Signs that a Child Might be Experiencing Abuse and/or Neglect

A child's troubling behavior may be an indication of a wide range of issues. These may include stress from family disruption, illness, the death of a pet, a move to a new neighborhood, or child abuse. The appearance of most of the symptoms below, on any particular day, may not necessarily indicate that the child is being abused or neglected, but should be watched. Symptoms that persist over time or dominate the way a child presents himself or herself should be reported. Some of the possible specific signs for each kind of abuse are listed below:

Physical Abuse: Suspicious injuries that are different from those normally associated with childhood "wear and tear" such as burns, bruises, lacerations, bite marks, and fractures.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse of others, self-destructive behavior, appears to be a danger to others, unwillingness or inability to form trusting relationships, chronic rebellion against authority, constant socially disruptive behavior, and habits like thumb sucking or rocking.

Sexual Abuse: Difficulty in walking; torn, stained, or bloody clothing; pain or itching in the genital area; sexual provocativeness; an age-inappropriate understanding of sex; reluctance to be left alone with a particular person; persistent and inappropriate sex play with peers; fear of touch; and abuse of animals.

Neglect: Child shows up inappropriately or poorly dressed, shows obvious need of medical care, lacks personal hygiene, repeatedly borrows money for basic necessities, and is consistently overly hungry. If asked, the child will likely make excuses for his or her parent(s).

If you are concerned that a child is being abused or neglected:

Do:

Show support and concern for any child who might be affected.
Be careful about jumping to conclusions. Act with all due diligence.
Speak confidentially with other adult leaders who have contact with the child.
Handle the matter as discreetly, but as quickly as possible.
If necessary, remove the child from danger and obtain medical treatment as needed.
Keep the situation as confidential as possible.
Be supportive.

Do not:

Solicit information or attempt to investigate the situation in any way.
Make any promises to the child, especially of secrecy.
Show disgust or anger. The alleged abuser may be someone the child loves.
Counsel or advise the child.
Confront a parent or family member.

Under New Hampshire law you should report to the New Hampshire Child Protection Services if you have reasonable cause to suspect that children are being abused in any way. To make a report, call between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday, at 800-894-5533 (in state) or 603-271-6562 (out of state). Then call the Hanover Police Department, at 603-643-2222 and Dartmouth College Safety & Security at 646-4000. If you are not sure that you should make a report to New Hampshire Child Protection Services, you may call Safety & Security first. You may also contact the Dartmouth Compliance and Ethics Hotline, which includes an option of anonymous reporting through www.dartmouth.ethicspoint.com or by calling (888) 497-0516.

Welcome to the Dartmouth College Campus!

You are here to

HAVE FUN

EXPERIENCE A DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENT

LEARN SOMETHING

MAKE NEW FRIENDS

GAIN MORE CONFIDENCE

If someone is making you uncomfortable or threatening you or someone else, you have many options:

- Talk to the program staff.
- Talk to your parents or guardians.
- Call the Dartmouth Department of Safety and Security 24 hours a day at (603) 646-4000. You can also email Safety.and.Security@Dartmouth.edu.
- You can also contact a 24 hour Hotline at www.dartmouth.ethicspoint.com or by calling (888) 497-0516.

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Your child is here to:

Have Fun ***Experience a Different Environment***
Learn Something ***Make New Friends*** ***Gain More Confidence***

If someone is making him or her uncomfortable or acting in threatening ways, you have many options:

- Talk to the program staff.

- Call the Dartmouth Department of Safety and Security 24 hours a day at (603) 646-4000. You can also email Safety.and.Security@Dartmouth.EDU.

- You can also contact a 24 hour Hotline at www.dartmouth.ethicspoint.com or by calling (888) 497-0516. This service allows an option of anonymous reporting if that is your preference.

- If you are concerned about any kind of sexual or physical mistreatment of a child, under New Hampshire law you should report to the New Hampshire Child Protection Services. To make a report, call between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday, at 800-894-5533 (in state) or 603-271-6562 (out of state). Then call the Hanover Police Department, at 603-643-2222 and Dartmouth College Safety & Security at 646-4000. If you are not sure that you should make a report to New Hampshire Child Protection Services, you may call Safety & Security first.

What kinds of things should you definitely report to any of the resources above?
Staff or other adults who

- Touch children or adolescents or talk to them in ways that make them feel embarrassed or unsafe
- Talk to them or show them pictures about sexual behavior
- Try to get time alone with them in cars or bathrooms or other places no one else can see
- Give them presents
- Pay more attention to them than other participants in the program