

# Suspect Abuse or Neglect? Take Action!

## Be Aware:

Signs can be **SUBTLE**. Look for:

- ➔ Signs of injury
- ➔ Changes in behavior, mood or communication
- ➔ Changes in sleep or eating patterns

Document your observations.

**PATTERNS** can develop over time.

## Act Immediately:

Ensure the **IMMEDIATE SAFETY** of the victim.

- ➔ **REPORT** and **DOCUMENT** the matter according to your agency's abuse policy and procedures and **REPORT** to:
  1. The police
  2. Agency administration
  3. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- ➔ **DO NOT DISCUSS** the matter with anyone who is not directly involved in the reporting and documentation procedure (e.g., colleagues, friends, residents).

## Legal Requirement to Report:

In some cases, abuse is considered a **CRIMINAL OFFENCE** under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Examples of criminal offences are:

- ➔ Physical or sexual assault
- ➔ Failure to provide the necessities of life
- ➔ Negligence causing bodily harm

Agencies are **REQUIRED BY LAW** to report to the police any suspected abuse that may constitute a criminal offence. The police have the **EXPERTISE** to determine if a criminal offence has taken place.

## Zero Tolerance of Abuse:

A zero tolerance of abuse means that **ANY** and **ALL** abusive actions must be reported and addressed.

- ➔ **REPORT EVEN IF** someone else says they are going to.
- ➔ **REPORT EVEN IF** you promised the victim you wouldn't tell anyone.