

Appendix 7**PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS
OF ABUSE**

The following indicators may help alert you to the possibility of abuse:

PHYSICAL INDICATORS:

- unexplained bruises, welts, and cuts, not on the usual places like the knees, shins or elbows
- presence of several injuries that are in various stages of healing, unusual or difficulty in walking or sitting
- repeated injuries over a period of time
- bald patches on child's head where hair may have been torn out
- unexplained burns (from cigarettes) or rope burns on arms, legs, neck or body
- sudden weight change
- broken bones
- cuts or sores made by child on the arm (self-mutilation)
- sexually transmitted diseases
- itching, pain, swelling or bleeding in the genital area, bloody underwear
- fatigue due to sleep disturbance
- bed-wetting,
- inappropriate dress (to cover injuries)
- pregnancy
- consistent hunger, poor personal hygiene, inappropriate dress
- unattended physical or medical problems
- suicide attempts
- running away from home, refusal to go home

PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS:

- unusual or sudden fear of adults, excessive fear of men or women, a particular individual, or authority figures
- fearful, startled or pulling away when touched unexpectedly
- age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual behaviour, bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge, sexually explicit play or drawings
- regressive communication patterns (eg. speaking childishly), dramatic behavioral changes, sudden non-participation in activities
- excessive eagerness to please
- severe depression, withdrawal from others, rejection of friends, sad, cries often
- stilted conversation, vacant stares or frozen watchfulness, no attempt to seek comfort when hurt
- a lack of trust in others
- constant anxiety, fear of home or a specific place
- low self-esteem, excessively dependent
- anger and anxiety
- attention-seeking behaviour
- sexual aggression with others; sexualized expression of love
- tantrums
- fear of being left alone.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION, REPORTING
AND INTERVENTION ARE VITAL