



child advocacy  
centre niagara

## What is Child Abuse?

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a caregiver, other child, youth, or adult sexually molests or uses a child for sexual purposes. Sexual abuse also includes someone who knowingly fails to protect a child from sexual abuse. Some examples of sexual abuse include:

- Any sexual act between an adult and a child including sexual intercourse
- Fondling (the act of touching a child in a sexual manner)
- Engaging a child in prostitution or pornography
- Exposing a child to adult sexual activity
- Non-contact sexual activities such as: sexual comments to a child or adolescent, exposing intimate body parts, having a sexual fixation on a child's body parts, making sexually related phone calls, and engaging in sexually related correspondence through the Internet

(Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2010; The Department of Justice Canada, 2011)

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse includes anything that a parent, caregiver, or person who has responsibility for a child does to a child that causes physical injury; or the failure of a caregiver to adequately supervise a child. Some examples of physical abuse include:

- Slapping
- Burning
- Hitting
- Throwing
- Beating
- Shaking
- Biting
- Bruising
- Bone fractures

These forms of injury are considered abuse whether or not the parent or caregiver intended to harm the child.

(Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2010)

# What is Child Abuse?

## Internet Luring

Internet luring refers to the use of the internet to communicate with a child with the intent to lure the child for sexual purposes or for the intent of abduction. Warning signs a child may show include:

- Spending extensive amounts of time on the internet
- Closing internet windows when someone enters the room
- Unwilling to give information about what they are doing on the internet
- Claiming to be doing homework on the computer but are falling behind in school
- New long-distance charges on the phone bill from unidentifiable numbers
- Pictures of unidentified people on their computer

To protect your child from internet luring, tell them that they should never agree to meet with someone they have only met online, that they should not give out identifying information over the internet, they should not post pictures of themselves on the internet or send pictures of themselves on a cell phone, and to never respond to sexually suggestive comments from people over the internet.

(Public Safety Canada, 2010; Victims of Violence, 2011)

## Witness to Violence

Witness to violence refers to an instance where a child witnesses a violent act. This often refers to the witnessing of domestic violence episodes between caregivers or the witnessing of harm inflicted on a sibling by a caregiver or other family member.