

DOMESTIC ABUSE - CHECKLIST

10 signs that a teacher might observe

- 1. Unexplained Injuries:** Frequent bruises, cuts, or other injuries, often with vague or implausible explanations, can be indicative of physical abuse at home.
- 2. Changes in Behaviour:** Sudden and drastic changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, or aggressive, may signal abuse. This can also include extreme clinginess or an unusual fear of adults.
- 3. Frequent Absences:** Regularly missing school without a valid reason can be a sign that a child is kept home to hide injuries or due to a chaotic home environment.
- 4. Poor Hygiene and Appearance:** Consistently appearing dirty, unkempt, or wearing the same clothes repeatedly may indicate neglect, a common aspect of domestic abuse.
- 5. Decline in Academic Performance:** A sudden drop in grades or a lack of concentration and interest in schoolwork can be a sign of distress caused by abuse.
- 6. Reluctance to Go Home:** Expressing fear or reluctance about going home after school can indicate problems at home.
- 7. Overly Watchful or Anxious Behaviour:** Being overly alert or wary, as if anticipating something bad to happen, is a common reaction to living in an abusive environment.
- 8. Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour or Knowledge:** Demonstrating sexual behaviour or knowledge that is inappropriate for their age can indicate sexual abuse or exposure to inappropriate content at home.
- 9. Physical Symptoms of Stress:** Complaints of headaches, stomach-aches, or other physical ailments with no apparent medical cause can be manifestations of stress due to abuse.
- 10. Withdrawal from Friends and Activities:** Pulling away from friends, extracurricular activities, or hobbies they previously enjoyed can be a sign of emotional or physical distress caused by abuse.

Questions / Discussion Points

- Is there an issue in our school / college / education setting?
- How can we identify children who might be the subject of domestic abuse?
- How do we manage our approach, being mindful of potential threats inside the domestic environment?
- What should we do if we have a concern about a child?
- Do we have up to date contacts for the local and national help services?