

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

VPK Hickman County



# Detection, Reporting and Prevention

**Under the Childcare Rules and Regulations Chapter 0520-12-01 VPK is required to provide educational program information regarding child abuse detection, reporting and prevention.**

This [link](#) will take you to the Kid Central website. This website offers many resources for families from Health, Education, Development and Support.

For this informational program session we will go to the Support tab and look at the items below listed under the title Crisis Services For Children:

Child Abuse  
Reporting Child Abuse  
Help Prevent Abuse



# Detection, Reporting and Prevention

The screenshot shows the homepage of kidcentraltn.com. The browser's address bar displays the URL. The website header includes the 'kidcentral tn HOME' logo, a user profile icon, and a search bar with the placeholder text 'I want to learn more about...'. Below the header is a navigation bar with four colored tabs: 'Health' (blue), 'Education' (red), 'Development' (orange), and 'Support' (purple), each with a dropdown arrow. The main content area features a large banner image of a smiling young child with curly hair. Overlaid on the left side of the banner is an orange circle containing the text 'See growth milestones.' and a white button labeled 'Sign Up for My Profile'. On the right side of the banner, a light blue speech bubble contains the text 'Find TN State Services' and a blue arrow pointing right. Below the banner are four small circular indicators, with the first one being orange and the others grey. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer section with a speaker icon on the left, and two links: 'Back To School Tips for Families' (with a small cube icon) and 'Children's Eye Health and Safety' (with a small cube icon).

kidcentraltn.com

**kidcentral tn**  
HOME

Health ▾ Education ▾ Development ▾ Support ▾

See growth milestones.  
Sign Up for My Profile

Find TN State Services →

Back To School Tips for Families

Children's Eye Health and Safety

# Detection, Reporting and Prevention

The screenshot displays the homepage of kidcentraltn.com. The browser's address bar shows the URL. The website features a header with the logo and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation bar with four main categories: Health, Education, Development, and Support. Each category has a dropdown arrow. Under the Health category, there are three links: Programs & Features, Adoption & Foster Parents, and Full Family Support. Under the Education category, there are two links: Crisis Services for Children and Child Care. Under the Development category, there is one link: Life Skills. Under the Support category, there are two links: Basic Needs and Child Support. At the bottom of the page, there are two additional links: Back To School Tips for Families and Children's Eye Health and Safety.

kidcentraltn.com

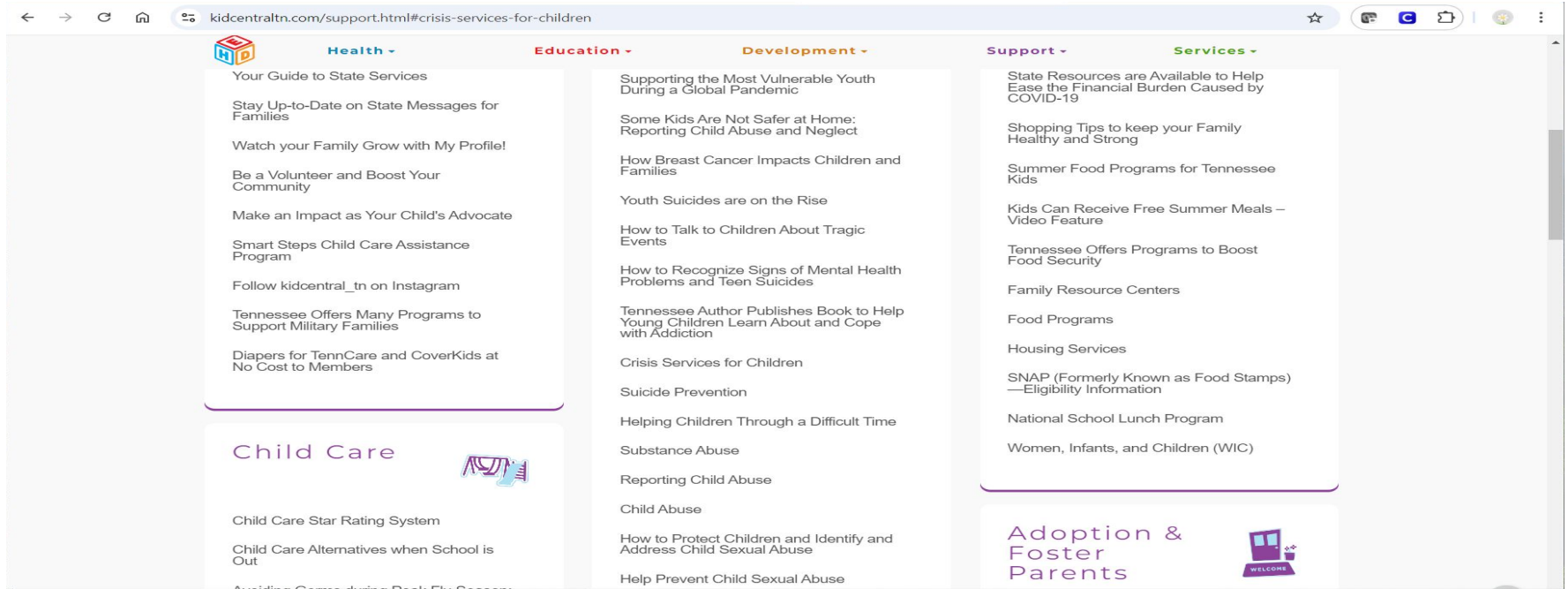
**Health** ▾ **Education** ▾ **Development** ▾ **Support** ▾

- Programs & Features
- Adoption & Foster Parents
- Full Family Support
- Crisis Services for Children
- Child Care
- Life Skills
- Basic Needs
- Child Support

Back To School Tips for Families

Children's Eye Health and Safety

# Detection, Reporting and Prevention



The screenshot shows the website kidcentraltn.com with a navigation bar and several content columns. The navigation bar includes a home icon, a search bar, and a star icon. The main content area is divided into five columns: Health, Education, Development, Support, and Services. Each column contains a list of links to various resources. The 'Child Care' section is highlighted with a purple header and a magnifying glass icon. The 'Adoption & Foster Parents' section is also highlighted with a purple header and a magnifying glass icon.

**Health**

- Your Guide to State Services
- Stay Up-to-Date on State Messages for Families
- Watch your Family Grow with My Profile!
- Be a Volunteer and Boost Your Community
- Make an Impact as Your Child's Advocate
- Smart Steps Child Care Assistance Program
- Follow kidcentral\_tn on Instagram
- Tennessee Offers Many Programs to Support Military Families
- Diapers for TennCare and CoverKids at No Cost to Members

**Education**

- Supporting the Most Vulnerable Youth During a Global Pandemic
- Some Kids Are Not Safer at Home: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- How Breast Cancer Impacts Children and Families
- Youth Suicides are on the Rise
- How to Talk to Children About Tragic Events
- How to Recognize Signs of Mental Health Problems and Teen Suicides
- Tennessee Author Publishes Book to Help Young Children Learn About and Cope with Addiction
- Crisis Services for Children
- Suicide Prevention
- Helping Children Through a Difficult Time
- Substance Abuse
- Reporting Child Abuse
- Child Abuse
- How to Protect Children and Identify and Address Child Sexual Abuse
- Help Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

**Development**

**Support**

- State Resources are Available to Help Ease the Financial Burden Caused by COVID-19
- Shopping Tips to keep your Family Healthy and Strong
- Summer Food Programs for Tennessee Kids
- Kids Can Receive Free Summer Meals – Video Feature
- Tennessee Offers Programs to Boost Food Security
- Family Resource Centers
- Food Programs
- Housing Services
- SNAP (Formerly Known as Food Stamps) – Eligibility Information
- National School Lunch Program
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

**Services**

**Child Care**

- Child Care Star Rating System
- Child Care Alternatives when School is Out

**Adoption & Foster Parents**

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

## What is child abuse?

According to TN Law (T.C.A. § 37-1-102), “Abuse” exists when a person under the age of eighteen (18) is suffering from, has sustained, or may be in immediate danger of suffering from or sustaining a wound, injury, disability or physical or mental condition caused by brutality, neglect or other actions or inactions of a parent, relative, guardian or caretaker. Abuse can be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual.



# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

**Physical Abuse** means any time a parent or caretaker hurts or injures a child on purpose. It also includes a parent or caretaker who fails to protect a child from a person who is hurting them. Physical abuse can seriously injure or even kill a child.

**Physical Neglect** means putting a child at serious risk of injury or illness by not adequately watching out for their safety, health and survival. Examples include:

- Abandonment
- Lack of supervision
- Life-endangering physical hygiene
- Lack of adequate nutrition, so the child doesn't grow normally
- Lack of shelter
- Ignoring medical or dental needs, putting the child's health in danger
- Not meeting a child's basic clothing needs

In its most severe form, physical neglect may result in a child's serious harm or death.



# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

**Sexual Abuse** means touching or penetrating a child's intimate parts, oral sex with a child, indecent exposure or any other sexual act performed in a child's presence for sexual pleasure. It also includes using a child for prostitution and/or making child pornography. A parent or caretaker who fails to try to protect a child or stop sexual abuse by another person is also involved in child sexual abuse.

**Emotional Abuse** includes verbal assaults (insults and/or yelling), ignoring a child and constant fighting in the family. If a child is shamed and humiliated enough, they will begin to live up to the poor image communicated by the abusing parent or caretaker.

Child abuse can happen anywhere—in poor, middle-class or well-to-do homes, in rural areas or urban ones.

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

## **Possible Signs a Child Has Been Abused or Neglected:**

- The child has repeated injuries that are not properly treated or adequately explained.
- The child begins acting in unusual ways; may be disruptive and aggressive, or passive and withdrawn.
- The child is forced to assume the role of a parent toward their brothers and sisters, or even toward their own parents.
- The child may have disturbed sleep (nightmares, bed-wetting, fear of sleeping alone, needing night-light).
- The child loses their appetite, overeats or may report being hungry.
- There is a sudden drop in school grades or participation in activities.
- The child may act in stylized ways, such as sexual behavior that is not normal for their age group.
- The child may talk about abusive or neglectful acts.

The above signs indicate that something is wrong but do not necessarily mean the child is being abused. However, if you notice these signs early, you may be able to prevent abuse or neglect.

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

**Parents/caretakers who abuse or neglect their children may show some common characteristics:**

- Possible drug/alcohol history
- Disorganized home life
- May seem to be isolated from the community and have no close friends
- May offer conflicting reasons or no explanation when asked about a child's injury
- May seem unwilling or unable to provide for a child's basic needs
- May not have age-appropriate expectations of their children
- May use harsh discipline that is not appropriate for child's age or behavior
- May have been abused or neglected as a child

Parents who abuse their children need help, but few are able to admit the problem and seek assistance.

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

Call 877-237-0004 or visit the [Tennessee Department of Children's Services website](#) to report abuse or neglect.

**En español:** Cómo Reportar el Abuso Infantil: Lo Que Tiene Que Saber Para Reportar el Abuso o Maltrato de Niños

## What happens when I call?

When a person notifies the Department of Children's Services regarding possible abuse or neglect of a child, the Department of Children's Services, Child Abuse Hotline case managers determine how quickly to respond with an investigation. The Child Abuse Hotline will gather sufficient information to determine if the report meets minimal criteria.



# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

**The report must meet the following criteria to be accepted for assignment:**

1. The report pertains to a child under the age of 18 years.
2. The report alleges harm or imminent risk of harm to the child.
3. The alleged perpetrator is:
  - A parent or caretaker
  - A relative or other person living in the home
  - An educator, volunteer, employee of recreational/organizational setting who is responsible for the child
  - Any individual providing treatment, care or supervision for the child
4. The report must contain information as to where to locate the alleged victim(s).

DCS accepts all referrals involving sexual abuse of children under the age of 13 years regardless of the previous relationship between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.

DCS does not investigate sexual abuse allegations of a child 13–18 years old by an alleged perpetrator who does not have a relationship with the child, as defined above unless the child is in the department's custody. DCS may assist law enforcement or the district attorney's office in such cases.

# Child Abuse Detection, Reporting and Prevention

## **What information will I be asked to provide?**

- Name and age of the child
- Nature of the harm or specific incident(s) that precipitated the report
- Specific allegation(s), date(s) and description(s) of the injuries or dangers
- Identities of alleged perpetrator(s) and their relationships to the victim
- Witnesses to the incident(s) and how to reach those witnesses
- Details of any physical evidence available
- Perpetrator's current access to the child
- Present condition of the child (alone, in need of medical attention, etc.)
- The location of the child and directions to get there
- Any statements from the child
- Parent's or perpetrator's explanation of the alleged child victim's condition or the incident
- Parent's current emotional, physical or mental state, especially feelings about the child and reactions to the report
- How the reporter came to know the information and the reporter's thoughts about the likelihood of further harm to the child

Reporters may remain anonymous. The reporter's identity is confidential, but if a name, is given the department can follow up with the reporter if necessary. The reporter is free from civil or criminal liability for reports of suspected child abuse or neglect made in good faith.

# Additional Resources

[Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

[Stewards of Light](#)

