

Scouts Canada



Recognize, Report and Prevent Child Abuse

Scouts Canada – Mission Statement

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

Recognize, Report and Prevent Child Abuse

- **Committed to the care of all participants.**
- **Leaders need to be able to:**
 - **recognize the signs of abuse,**
 - **report suspected child abuse.**
 - **respond to disclosures of abuse,**
 - **help youth recognize and respond to risks they may encounter.**
- **‘Duty of Care’**

NEGLECT

The inability or unwillingness of those responsible for the care of a child to meet the physical, medical and/or developmental needs of the child, including failure to provide food, shelter, basic health care, supervision and protection from risks, to the extent that the child's physical health, development or safety is harmed. Not always intentional, neglect may be a result of insufficient resources or other circumstances beyond a person's control.

(BC Handbook of Action on Child Abuse & Neglect, 1997)

SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- **Absence of supervision by a responsible person**
- **Inadequate clothing for the weather conditions**
- **Poor health due to improper or inadequate diet**
- **Lack of attention to medical conditions**
- **Unwillingness to go home**
- **Consistent lack of energy**
- **Poor hygiene**

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Any non-accidental physical force or action that results in or could result in an injury, impairment, intense or prolonged pain to a child, or a child's death. It may include, but is not limited to such actions as assaulting, burning, shaking or poisoning.

(BC Handbook of Action on Child Abuse & Neglect, 1997)

SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- **Unusual or unlikely explanations for injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns, abrasion**
- **Injuries in soft-tissue areas on the abdomen or back**
- **Not typical childhood injuries**
- **Unusual apprehension of adults**
- **Behavioural extremes (aggressive/ withdrawn)**
- **Fear of people who normally care for child**

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

A concerted attack by an adult on a child's development of self and social competence, a pattern of psychologically destructive behaviour.

(Garbarino, Guttman & Seeley)

SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- **Severe anxiety**
- **Depression**
- **Withdrawal**
- **Self-destructive behaviour**
- **Aggressive or disruptive behaviour**
- **Abnormal fear of failure
overly high goals**
- **Overly compliant –
anxious to please**
- **Unusual fear of
consequences, leading to lying**

SEXUAL ABUSE

Occurs when an older child, an adolescent, or an adult uses a younger child for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification.

(Rogers, 1988)

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- **Hints, indirect messages**
- **Seductive or provocative behaviour**
- **Physical symptoms**
- **Self-destructive behaviour**
- **Unhappiness**
- **Regression**
- **Difficulty at school**
- **Unwillingness to change clothes for activities**
- **Deliberate attempts to be unattractive**

STEPS FOR RECEIVING DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD

- 1. Listen, believe and reassure.**
- 2. Advise of your duty to report.**
- 3. Ensure the child is safe.**
- 4. Document what you heard
and said**

STEPS FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

- 1. Write out what you know from a disclosure by a child, report from a third party or personal observation.**
- 2. Report disclosure to the Child Protection Authority or police.**
- 3. Contact the Scouts Canada Executive Director, if the adult involved is a member or volunteer with Scouting.**

HOW TO HELP THE YOUTH RESPOND

- **Trust your instincts or feelings.**
- **Expect privacy.**
- **Say no to unwanted touching or affection.**
- **Say no to an adult's inappropriate demands and requests.**
- **Withhold information that could jeopardize your safety.**
- **Refuse gifts.**
- **Be rude or unhelpful if the situation warrants.**
- **Run, scream, and make a scene.**
- **Break away from unwanted advances.**
- **Ask for help.**

Situations and Suggested Actions

What if you are home alone, the telephone rings, and a voice on the other end asks if your parents are home? What would you do?

- *Tell the caller your parents are busy and cannot come to the phone.*
- *Take a message and the phone number of the caller.*
- *If the message needs an immediate response, call your parent.*
- *Don't tell the caller you are home alone.*
- *Let the answering machine answer and don't pick up the phone until you are sure who the caller is.*