

## **Abuse & Neglect**



Nurse Aide Education Program  
Inservice/Continuing Education Credit Courses

## Abuse & Neglect

### Introduction



Abuse inflicts physical, sexual, emotional trauma that can leave deep and deep and long-lasting emotional scars. Subtle forms of abuse such as neglect and emotional abuse can be just as traumatizing as as violent physical abuse. Abuse comes in many forms: physical, emotional, sexual, economic, and spiritual. Some forms of abuse are not are not easily recognizable and caregivers need to observe for abusive abusive situations.

The first step in ending the abuse or neglect is recognizing when a situation is harmful. Support and treatment can help both victims and and abusers. Below are definitions that will assist in identifying abusive abusive and neglectful situations.

### Types of Abuse and Neglect

**Abuse** is purposely causing physical, mental, or emotional pain or injury to someone. Shoving is an example of physical abuse. Intimidating a person is an example of emotional or psychological abuse.

**Neglect** is harming the person physically, mentally, or emotionally by failing to give care and attention. Deliberately ignoring a dependent person is an example of neglect. Failure to provide proper care for a person causes unintended injury and is neglectful.

Examples of neglect are:

- Not noticing the person's dentures do not fit properly (can't eat well, becomes malnourished).
- Forgetting to lock the person's wheelchair before transferring her. She falls and is injured.





**Physical Abuse-** Any treatment, intentional or not, that causes harm to a person's body. This includes slapping, bruising, cutting, burning, physically physically restraining, pushing, shoving, or other assaultive behaviors. Physical abuse includes domestic violence, false imprisonment or involuntary seclusion of another.



**Sexual Abuse-** Physically or emotionally forcing a person to perform or participate in sexual acts. This includes sexual harassment or unwelcome unwelcome verbal or physical sexual advances



**Psychological or mental abuse-** Emotionally harming a person by threatening, humiliating, intimidating, isolating, insulting or treating him or her or her in a demeaning and disrespectful manner. Verbal abuse is often psychologically and mentally damaging.



**Verbal abuse-** Oral or written words, pictures, or gestures that intimidate, intimidate, humiliate, or frighten others.



**Financial abuse-** Stealing, taking advantage of, or improperly using money, money, property, or assets of another.



*be posted and should include telephone numbers for the Protective Services authority for children and for adults. If in doubt, you can always call 911 for assistance in how to report.*

### **Observing and Reporting**

Symptoms of possible Abuse and Neglect that must be reported:

- Poisoning
- Teeth or bite marks
- Belt buckle or strap marks
- Old and new bruises, contusions and welts
- Fractures or dislocations
- Burns of unusual shape and location, cigarette and scalding burns
- Scratches and puncture wounds
- Scalp tenderness and patches of missing hair
- Swelling in the face, broken teeth

Physical abuse is often easy to recognize and easy to report. Some forms of abuse are not so easily recognized. Some signs that may warrant closer observation for abuse and neglect include:

- Yelling obscenities
- Fear, apprehension, fear of being alone
- Poor self-control
- Constant pain
- Threatening to hurt others
- Complaints of anxiety
- Withdrawal or apathy
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Agitation or anxiety, signs of stress
- Low self-esteem
- Mood changes, confusion, disorientation
- Private conversations not allowed, or the family member/caregiver is present during all conversations

Caregivers should also be aware that unmet care needs constitute neglect. Pressure sores, soiled bedding or clothing, bodily filth, body lice, and dehydration are all signs of neglect and should be reported.

*If a client wants to make a complaint of abuse, you must help them in every possible way. The process for reporting can be obtained from police, emergency responders, schools, hospitals, and community agencies that serve the elderly or disabled. Emergency numbers for reporting should be posted in each dependent person's home.*

### **Summary**

Abuse inflicts physical, sexual, emotional trauma that can leave deep and long-lasting emotional scars. It can come in a variety of forms, and it is important that you can identify these. If you do encounter a person who is being abused, you must take appropriate action and contact the appropriate authorities immediately.

