

Child abuse and maltreatment in school-age years

[Society](#), [Child Abuse](#)



School age children are children between the age of 6 and 12. Parents should carefully monitor children in this age group as they may face child abuse and maltreatment in diverse aspects (Grand Canyon University, 2018). One type of abuse that children may undergo is bullying by other schoolmates. Bullying occurs in educational setting and may include hostile intent, provocation, physical, emotional, or verbal bullying. Parents and caregivers should identify warning signs of that indicate bullying and act appropriately to protect the children (Callaghan, Fellin, Alexander, Mavrou, & Papathanaasiou, 2017). Some of the warning signs of bullying include unhappy, anxious, or withdrawn children, unexplained injuries, changes in eating habits, poor performance in school, destroyed clothing, and regular school absenteeism.

School-age children may also face sexual abuse such as rape, child pornography, or molestation (Callaghan et al., 2017). Any sexual intercourse with a child is rape since a child cannot legally give consent to sexual activity. Sexual activities may include fondling a child's private parts, indecent exposure, vaginal/anal penetration, and sexual exploitation where children are used for prostitution. Statistics indicate that a close family member or someone that the child knows is the perpetrator of most sexual abuse (Callaghan et al., 2017). Some of the warning signs of sexual abuse include a child's knowledge of sexual acts, seductive behaviors of a child, excessive aggression, uninhibited behavior, or fear of a certain family member. Healthcare providers may conduct a medical examination to identify sexual abuse. Child abuse is defined according to socially accepted norms that vary from one culture to another (Grand Canyon University, 2018).

Certain cultures such as the Asian communities use healing practices such as the use of herbal remedies to cure certain illnesses that that may be misinterpreted as child abuse. Healthcare providers should be sensitive to cultural beliefs and practices and maintain a nonjudgmental attitude as this will help in differentiating cultural health practices from child abuse (Zeanah & Humphreys, 2018). The state of California requires all healthcare providers to report any suspected child abuse immediately to the county child welfare department or any local law enforcement agency such as the local police and write a report within 48 hours about the incident. A person does not have to be physically present to witness the abuse or have definite proof that a child may have been subjected to child abuse rather have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused (California Department of Education, 2020).

References

1. California Department of Education. (2020). Child Abuse Prevention Training and Resources. Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Guidelines. Retrieved from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/ap/childabusereportingguide.asp>
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