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EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Observable Indicators
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Emotional abuse is a pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth. Emotional abuse includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands that place expectations on a child beyond his or her capacity. Constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, rejecting and teasing are some of the forms these verbal attacks can take. Emotional abuse also includes failure to provide the psychological nurturing necessary for a child's psychological growth and development -- providing no love, support or guidance (National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1987).

Observable Indicators

- child rocks, sucks, bites self
- inappropriately aggressive,
- destructive to others
- suffers from sleep, speech disorders
- restricts play activities or experiences
- demonstrates compulsions, obsessions, phobias, hysterical outbursts

Behavioral Indicators in Child

- negative statements about self
- shy, passive, compliant
- lags in physical, mental and emotional development

- self destructive behavior
- highly aggressive
- cruel to others
- overly demanding

Family or Parental Indicators

- blames or puts down child
- is cold and rejecting
- indifferent to child's problems or welfare
- withholds affection
- shows preferential treatment when there is more than one child in the family

NOTE Again, any one of these indicators could be attributable to a specific life event or other trauma. A pattern of behavior is the strongest indicator of abuse and should not be ignored.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
OTHER CHILD ABUSE SUBJECTS,
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