# Indicators of Neglect

Neglect is the negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child; which is caused by failure to protect or care for a child. This includes failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and emotional support for a child. Neglect is the most common form of abuse seen and may have long-term effects. Neglect is failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care. Parents must provide adequate supervision, care, guidance and protection to keep children from physical or mental harm. Parents must also provide appropriate treatment for children's problems. Children will have minor injuries during childhood. When accidental injuries are frequent, they may be the result of neglect.

General Neglect - Physical Indicators

- Consistently dirty and clothes are unwashed.
- Hungry, underweight
- Tired and listless
- Has unattended physical/dental problems.
- May have accidental injuries due to a lack of supervision
- Inappropriately/inadequately dressed
- Has injuries that indicate an unsafe living condition (rat or roach bites, for instance)

General Neglect - Behavioral Indicators

- Truant or tardy to school often, or arrives early and stays late.
- Begs or steals food.
- Attempts suicide.
- Extremely dependent or detached.
- Appears to be exhausted.
- States that there is frequent or continual absence of parent or guardian.

Behaviors Seen in Infants & Toddlers

- Withdrawn, apathetic
- Rocking
- Fearful
- Lethargy
- Failure to thrive
- Speech and language delays

Behaviors Seen in School-Age Children

- Withdrawn, apathetic
- Fearful
- Learned helplessness
- Hoarding food
- Pseudo-independence
- Regressive behavior
- Sleeps in class or is unable to concentrate due to fatigue
- Seems unable to concentrate, preoccupied
- Parent-child role reversal exists