

Indicators of Neglect in Children

General Neglect - Physical Indicators

The child:

1. is consistently dirty and clothes are unwashed.
2. is hungry, underweight
3. is tired and listless
4. has unattended physical/dental problems.
5. may have accidental injuries due to a lack of supervision
6. is inappropriately/inadequately dressed.
7. has injuries that indicate an unsafe living condition (rat or roach bites, for instance)

General Neglect - Behavioral Indicators

The child:

1. is truant or tardy to school often, or arrives early and stays late.
2. begs or steals food.
3. attempts suicide.
4. is extremely dependent or detached.
5. appears to be exhausted.
6. states that there is frequent or continual absence of parent or guardian.

Behaviors Seen in Infants & Toddlers

1. Withdrawn, apathetic
2. Rocking
3. Fearful
4. Lethargy
5. Failure to thrive
6. Speech and language delays

Behaviors Seen in School-Age Children

1. Withdrawn, apathetic
2. Fearful
3. Learned helplessness
4. Hoarding food
5. Pseudo-independence
6. Regressive behavior
7. Sleeps in class or is unable to concentrate due to fatigue
8. Seems unable to concentrate, preoccupied
9. Parent-child role reversal exists

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Behaviors Seen in Adolescents

1. Withdrawn, apathetic
2. Aggressive
3. Unkempt appearance
4. Drug/alcohol abuse
5. Eating disorders
6. Sleeps in class or is unable to concentrate due to fatigue
7. Parent-child role reversal exists
8. Child has been forced out of home

Possible Indicators of Neglectful Parents

1. Delays seeking medical/dental attention for child
2. Is secretive and reluctant to give information about the child's condition.
3. Seldom touches, talks to or makes eye contact with child.
4. Becomes impatient about child's crying or need for attention.
5. Criticizes or gets angry with the child for being injured or having needs.
6. Shows little concern for child's problems, does not respond to inquiries.
7. Cannot be found.
8. Is using drugs and/or alcohol.
9. Has no family or support system to turn to in a crisis or has multiple pressures that diminish capability to accomplish daily tasks.
10. Has resources but does not use them to provide adequate care for child.
11. Has exposed the child to domestic violence, drug-dealing or use, or knowingly exposed them to unsafe people such as pedophiles.

Possible Indicators of Neglect in Housing Conditions

1. Inadequate heat
2. Unsafe use of space heaters.
3. Exposed wiring.
4. Broken/dangerous furniture or no furniture.
5. Missing or broken windows/doors.
6. Soiled, urine-soaked bedding.
7. Lack of edible food.
8. Medicines and cleaning supplies not stored away from reach of children.
9. No clean clothing.
10. Health dangers such as illegal drugs, feces, urine, rotting/molding food, or clothing.
11. Lack of working plumbing.
12. Hazards such as broken glass, rotten flooring/railings, vermin.

For more information, please contact Liberty House at 503-540-0288.