

How and when to report child abuse.

The State of Tennessee requires all diocesan employees and adult volunteers to report suspected child abuse. At times, a person who suspects abuse may feel unsure about reporting abuse if the signs are subtle such as when a child's behavior or mood changes. At other times, when abuse is visible, the need to report can be very clear. Either way, the Tennessee Code 37-1-403 (a) (1) states: *"Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect or that, on the basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect."*

THE 3 R'S OF
REPORTING CHILD ABUSE



Possible Indicators of Child Abuse

Potential Sexual Abuse Indicators

Physical Symptoms

- Soreness or bruising, pain or itching in genital or anal areas
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Bedwetting
- Unexplained loss of appetite
- Verbal descriptions of sexual abuse

Behavioral Symptoms

- Having knowledge of or asking an unusual amount of questions about human sexuality
- Excessive masturbation
- Anger, rage, depression, anxiety
- Frequent nightmares
- Compulsive drawing or viewing sexually explicit pictures
- Obsession with pornography
- Becoming isolated or withdrawn
- Repeated runaway or suicide attempts
- Promiscuous behavior
- Self destructive behavior/self injury, risky or delinquent behavior
- Substance abuse

Potential Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Anxiety, depression, or hostility
- Low self esteem
- Developmental delays
- Ongoing self depreciation
- Failure to thrive

Potential Physical Abuse Indicators

Physical Symptoms

- Unexplained fractures or injuries
- Multiple injuries in various body locations
- Previous injuries in various healing stages
- Patterned injuries consistent with objects of abuse (cigar/cigarettes, hands, ropes)
- Burns on extremities, buttocks or genitals
- Frightened of or shrinks at approach of adult caretaker
- Verbal descriptions of physical abuse

Behavioral Symptoms

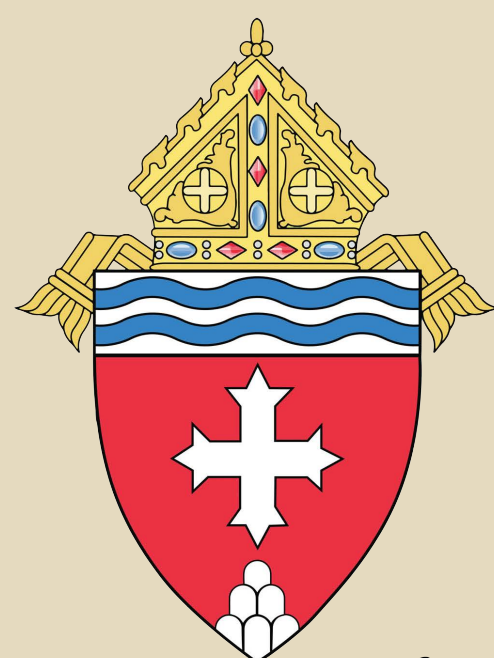
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Emotional turmoil (depressed, suicidal)
- Self isolation, undue aggression or constant anger
- Developmental delays
- Fear of going home or repeated runaway attempts
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Cruel behaviors
- Depression, anxiety

Potential Neglect Indicators

- Constant hunger or tiredness
- Neglected personal hygiene/poor state of dress
- Untreated medical issues
- Signs of malnutrition, emaciation
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Antisocial behavior
- Abandonment

This list is provided as a set of guidelines only and is not intended to be a comprehensive or exhaustive source.

Trained case managers respond 24/7 when you call the Hotline. You will be asked for the victim's name, addresses and names of family members. You will need to describe the situation, victim's condition, and any information reported by the victim about abuse. Please also notify the Catholic Diocese of Memphis Human Resources.



Catholic Diocese of Memphis

 **Abuse Hotlines**

Abuse Hotline: 1-877-237-0004

Victim Assistance Coordinator: 1-901-373-1266/report.abuse@cdom.org

Safe Environment Coordinator: 1-901-373-1251

For non-emergencies, report online at <https://carat.app.tn.gov/carat/>.