

# What is Child Abuse?

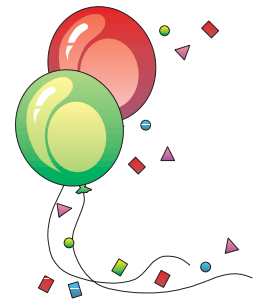
California law defines child abuse as any of the following:

- ◆ A child is physically injured by other than accidental means
- ◆ A child is subjected to willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment
- ◆ A child is abused or exploited sexually
- ◆ A child is neglected by a parent or caretaker who fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision.

**Any child may be victimized. Child abuse crosses all socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural, occupational, religious, and age groups.**



**Remember,  
child abuse  
is a  
CRIME!**



**There are four major types of child maltreatment:  
NEGLECT, PHYSICAL ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE  
and EMOTIONAL ABUSE.**

- ◆ **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs including physical, medical, educational and emotional needs.
- ◆ **Physical abuse** is physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result punching, beating kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting, or otherwise harming a child.
- ◆ **Sexual abuse** includes activities such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.
- ◆ **Emotional abuse** is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats, or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance.

