

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO NEGLECT AND ABUSE

While maltreating parents/caretakers share many characteristics with members of the general population, there are patterns of behaviors and family dynamics which are predictors and indicators of child abuse and neglect. The following is a list of characteristics which are commonly present in maltreating families:

- Tend to be socially isolated and have no social support system
- Parents have low self-esteem
- Parents have distorted ideas regarding the child
- Have little knowledge about child development
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Lack means of controlling child's behavior through alternative methods to corporal discipline
- Inability to empathize (view the world from the point of the child)
- Have difficulty in building trusting relationships
- Mental Health Issues
- Tend to be immature and dependent
- Use of alcohol and/or substances
- Domestic violence
- Inadequate family income and/or sporadic employment history
- Inadequate housing
- Unstable living conditions (transient or frequent moves)
- Limited intellectual functioning
- Family history of child neglect or abuse
- Poor household management
- Poor understanding of role of parent
- Poor communication within the family
- Non-responsive to emotional needs of the child
- Child who is developmentally delayed and/or has behavior problems