



Child Safety

also means

Child Abuse Prevention



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THE SOCIETY'S MANDATE IS TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND TO STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Often when we hear the term 'child safety', visions of bicycle helmets, child car seats, and crossing guards come quickly to mind. We think of devices to protect children from the dangers of unforeseen accidents. For others, like staff, foster parents and volunteers of the Children's Aid Society (CAS), child safety conjures up different images. Child safety translates into Child Abuse Prevention. The Society and other social service providers are concerned with the injuries caused by neglect and emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of children.

What is child abuse?

It is generally defined as the non-accidental mistreatment or neglect of a child by parent(s) or

other caretaker(s) that result in injury or harm. It is not confined to a particular social class, neighbourhood, ethnic group or any other classification of people or community. Its impact on the lives of its victims is devastating. Child abuse can result in lasting physical injury or even death. For instance, a baby that is shaken violently can be permanently brain damaged and blinded. A child that has not been shown love or attention may have difficulty building healthy relationships of his or her own. Children who experience abuse sometimes take out their frustrations on others. At times, this can lead to violent or criminal behaviour. The consequences are not only felt at the individual level, but also within the community.

There is good news! Child abuse can be prevented and treated with more public education and awareness. Some commonly recognized signs of child abuse include repeated injuries, neglected appearance, passive, withdrawn, or disruptive behaviour. What can you do? If you suspect a child is being abused, call your local Children's Aid Society. Children's Aid Societies are mandated to investigate suspected cases of child abuse.

When more people become aware of the signs of child abuse and its negative repercussions, and when people begin to see child abuse as a community concern, more children will be protected.

The Children's Aid Society (CAS) also known as Family and Children's Services (F&CS) is a non-profit agency working in local communities to provide help and support to children and their families. Established under the authority of *'The Child and Family Services Act'*, the CAS is a non-profit corporation formed by concerned people in each community. The CAS is operated by a board of directors elected from the local community and by the membership at large.



If you are being abused, have been abused, or know someone who is being abused, you can contact the following services in your community for help:

- ☎ Shelter or transition home
- ☎ Police department
- ☎ Victim services
- ☎ Crisis centre or crisis line
- ☎ Women's centre
- ☎ Social service agency
- ☎ Health care centre, clinic or hospital
- ☎ Counselor
- ☎ Community or family centre

Please Note: To obtain 'local' telephone numbers for Emergency and Social Services please refer to the first few pages of your 'local' telephone directory. To find a Help Line in your province or territory please scroll to the next page.

Continued...next page...listing of provincial and territorial child abuse hot lines

Provincial and Territorial Child Abuse Hot Lines

Alberta	Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-387-KIDS (5437)
Alberta	Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
British Columbia	Child Abuse Prevention	1-800-663-9122
Manitoba	Child & Family Services	1-888-339-3576
New Brunswick	Social Development	1-800-442-9799
Newfoundland and Labrador	Health and Community Services Children Protection	1-800-668-6868 (709) 752-4619
Northwest Territories	Children and Family Services	1-867-873-7046
Nova Scotia	Children, Youth & Families	1-866-922-2434
Nunavut	Health and Social Services	1-867-975-5700
Ontario	Ontario Children's Aid Society	1-800-718-1797
Prince Edward Island	Child Protection	1-800-341-6868
Quebec	Child Welfare – French Batshaw Youth & Family – English After Hours or Emergencies	1-866-532-2822 (514) 935-6196 Dial 811
Saskatchewan	Child Abuse Kid's Help Line	1-800-274-8297 1-888-668-6868
Yukon	Child Abuse Hot Line	1-800-661-0408,

Government Websites

Canada

[Health Canada](#)

[Human Resources Development Canada](#)

First Nations

[Assembly of First Nations](#)

Ontario

[Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services](#)

[Ministry of Education](#)

[Ministry of Health and Long Term Care](#)

[Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing](#)

Other Provinces' Ministries Responsible for Child Welfare

[Alberta Children's Services](#)

[British Columbia Ministry for Children and Families](#)

[Manitoba Child and Family Services](#)

[New Brunswick Family and Community Services](#)

[Newfoundland Department of Health and Community Services](#)

[Nova Scotia Department of Community Services](#)

[Northwest Territories Health and Social Services](#)

[Nunavut Health and Social Services](#)

[Prince Edward Island Health and Social Services](#)

[Saskatchewan Social Services](#)

[Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance du Québec](#)

[Yukon Department of Health and Social Services](#)



1-800-4-A-Child

1-800-422-4453

About Childhelp

Founded in 1959 by Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson, Childhelp® is a leading national non-profit organization dedicated to helping victims of child abuse and neglect. Childhelp's approach focuses on prevention, intervention and treatment. The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-4-A-CHILD®, **operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week**, and receives calls from throughout the United States, **Canada**, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam. Childhelp's programs and services also include residential treatment services (villages); children's advocacy centres; therapeutic foster care; group homes; child abuse prevention, education and training; and the National Day of Hope®, part of National Child Abuse Prevention Month every April. Several of Childhelp's programs were firsts, and continue to be studied by professionals worldwide as "models that work." Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson continue to actively lead the organization and provide its vision, serving as Chairman/CEO and President, respectively.

Programs and Services

Childhelp's programs and services also include residential treatment services (villages); children's advocacy centers; therapeutic foster care; group homes; child abuse prevention, education and training; and the National Day of Hope®, part of National Child Abuse Prevention Month every April. Several of Childhelp's programs were firsts, and continue to be studied by professionals worldwide as "models that work." Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson continue to actively lead the organization and provide its vision, serving as Chairman/CEO and President, respectively.

Mission

Childhelp® exists to meet the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of abused, neglected and at-risk children. We focus our efforts on advocacy, prevention, treatment, and community outreach.

What is Child Abuse

Although there are many formal and acceptable definitions of child abuse, the following is offered as a guide for information on child abuse and neglect. Child abuse consists of any act of commission or omission that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development. Child abuse includes any damage done to a child which cannot be reasonably explained and which is often represented by an injury or series of injuries appearing to be non-accidental in nature.

Forms of Child Abuse

Physical abuse

Any non-accidental injury to a child. This includes hitting, kicking, slapping, shaking, burning, pinching, hair pulling, biting, choking, throwing, shoving, whipping, and paddling.

Sexual abuse

Any sexual act between an adult and child. This includes fondling, penetration, intercourse, exploitation, pornography, exhibitionism, child prostitution, group sex, oral sex, or forced observation of sexual acts.

Neglect

Failure to provide for a child's physical needs. This includes lack of supervision, inappropriate housing or shelter, inadequate provision of food and water, inappropriate clothing for season or weather, abandonment, denial of medical care and inadequate hygiene.

Emotional abuse

Any attitude or behavior which interferes with a child's mental health or social development. This includes yelling, screaming, name-calling, shaming, negative comparisons to others, telling

them they are “bad, no good, worthless” or “a mistake.” It also includes the failure to provide the affection and support necessary for the development of a child’s emotional, social, physical and intellectual well-being. This includes ignoring, lack of appropriate physical affection (hugs), not saying “I love you,” withdrawal of attention, lack of praise and lack of positive reinforcement.

What do I do if I think someone is abusing a child?

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused by someone, it is important that you **LISTEN** to them most of all.

- **Ask ONLY four questions**
 - What happened?
 - Who did this to you?
 - Where were you when this happened?
 - When did this happen?
- Asking any additional questions may contaminate a case!

DO NOT

- Investigate
- Ask leading questions (a question that suggests the answer or contains the information the questioner is looking for – That man touched you, didn’t he?)
- Make promises
- Notify the parents or the caretaker

DO

- Provide a safe environment (be comforting, welcoming, and a good listener)
- Tell the child it was not his/her fault
- Listen carefully
- Document the child’s exact quotes
- Be supportive, not judgmental
- Know your limits
- Tell the truth

If you suspect abuse, but a child has not disclosed to you, call **1-800-4-A-CHILD**. Our counselors can talk through the situation with you and help you decide what the best course of action is.

If you would like to learn more about this wonderful and very caring organization, or if you would like to make a donation, please click on www.childhelp.org.

Click on [signs and symptoms of abuse](#) to obtain additional information in PDF.