

Do you suspect child abuse or neglect?

See something, say something. Here's your guide...

Every Oklahoman is a mandated reporter. Follow these tips & guidelines for recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect.

Potential signs of child abuse & neglect:

- Fear of caregiver
- Extreme fatigue
- Unexplainable injuries
- Frequent absence from school/activities
- Passive/withdrawn behavior
- Severe lack of cleanliness
- Advanced sexual knowledge beyond developmental stage

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911. If you suspect abuse, call the OKDHS Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1.800.522.3511 and the non-emergency line for your jurisdiction.

How to talk to a child about suspected abuse:

- 1** Ask open-ended questions. Lead with questions such as, "Can you tell me what happened?" or "Can you tell me more about that?"
- 2** Gather necessary information directly from the child. Your primary goal in this conversation is to find out **WHO** (suspected perpetrator) did **WHAT** (type of abuse: physical, sexual, or neglect) and **WHERE** this abuse took place (the geographic location, NOT the location on the body). Do not engage in new conversations with the child for further questioning. Any additional questions beyond this can impede a potential investigation and retraumatize the child.
- 3** Gather additional demographic information from an administrative database. Collect the child's and caregivers' names, dates of birth, current address(es), listed emergency contacts, names of siblings and their dates of birth (if applicable), and any relevant family/medical history.
- 4** Reassure the child. Let them know they did the right thing by telling you and that what has happened to them is not their fault.
- 5** Make the report. Once you've gathered all of the necessary information, call the non-emergency line for your local law enforcement jurisdiction and the OKDHS Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1.800.522.3511. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Reporting is the first step in the healing process, and a child who tells you their story has placed their trust in you. Listen and take action.



To learn more about our educational trainings, contact The CARE Center: Oklahoma County's child advocacy center (CAC).

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