

Child Protection training – introduction or refresher course

Notes, references, website links and resources

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is defined as "...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person". **Reference:** (Section 2, Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989)

The Australian Institute of Child abuse also explains Child abuse as:

Any non-accidental act or omission by

- a. parents
- b. caregivers
- c. other adults
- d. young people
- e. older children

that may be intentional or unintentional, that is not considered normal conduct, and that causes (or there is a substantial risk of causing) harm to a child.

How do we recognise child abuse - signs and clues?

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child;
- Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

Source: (Child Matters)

Types of Abuse

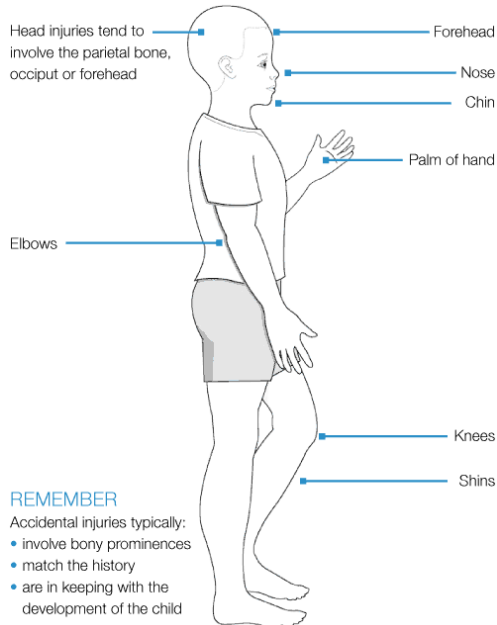
- **Emotional Abuse**
Emotional Abuse includes treatment that has damaged the child's mental health, social and/or emotional functioning and development.
- **Neglect**
Neglect includes failing to provide for a child's basic needs and includes physical neglect, neglectful supervision, medical neglect, abandonment and refusal to assume parental responsibility.
- **Physical Abuse**
The intentional use of physical force against a child that results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm for the child's health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating.
- **Sexual Abuse**
Sexual abuse includes acts or behaviours where an adult, older or more powerful person uses a child for sexual purpose.

'How Can I Tell?' book attached offers more detailed information on all types of child abuse. To view an updated 'How Can I Tell?' book follow this [link](#).

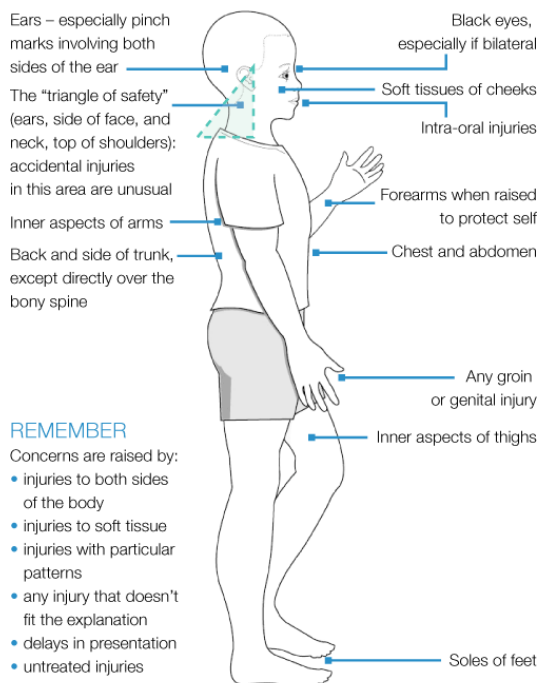
Myth: Children are usually sexually abused by strangers.

Myth buster: Most children who are sexually abused are abused by someone they know.

Typical features of accidental injuries



Typical features of non-accidental injuries (injuries that should raise concerns)



Reference: <https://bda.org/childprotection/Recognising/Pages/Physical.aspx>

Basic principles for dealing with a disclosure or suspicion

Respond to child or young person, believe what they say and listen carefully.

Record any factual concerns or observations, what the child said word for word.

Consult/inform management, someone experienced. Don't make decisions alone!

Record formally what has happened (the facts) and ensure safety of child or young person.

Report to Oranga Tamariki or the Police.

Get support from the appropriate people – dealing with abuse can be incredibly stressful.

What can I do if a child tells/discloses abuse?

Stay calm, listen carefully and be patient.

Appropriate responses

- Believe what they say.
- Say you are glad they told you.
- Say you are sorry it happened.
- Let the child know that they have done the right thing.
- Let them know it's not their fault.
- Let them know they are not the only one.
- Let them know you will help.
- Let them know what you're going to do next.

Don't

- Overreact
- Ask leading questions or introduce words, phrases or concepts.
- Jump to conclusions – there may well be perfectly innocent reasons for signs or clues.

REMEMBER...

- While reassuring the child it is important that you do not agree not to tell anyone.
- Discuss your concerns with your direct line Manager and or designated Child Protection Officer – DON'T act alone.
- It's not your responsibility to decide if the allegation or suspicion is true or not.
- Follow your organisations Child Protection policies and procedures!

What do I do if it's an emergency?

If a child or young person is in immediate danger, or a crime against a child has been committed this must be reported.

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 111.

Support agencies

When child abuse is suspected, it is important not to make decisions alone, but to consult with someone with specialist knowledge and training to make a well informed decision.

Contacts

[Oranga Tamariki](#) - 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459) or email: contact@ot.govt.nz

Local Police - www.police.govt.nz/contact-us/stations

[ED ASSIST](#) – 0508 ED ASSIST (0508 332 774) or email: edassist@ot.govt.nz

Other resources and support agencies

- [Shakti](#)
- [Barnardos](#)
- [Child Matters](#)
- [Citizens Advice](#)
- [Plunket](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [Shine](#)
- [Victim Support](#)

Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse

When is a child in need of care and protection?

A child or young person is in need of care or protection if the child or young person is being, or is likely to be:

- harmed (whether physically, emotionally or sexually)
- ill-treated
- abused
- seriously deprived.

When can a person report suspected child abuse?

Any person can report suspected child abuse if they believe that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be:

- harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually)
- ill-treated
- abused
- neglected
- deprived.

What happens after child abuse is reported?

Once a report of child abuse has been made, the matter must be investigated.

Note: Most providers have protocols and requirements about how to identify child abuse and report it. Follow your organisations Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

What happens if the person who reports suspected child abuse has got it wrong?

A person who reports abuse is protected from civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings, unless the information was given in bad faith.

What's the situation in New Zealand?

The sad reality is that New Zealand has one of the worst records of child abuse in the developed world.

Our child abuse stats

On average, a New Zealand child dies every five weeks as a result of violence. Children under 2 years old make up the majority of this statistic.

Child Abuse costs NZ around \$2 billion each year.

For the year 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018 there were 89,650 reports of concern to Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children.

Between 1 January 2019 and 30 November 2019, 11 children and young people died as a result of homicide.

Every 8th homicide victim in New Zealand from 2004 to 31 March 2019 was a child – The Homicide Report, May 2019.

Of the cases where the killer's relationship to the victim was known, 27% were mothers, 24% were fathers, and 17% were de facto partners.

New Zealand has the 7th highest rate of child deaths in the OECD - UNICEF report, 2017.

Legislation links

[The Children's Act 2014](#)

[The Children's Act 2014, Schedule 2](#)

[Oranga Tamariki Act 1989](#)

[Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989](#)

[Children, Young Persons, and Their Families \(Vulnerable Children\) Amendment Act 2014](#)

[Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994](#)

[Privacy Act 2020](#)

[Human Rights Act 1993](#)

[Domestic Violence Act 1995](#)

[Care of Children Act 2004](#)

[Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015](#)

[Crimes Act 1961](#)

[The Criminal Records \(Clean Slate\) Act 2004](#)

[The Crimes Amendment Act \(No.3\) 2011](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#)