

## Types of Abuse & What to Look For | Jacklyn Eding, LMSW – Wedgwood Trauma-Focused Therapist

- **Emotional/Psychological Abuse:**
  - This type of abuse is experienced when a child is made to feel worthless and helpless by another person or their caregivers. *As symptoms are harder to spot, emotional abuse often goes unnoticed.*
  - **Emotional/Psychological abuse can look like:**
    - Humiliating or constantly criticizing a child
    - Threatening a child or calling them names
    - Excessive and Harsh yelling
    - Blaming and scapegoating
    - Exposing a child to upsetting events (domestic violence, drug/alcohol activity)
  - **A child who is experiencing emotional abuse may exhibit the following signs:**
    - Increased anxiety and a lack of confidence
    - Not having a close bond with their parents or caregivers
    - Experiencing emotional outbursts which are extreme in nature.
    - Lacks appropriate social skills and may have few or no friends.
- **Physical Abuse:**
  - When another person or caregiver(s) causes **intentional** body injury.
  - **Physical abuse can look like:**
    - Hitting a child with an object to inflict pain.
    - Punching
    - Slapping
    - Shoving
  - It's important to note that not all signs of physical abuse may not be easily seen. **A child who is experiencing physical abuse may exhibit the following signs:**
    - Bruises, welts, or black eyes
    - Lacerations, cuts, or open wounds
    - Broken bones
    - quick to react or cower away with sudden movements from others.
- **Sexual Abuse:**
  - **Non-consensual sexual activity.**
  - **Examples** of sexual abuse include:
    - Inappropriate and unwanted touching
    - Coerced nudity
    - Sexually explicit photographing or showing sexually explicit content.
  - **Signs of sexual abuse can include:**
    - Regressive behaviors-bed wetting, soiling after being toilet trained, or acting like a baby/younger child again.
    - Unusual or new fears, such as being touched, or being alone with a particular person.
    - Difficulties in eating, sleeping, or keeping up with hygiene.

The number one rule **gl\_ afgb pnnpq mwms rf\_r fc npqfc g`cge \_`sqcb gnm@JCTC**. If you suspect that a child is experiencing abuse, or a child has reported to you that abuse has occurred, it is important to remember that **your job is to protect, not question**. *Reporting the abuse, even if you are unsure, is never wrong.*

If abuse is suspected, or reported, please reach out to your local law enforcement agency and/or to Child Protective Services at 855-444-3911.