



Child Abuse



Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver does something or stop doing something and as a result the child suffers harm or is at risk of suffering physical, mental and/or emotional damage. In Puerto Rico, there is Act No. 246, which ensures the Safety, Welfare and Protection of Minors.

What types of Child Abuse are there?

- **Negligence:** Parents or caregivers must ensure, within their means, care, food, access to health services, education, clothing and safe housing. They must ensure that the child has basic and essential services for a healthy environment. Failure to do so is considered negligence.
- **Physical Abuse:** Any non-accidental hit or injury, caused by a single incident or several. This includes hair halons and/or pushes, hitting objects (leash or a stick), kicking, burning, shaking an infant.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Not providing the child with an adequate environment for emotional and psychological development that allows independence and security. This includes attitudes such as ignoring the child, not showing affection or protection. Shout at him, scold him violently or threaten him. In addition, acting in an antisocial manner before them, such as getting drunk, taking drugs or allowing them to witness violent acts.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Engaging in sexual conduct in the presence of a minor and/or using a minor, voluntarily or involuntarily, to carry out sexual conduct in order to satisfy the abuser.
- **Child Exploitation:** Labor exploitation (distribution and drug sales, armed violence, domestic work or begging). Sexual exploitation (prostitution, pornography, arranged marriages, exploitation for reproductive purposes).

- **Institutional Abuse:** When an official of a public or private institution that has under his responsibility a minor for their care, education, treatment or detention, do or stop doing something and as a consequence, cause harm or put at risk a minor suffer damage to their physical, mental and/or emotional health.

Risk Factors

Risk factors are behaviors and conditions that increase the probability of abuse towards a child.

- **Related to the minor:** Although the children are the victims, they may present characteristics that may increase the probability of being mistreated; unwanted children, with some physical or mental disability, behavioral problems, be between the ages of zero (0) to three (3) years or in adolescence.
- **Related to parents:** When parents are very young or immature. They were victims of abuse in childhood, are users of alcohol or controlled substances, are in a relationship of conflict or domestic violence, have low self-esteem or poor tolerance.
- **Related to family and society:** Family with only one parent, lack of support network, participation of a family member in criminal activities in the community.

How can you prevent child abuse?

- Plan your family. If you expect a baby, make sure you get prenatal care.
- Provide an environment of harmony in the home maintaining healthy relationships both as a couple and intrafamily.
- Avoid the use and abuse of alcohol and controlled substances.
- Set aside a few minutes a day to talk with your child.
- Teach your children healthy ways to solve conflicts and manage frustration. You are his example. Control your impulses and act calmly.
- If you are having problems with parenting, seek professional help.

Family, Society and State Obligations are:

- **The Family:** It will have the obligation to promote equality, affection, solidarity and respect among all its members.
- **The Society:** Citizens must denounce by any means, crimes or actions that violate or threaten minors.
- **The State:** Will guarantee the welfare of our children and ensure that their rights are respected.

What are the consequences of Child Abuse?

Abuse can have lifelong consequences. Among them physical or mental disabilities, deformities, low self-esteem, depression and difficulties to relate adequately with others.

Remember

Child abuse occurs when the actions of an adult responsible for a child result in harm or risk of harm to the child. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, exploitation, among others. We all have the obligation to report crimes or actions that threaten children, so that their rights are respected.

Direct Line to Report Situations of Maltreatment, Institutional Maltreatment, Negligence and Institutional Negligence

Tel: 787-749-1333

Tel: 1-800-981-1333

7 days/24 hours

Guidance and Family Support Line

787-977-8022

1-800-977-8022

7 days/Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

Report Child Exploitation

ICE PR

787-729-6969

National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline

1-888-373-7888

Polaris Be Free Texting Helpline

Send message to "BeFree" (233733)

For additional information

Customer Service Department

1-844-347-7800

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7805

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

Twenty-four (24) hours a day,
seven (7) days a week.

Visit our website

www.firstmedicalvital.com



References

<http://www.lexjuris.com/lexlex/Leyes2011/lexl2011246.ht>

<https://www.lifeder.com/como-prevenir-el-maltrato-infantil/>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/spanpacket2004.pdf>

http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/sp_long_term_consequences.pdf

