

# Recognizing Child Abuse

(From HelpGuide.org)



Child abuse is more than bruises and broken bones. While physical abuse might be the most visible, other types of abuse, such as emotional abuse and neglect, also leave deep, lasting scars. The earlier abused children get help, the greater chance they have to heal and break the cycle—rather than perpetuate it.

By learning about common signs of abuse and what you can do to intervene, you can make a huge difference in a child's life. There are often certain recognizable physical and behavioral indicators of child abuse or neglect.

Bruising is the earliest and most visible sign of child abuse. Early identification of bruises resulting from child abuse can allow for intervention and prevent further abuse.

Bruises seen in infants, especially on the face and buttocks, are more suspicious and should be considered non-accidental until proven otherwise.

Injuries to children's upper arms (caused by efforts to defend themselves), the trunk, the front of their thighs, the sides of their faces, their ears and neck, genitalia, stomach, and buttocks are also more likely to be associated with non-accidental injuries.

Injuries to their shins, knees, elbows, scrapes on hands, chin, bumps on forehead, or the bony parts are more likely to signify accidental injury.

