



Child Protection Services

about

Further information
please call your local
regional office (see
page 4).

Educational handouts
in the **about** series are
available from:

Communications and
Public Education
Saskatchewan Ministry
of Social Services
1920 Broad Street
Regina SK S4P 3V6

Visit us on our web site
and follow the links:

www.cr.gov.sk.ca



Recycled Paper

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We all share the responsibility for making sure every child is safe and cared for. When parents cannot or will not care for, supervise, and protect their children, someone else may have to step in to make sure the child's needs are being met.

The Ministry of Social Services provides child protection services. The Ministry is given the authority to do this by *The Child and Family Services Act*. First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies provide similar services to children and families living on-reserve.

According to *The Child and Family Services Act*, unless it is otherwise stated, a child means an unmarried person under the age of 16 years.

What is child abuse or neglect?

There are many forms of child abuse. Generally, abuse means anything that may be harmful to a child's physical, emotional or psychological health, or that takes advantage of a child.

- **Physical abuse** — any action, including discipline, which causes injury to the child's body.
- **Sexual abuse** — any action to involve a child in a sexual activity including sexual touching, exposure, using a child in the making of or viewing pornography, and/or involving a child in prostitution.

- **Emotional mistreatment** — expecting a child to be able to do things he or she cannot do, embarrassing or insulting a child, making hurtful comments about a child's appearance, intelligence, size, ability, etc.
- **Neglect** — failing to provide a child with enough good food, proper clothing, shelter, health care, or supervision.

Why do people abuse or neglect their children?

Parenting can be a tough job. Some people have trouble handling all of the responsibility and pressure that comes with being a parent. Some parents do not understand that their children are not always able to do the things they expect them to do. Sometimes this leads to abuse or neglect.

Being abused or neglected may lead to lifelong problems. There are many things that can lead a parent to abuse a child, including:

- marriage, personal or financial problems;
- alcohol, drug or other substance abuse;
- lack of family or friends;
- poor or over-crowded housing;
- lack of knowledge about how children develop;
- inappropriate discipline;
- little or no experience caring for children;

- demands of a child with a special need; and
- being abused or neglected as a child.

Can abuse and neglect be prevented?

Yes. Child abuse and neglect can be prevented by helping parents to:

- learn about what is normal in terms of their child's development and what they can expect at certain ages;
- improve their parenting skills, including how to use proper discipline;
- learn how to settle family conflicts;
- learn to deal with stress; and
- recognize and seek help for drug, alcohol, gambling or other addictions.

How can I help stop child abuse and neglect?

If you have reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected, it is important to remember that **it is NEVER the child's fault**.

As a parent — If you think you may be abusing your child or you are afraid you may abuse your child, or if you would just like information or someone to talk

to, call the nearest office of the Ministry of Social Services. (*See page 4.*)

Asking for help does not mean you are a poor parent. Just the opposite — it means that you care about your child and want to do the best job you can.

As a member of the community — If you have reason to believe a child may be neglected or abused, you have a legal responsibility under *The Child and Family Services Act* to report your concerns. You may report them to the Ministry of Social Services, the police, or a First Nations Child and Family Services agency.

You are asked to report your suspicions. You are not expected to figure out who may have caused the abuse or neglect.

If you are not sure whether or not you should report a particular situation, you may wish to discuss it with a child protection worker or the police.

If I make a report — what happens then?

All reports of abuse or neglect are investigated by trained, professional staff. They will usually discuss the situation with the family and decide what would be the best plan for the child and the family.

As noted above, everyone has a responsibility to report a situation where they believe a child may be in need of protection. Most people who report possible abuse or neglect do so because they have a real concern about the child's safety and well-being.

Sometimes, though, a person may make a false report out of spite, anger, revenge or a desire to cause problems for a parent. Any person who does this may have legal action taken against them by the person against whom the false report is made.

What are the signs that a child may be abused or neglected?

There are usually signs that a child is being abused or neglected. The signs may be physical which means it is possible to see them. In other cases, the child's behaviour may lead to concerns about abuse. Often, one sign is not enough to suggest abuse or neglect, but several signs or a pattern of signs make it more likely that abuse or neglect may exist. The following chart lists a number of physical signs and types of behaviour which might suggest abuse or neglect.

	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> injuries (bruises, cuts, burns, bite marks, fractures, etc.) that are not consistent with explanation offered (e.g., extensive bruising to one area) the presence of several injuries over a period of time any bruising on an infant facial injuries in preschool children (e.g., cuts, bruises, sores, etc.) injuries inconsistent with the child's age and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot recall how injuries occurred, or offers an inconsistent explanation wary of adults or reluctant to go home, absences from school may cringe or flinch if touched unexpectedly may display a vacant stare or frozen watchfulness extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn wears long sleeves to hid injury extremely compliant and/or eager to please sad, cries frequently
Emotional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bedwetting and/or diarrhea which is non-medical in origin frequent psychosomatic complaints: headaches, nausea, abdominal pain child fails to thrive <p>Rarely is any one indicator conclusive proof that a child has been harmed. In most instances, children present a cluster of behavioural and physical indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness, mood swings overly compliant; too well-mannered; too neat and clean extreme attention-seeking behaviours displays extreme inhibition in play poor peer relationships severe depression, often suicidal running away from home constantly apologizes
Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unusual or excessive itching in the genital or anal area torn, stained or bloody underwear (observed if the child requires bathroom assistance) pregnancy or venereal disease injuries to the vaginal or anal areas (e.g., bruising, swelling or infection) <p>While the above are not conclusive indicators of sexual abuse, one or more could be a sign that a child needs help.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> age-inappropriate sexual play with toys, self, others (e.g., replication of explicit sexual acts) age-inappropriate, sexually explicit drawings and/or descriptions bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge promiscuity prostitution seductive behaviours fear of home, excessive fear of men or women depression
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> abandonment unattended medical or dental needs consistent lack of supervision consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene persistent conditions (e.g., scabies, head lice, diaper rash or other skin disorder) developmental delays (e.g., language, weight) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regularly displays fatigue or listlessness, falls asleep in class steals food, begs from classmates reports that no caretaker is at home frequently absent or late self-destructive school drop-outs (adolescents)

Social Services Child Protection Offices

Buffalo Narrows.....1-800-667-7685
Waite Street 235-1700
S0M 0J0

Creighton.....1-800-532-9580
1st Street East 688-8808
S0P 0A0

Estevan.....637-4550
1219 - 5th Street
S4A 0Z1

Fort Qu'Appelle.....1-800-667-3260
177 Segwun Avenue 332-3260
S0G 1S0

Kindersley463-5470
113 2nd Avenue East
S0L 1S0

La Loche.....1-877-371-1131
La Loche Avenue 822-1711
S0M 1G0

La Ronge1-800-567-4066
1320 La Ronge Avenue 425-4544
S0J 1L0

Lloydminster.....1-877-367-7707
4910 - 50th Street 820-4250
S9V 1Z5

Meadow Lake1-877-368-8898
Unit 5, 101 Railway Place 236-7500
S9X 1X6

Melfort.....1-800-487-8640
107 Crawford St. E. 752-6100
S0E 1A0

Moose Jaw694-3647
36 Athabasca Street E.
S6H 6V2

Nipawin.....1-800-487-8594
210 - 1st Street E. 862-1700
S0E 1E0

North Battleford..... 1-877-993-9911
#405, 1146 - 102 St. 446-7535
S9A 1G1

Prince Albert 1-866-719-6164
800 Central Avenue 953-2422
S6V 6G1

Regina..... 787-3760
2045 Broad Street
S4P 3V6

Rosetown 882-5400
122 - 2nd Avenue North
S0L 2V0

Saskatoon 933-5961
122 - 3rd Avenue North
S7K 2H6

Swift Current..... 778-8219
350 Cheadle Street West
S9H 4G3

Weyburn 848-2404
110 Souris Avenue N.E.
S4H 2Z9

Wynyard 1-866-287-7747
400A Avenue D, West 554-5450
S0A 4T0

Yorkton 786-1300
72 Smith Street East
S3N 2Y4

After Hours Crisis Services

Prince Albert 764-1011
Saskatoon.....933-6200
Regina569-2724

Other Communities.....Local Police