

# The New York State Children's Alliance, Inc.

*Serving Children and Families across New York State*

## Mandated Reporter Reference Guide

*All Mandated Reporters are required to report any suspicions of child neglect and/or abuse when he/she has reasonable cause to suspect neglect and/or abuse of a child under the age of 18.*

### REASONABLE CAUSE TO SUSPECT

Reasonable cause to suspect child abuse means that based on rational observations, professional training, and experience, you suspect a parent or person legally responsible for a child is harming or placing a child in imminent danger of harm. A suspicion can be as simple as distrusting an explanation for an injury.

### WHERE TO CALL 1-800-635-1522

The Mandated Reporter State Central Registry (SCR) is a 24/7 child abuse hotline. A call must be made to the SCR hotline when a parent or other person who is legally responsible for a child's care is responsible for the neglect, maltreatment, physical and/or sexual abuse of a child or knowingly allows someone to inflict such harm on a child.

*If the person who is responsible for the neglect, maltreatment, physical and/or sexual abuse of a child is NOT the parent or person legally responsible for the child's care, contact your local law enforcement agency.*

### INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT

#### Indicators of Physical Abuse can include:

- Injuries to the eyes or both sides of the head or body (accidental injuries typically only affect one side of the body)
- Frequently appearing injuries such as bruises, cuts and/or burns, especially if the child is unable to provide an adequate explanation of the cause
- Destructive, aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Passive, withdrawn or emotionless behavior
- Fear of going home or fear of parent(s)

#### Indicators of Sexual Abuse can include:

- Difficulty and/or pain when sitting or walking
- Sexually suggestive, inappropriate or promiscuous behavior or verbalization
- Expressing age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual relations
- Sexual victimization of other children

#### Indicators of Maltreatment can include:

- Obvious malnourishment, listlessness or fatigue; stealing or begging for food
- Lack of personal care – poor personal hygiene, torn and/or dirty clothes
- Frequent absences from or tardiness to school
- Child inappropriately left unattended or without supervision

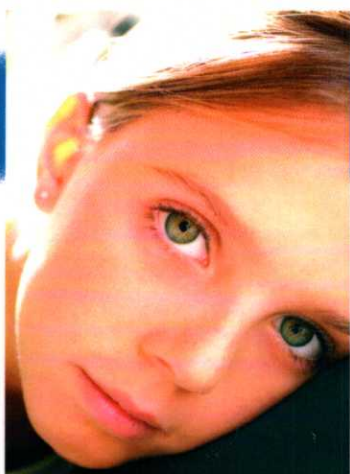
This list is not all-inclusive, and some abused or maltreated children may not show any of these symptoms.



**NYS Mandated Reporter Hotline 1-800-635-1522**

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### CREATING A BETTER RESPONSE

The New York State Children's Alliance Inc. (NYSCA, Inc.) is a member organization created to promote the development, growth and continuation of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT) and Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) throughout New York State to better serve abused and neglected children and their families. We are committed to helping local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient.

At a CAC, a multidisciplinary team with representatives from law enforcement, child protection, prosecution, mental health, medical, family/victim advocacy, and center staff come together to investigate cases, prosecute offenders and provide treatment. The team works together to manage a case and provide a coordinated and compassionate response to assist victims of child abuse.

### Appropriate Responses to Child Abuse Disclosure

- Remain calm
- Find a private place to talk
- Ask the child to share everything they remember about the incident, listen, and do not ask any further questions
- Tell the child you believe them
- Tell the child it is not his/her fault
- Report the situation immediately
- Make the hotline call!

***All suspicions of child maltreatment and/or abuse must be reported to the SCR at:***

**1-800-635-1522**

***This desk reference provides some basic information to assist professionals in their role as a mandated reporter. If you would like further information or to locate a child advocacy center in your community, please visit our website at <http://newyork.nationalchildrensalliance.org>***

***For additional information and an on-line mandated reporter training, please visit the New York State Office of Children and Family Services website at [www.ocfs.state.ny.us](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us)***



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