

What is Child Abuse?

California law defines child abuse as any of the following:

- A child is physically injured by other than accidental means.
- A child is subjected to willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment.
- A child is abused or exploited sexually.
- A child is neglected by a parent or caretaker who fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision.

Any child may be victimized. Child abuse crosses all socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural, occupational, religious, and age groups.

**Remember,
Child Abuse
Is a
CRIME!!!**

**There are four major types of child maltreatment:
Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and
Emotional Abuse.**

- Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs including physical, medical, educational, and emotional needs.
- Physical abuse is physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result from punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting, or otherwise harming a child.
- Sexual abuse includes activities such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.
- Emotional abuse is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats, or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance.

**From the California Department of Social Services, Office of the Prevention of Child Abuse.*