

Behavior Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Being uncomfortable around previously trusted persons
- Sexualized behavior or knowledge of sexual facts and terminology beyond developmental age.
- Abrupt personality changes.
- Clinging behavior that may take the form of separation anxiety.
- Sleep disturbances. Wearing multiple layers of clothing, especially to bed.
- Bedwetting.
- Moodiness, inappropriate crying, depression, isolation.
- Criminal behavior. Fire Setting. Cruelty to animals.
- Attempts to be unattractive, or undesirable (such as poor hygiene)
- Regressive behavior (fantasies and/or infantile behavior)
- School difficulties
- Suicidal gestures or attempts
- Excessive masturbation or masturbation to the point of injury.

Having a child exhibit one or more of these signs is not indicative of sexual abuse. There could be any number of reasons why children exhibit some of these signs. Children react differently depending on the age, extent of abuse, support from other and their relationship to the offender.