
FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION

The world may no longer seem a safe, secure place for adults, but our children should still have the security of childhood. Homes should be places where there is nurturing, support, and love. Many children, however, feel anything but safe and secure in their homes because they live with adults or older children who abuse and/or neglect them.

The accuracy of statistics dealing with what goes on within the privacy of the home may be open to question, but based on reports to child protective services, almost 1 million children are maltreated by their caregivers or other adults over the course of each year in the United States. Included in this is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. For children under the age of 14 years, maltreatment is the sixth leading cause of death. The lives of those who survive are marred by emotional scars that can persist for years. Sometimes these children become abusers themselves, inflicting maltreatment on their children, their spouses, and even their elderly parents. Other survivors experience emotional disorders, learning difficulties, or other deficits that burden the community, welfare systems, social services, healthcare facilities, and mental health systems.

While the extremes of child abuse are obvious, many parents struggle to decide what is legitimate discipline and what words or behaviors inflict emotional pain. When does a family's casual acceptance of nudity become perverted to sexual abuse? Gray areas exist, but the following are offered as definitions of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect:

Physical abuse: An act of commission toward a child by a parent or caretaker that results in harm to the child or is intended to harm the child.

Emotional abuse: Verbal denigration, belittling, or scapegoating that targets a child's development of self and social competence.

Sexual abuse: Sexual contact or interaction between a child and an adult or older child that is designed to result in the sexual stimulation and gratification of the adult or older child.

Neglect: Acts of omission that adversely affect the developmental potential of a child; the failure of caregivers to provide for the basic needs of their children.

How can concerned individuals address these problems? An important step is to report suspected child maltreatment. While there is a moral obligation for anyone to report, a number of professionals—physicians, nurses, dentists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, teachers and other school officials, day care workers, and law enforcement personnel—are legally mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect in the United States. This book was prepared with the needs of mandated reporters in mind.

There is a need for clear, accurate information as a part of ongoing educational efforts. As child maltreatment infects new areas (the Internet, for example), mandated reporters need to be aware of an increasingly large variety of abuse indicators. They also need an understanding of the systems put in place to handle child abuse cases—legal services, social services, medical care, etc.

There also is a need for support: for the child, the parents, and the reporter himself or herself. This can be as simple as knowing who can answer initial questions or as complex as where to look for the protection of an endangered child.

The mandated reporter also needs a knowledge of preventive efforts and programs that are in place. Preventing child abuse can involve programs as diverse as prenatal screening and care, local parenting classes, and mass media campaigns.

How does the third edition of *Recognition of Child Abuse for the Mandated Reporter* meet these needs? Chapters specific to identifying child maltreatment in its various forms address the informational requirements of readers. These foundational chapters are complemented by in-depth discussions of unusual presentations, such as Munchausen syndrome by proxy and multiple personality disorder. Added to these discussions are chapters on how the system works and who does what. Finally, the topic of prevention is not only addressed in special chapters but also runs throughout the text as an underlying message. One clear focus of this book is eliminating the factors that lead to the abuse of our youngest citizens.

All of us have a responsibility to provide a safe, nurturing environment for the children of our nation. Those most intimately involved—parents and other caregivers—face a significant challenge in this uncertain world and can benefit from different types of support. All those who are committed to the health, social growth, and legal protection of children must be provided with the tools required to address difficult issues such as child abuse. This book is a valuable addition to the resources available to those helping to provide a safe, secure environment for children.

John M. Leventhal, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics
Yale University School of Medicine
Medical Director
Child Abuse Committee
Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital
New Haven, Connecticut

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

Mandated reporters - those legally and ethically required to report child abuse - need practical, current information to truly recognize the signs and symptoms of maltreatment. This completely revised and updated reference offers that. In addition, this publication serves as a textbook for students in medicine, nursing, social services, and law enforcement who plan to work with children. Written by experts from multiple disciplines, *Recognition of Child Abuse for the Mandated Reporter* incorporates proven approaches for distinguishing possible abuse from conditions that mimic abuse, conducting necessary interviews and examinations, documenting findings and preparing reports, making appropriate referrals, and joining with other caring professionals to prevent child maltreatment.

Abused children, especially those who have been sexually abused, often first disclose their abuse to a teacher or other counselor. Handling the disclosure is critical, and this text offers comprehensive information in this area. Case reports are used extensively to demonstrate situations ranging from obvious abuse to conditions mistaken for abuse, to ambiguous cases in which definitive diagnosis remains elusive.

New chapters in this third edition include, among others, *The Internet and the Risk for Maltreatment*, *After the Call: Children and the Child Welfare System*, and *Prevention Efforts: National*. In addition, the expanded material includes discussion of community and home-based services, art and play therapy, psychological and psychiatric responses to abuse, and resources available to professionals caring for abused children.

We hope that this third edition will continue to be accepted and widely used. We believe this text is an essential resource for all adults responsible for the care and protection of children. It will help them to identify problems in the lives of children and empower them to report suspected cases in appropriate and meaningful ways.

Angelo P. Giardino, M.D., Ph.D.
Eileen R. Giardino, Ph.D., R.N., C.R.N.P.