information that can empower neighbors, friends, and family members to take action when abuse is suspected. Often, members of the community surrounding the child can help parents and caregivers find the services they need to reduce family stress or promptly contact professionals who can intervene on the child's behalf.



This guide will help you recognize the signs of possible abuse and provide information about the resources available to support children and families. Our community has many supports to help families with the stressors that can lead to abuse.

What is child abuse?

There are four basic types, but children are often the victims of more than one form of abuse:

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE** such as beatings, burns and bites
- **NEGLECT** such as the failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical care
- **SEXUAL ABUSE** is ANY sexual contact with a child from inappropriate touching to incest or rape
- **EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT** in the form of constant criticism, insults, or withholding love

What are the warning signs of abuse?

Signs can be seen in the child, the parent, or in the interactions between them. **IMPORTANT TO NOTE:** none of these signs *prove* that child abuse is present in a family. Most of them can be seen in many children or parents at one time or another. But when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination, it is reasonable to consider the possibility of child abuse. A closer look may reveal further signs of abuse.

CHILD BEHAVIORS that indicate possible abuse

- Is fearful of a person or place, seems frightened of the parent or shrinks at the approach of adults.
- Has an unreasonable fear of a physical exam. Suddenly refuses to change for gym or participate in physical activities.
- Has unexplained difficulty walking or sitting.
- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses. Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention.
- Has learning problems not caused by a physical or psychological impairment.
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen.
- Shows extreme behavior: overly compliant, overachiever, or too responsible; overly demanding; extremely passive; or quick to anger / take aggression.
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example).
- Finds it hard to develop close relationships.
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development.
- Attempts suicide.
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent.
- Comes to school early or stays late. Does not want to go home.
- Has unexplained absences from school.
- Runs away.
- Has unexplained injuries, bruises or other marks.
- Begs or steals.
- Is consistently dirty or has body odor.
- Lacks appropriate clothing for the weather.
- States there is no one at home to provide care.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs.
- Reacts in an unexpected way when asked if anyone has touched them.
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior.
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age fourteen.
- Draws pictures showing sexual acts or that are scary or use a lot of black and red.
- Says that he/she has been injured or abused by an adult.

PARENT BEHAVIORS that indicate possible abuse:

- Shows little concern for the child, seems apathetic or depressed.
- Is unresponsive to requests from the child's school.
- Is secretive and isolated.
- Frequently blames, belittles, or berates the child.
- Overtly rejects the child.
- Denies the existence of problems or blames the child for problems in school or at home.
- Refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems.
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, evil or burdensome.
- Demands perfection or a level of performance the child cannot achieve.
- Unreasonably expects the child to satisfy his/her physical or emotional needs.
- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury.
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child or asks the classroom teacher to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves.
- Has a history of being abused as a child.
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs.

Continued

- Is unduly protective of the child, severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex.
- Describes marital difficulties involving family power struggles or sexual relations.

INTERACTION between parent and child that may indicate abuse

- Rarely touch or look at each other.
- State that they do not like each other or view their relationship to be entirely negative.

What should I do if I suspect that a child is being abused?

Remember, the child's safety is most important and acting out of caring concern is the responsible thing to do. In many cases, it takes courage to take action. It is unfortunate but not unusual for those who suspect abuse to do nothing out of fear of angering the parent. There are many levels of action that can be taken, from questioning a parent to calling the police, but doing nothing can allow a situation to worsen and lead to increased levels of abuse.

WHEN TO CALL THE AUTHORITIES IMMEDIATELY

If a child reveals that he or she has been abused, it is essential to take the child seriously and act quickly. Unfortunately, many children who report abuse are not believed. When this happens the child may not risk telling again and could be victimized for many months or years. Call promptly and let trained professionals assess the situation and act appropriately.

Call your local police department or a child abuse hotline:

New York State Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-342-3720

Onondaga County Child Abuse Hotline 315-422-9701

WHEN TO CALL A COMMUNITY CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION SERVICE

If any of the described symptoms are seen, it is reasonable to become observant for other warning signs. If symptoms are severe, if they persist, or if multiple warning signs are present, it is advisable to contact a local child-abuse prevention program that can guide you to take the appropriate action.

CARE Program at University Hospital 315-464-7250

McMahon/Ryan Child Advocacy Site 315-701-2985

WHEN TO USE THIS GUIDE TO HELP PARENTS FIND SERVICES

If families are under stress, the likelihood of abuse increases. Use this guide to help parents facing difficulties find the help they need to deal with the situations that are causing them stress.

Keeping Kids Safe Resource Directory

Preventing Child Abuse

New York State Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-342-3720

Onondaga County Child Abuse Hotline
315-422-9701

McMahon/Ryan Child Advocacy Site
315-701-2985
509 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

ARISE
315-671-2955
635 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203



Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

Vera House
24-hour hotline 315-468-3260
non-emergency 315-425-0818
TTY (during business hours) 315-484-7263
Administrative Office, 6181 Thompson Road,
Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13206

The Salvation Army
315-479-1324
749 South Warren Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Emergency Assistance

Emergency Food & Support

Cathedral Emergency Services
315-424-1876
264 East Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
315-475-3807
264 East Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Huntington Family Centers
315-476-3157
405 Gifford Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Lafayette Outreach Inc.
315-677-5221
P.O. Box 169, 6136 Rt. 20 LaFayette, NY 13084

Onondaga County Department of Health, WIC
315-435-3304
375 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Onondaga County Department of Social
Services
315-435-2700
John H. Mulroy Civic Center, 2nd Floor
421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

P.E.A.C.E., INC.
315-470-3331
811 East Washington Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

The Salvation Army
315-479-1157
677 South Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Syracuse Northeast Community Center
315-472-6343
716 Hawley Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13203

Emergency Meals

Rescue Mission Alliance of Syracuse
315-472-6251
145 Gifford Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Samaritan Center
315-472-0650
310 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Emergency Shelter

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
315-476-0617

The Salvation Army
315-479-1332

Vera House
24-hour hotline 315-468-3260
TTY (during business hours) 315-484-7263

HelpLine

Onondaga County HelpLine
315-435-8300



Family Supports

Child Care Referrals

Child Care Solutions
315-446-1220 Ext. 303
6724 Thompson Road, Syracuse, NY 13211

Early Childhood Needs

ARC of Onondaga County
315-468-1632
301 Valley Drive, Syracuse NY 13207

Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC)
315-443-4444 OR 800-962-5488
OR TTY 315-443-4355
Early Childhood Direction Center, 805 South
Crouse Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13244

Enable

315-410-3319
1603 Court Street, Syracuse, NY 13208
OR
600 West Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13204

Onondaga County Department of Health,
Maternal & Child Health
315-435-2000
501 East Fayette Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Onondaga County Department of
Social Services
315-435-5683
County Office Building 5th Floor, 600 South
State Street, Syracuse, NY 13022

P.E.A.C.E., INC.
315-470-3300
Administrative Office, 217 South Salina Street,
2nd Floor, Syracuse, NY 13202

Syracuse City School District
315-435-4576
Main Office at Beard School, 220 West Kennedy
Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

Health Services

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
315-424-1911
259 East Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Franciscan Northside Ministries
315-423-9961
808 North Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13208

Onondaga County Department of Health,
Family Planning
315-435-3685
Civic Center, Room 30, 421 Montgomery Street,
Syracuse, NY 13202
OR
428 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Onondaga County Department of Health,
Maternal & Child Health
315-435-2000
501 East Fayette Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Planned Parenthood of the
Rochester/Syracuse Region
1-866-600-6886
1120 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

SUNY Upstate Medical University Women's
Health Services

315-464-5210
91 Presidential Plaza, Room 3073
Syracuse, NY 13202

SUNY Upstate Medical University, University
Pediatric and Adolescent Center
315-464-4357
90 Presidential Plaza, Syracuse, NY 13202

SUNY Upstate Medical University Pediatric
Emergency Department
315-464-5613
750 East Adams Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

Syracuse Community Health Center
315-476-7921
819 South Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

Job Information

JobsPlus CNY Works
315-442-3242 315-473-8250

Parenting Information

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
315-362-7551
1654 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Children's Consortium
315-471-8331
2122 Erie Boulevard East, Syracuse, NY 13224

E.P.I.C., Every Person Influences Children
315-435-4890
725 Harrison Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

Exceptional Family Resources
315-478-1462
1065 James Street, Suite 220
Syracuse, NY 13203

Huntington Family Centers
315-476-3157
405 Gifford Street
Syracuse, NY 13204

Onondaga County
Department of Health,
Maternal & Child Health
315-435-2000
501 East Fayette Street,
Suite B, Syracuse, NY 13202

Salvation Army, Preventive Services Partnership

315-479-1369
749 South Warren Street, Syracuse, NY 13202

SUNY Upstate Medical University, University
Pediatric and Adolescent Center
315-464-4357
90 Presidential Plaza, Syracuse, NY 13202

St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center,
Newborn Classes
315-448-5515
301 Prospect Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13203

Young Life Syracuse East & Urban
315-682-5062

Neighborhood Centers

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
315-424-1800
Administrative Office
1654 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Bishop Foery Foundation
315-475-8316
100 Edmund Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

Hawley Youth Organization
315-472-6343
716 Hawley Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13203

Northside CYO
315-474-7428
527 North Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13208

Parkside Commons
315-422-1301
201 Westmoreland Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13224

Vincent House
315-475-9844
500 Seymour Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Dunbar Association, Inc.
315-476-4269
1453 South State Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

Faith Hope Community Center Inc
315-477-9944
1029 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, NY 13202



Franciscan Northside Ministries
315-423-9961
804 North Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13208

Huntington Family Centers
315-476-3157
405 Gifford Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Mary Nelson's Community Center
315-422-5690
2849 South Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

P.E.A.C.E., INC.
315-470-3330
Administrative Office
217 South Salina Street, 2nd Floor
Syracuse, NY 13202

County East Family Resource Center
315-437-7071
215 West Manlius Street, #2
East Syracuse, NY 13057

County South Family Resource Center
315-696-8203
12 Clinton Street, Tully, NY 13159

County West Family Resource Center
315-638-1051
93 Syracuse Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027

Eastside Family Resource Center
315-470-3325
202 South Beech Street, Syracuse, NY 13210
Southside Family Resource Center
315-470-3342
136 West Castle Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

Westside Family Resource Center
315-470-3352
200 Wyoming Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Salvation Army, Barnabas Center
315-475-9744
1941 South Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13205

Spanish Action League
315-475-6153
700 Oswego Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility
(Southwest Community Center)
315-474-6823
401 South Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204

Syracuse Northeast Community Center
315-472-6343
716 Hawley Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13203

The Refugee Assistance Program
315-435-4984
501 Park Street, Syracuse, NY 13203

Keeping Kids Safe Coordination Team

AFL-CIO Community Services

ARISE

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County

Child Care Solutions

Child Fatality Review Team

Determination Center of CNY, Inc.

E.P.I.C.

McMahon/Ryan Child Advocacy Site

Mothers Against Gun Violence

Office of Congressman Daniel B. Maffei

Onondaga County Department of Social Services

Onondaga County Health Department

Onondaga County Maternal and Child Health

Onondaga County Office of the Executive

Onondaga County Probation Department

Planned Parenthood

REACH CNY

Salvation Army

SUNY Upstate Medical University Pediatrics

Syracuse City School District

Syracuse University

United Way of Central New York

United Way's Success By 6 Initiative

Vera House



UPDATED 6/26/2009

This guide is published by United Way of Central New York.
For the most recent version of this resource guide visit the *Partners Toolbox*
section of our website: www.unitedway-cny.org