

## **RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF ABUSE OF A MINOR**

Observation or reporting of signs of abuse or violence against minors at the University arising from activities involving contact with minors may be undertaken by minors, their parents/guardians, University employees, or individuals possessing knowledge or suspicion of such abuse. These signs may include physical or behavioural symptoms. It is important to consider the minor's family situation when identifying potential abuse occurring at home. If feasible, comprehensive identification will be conducted by the Rector's Plenipotentiary and a team of specialists, such as psychologists or educators, based on information gathered through personal interactions or from other sources. In a limited capacity, identification may be undertaken by a member of the academic community who communicates relevant information to the Rector's Plenipotentiary. Following the identification process, the Rector's Plenipotentiary will determine appropriate intervention, which could involve reporting the abuse to the Rector and/or external public authorities, depending on the identified type of abuse and the necessary course of action.

### **Signs of abuse:**

#### **1. Physical symptoms to look out for include:**

1. Bruises, fractures, burns, and other injuries or marks on the minor's body that may indicate physical abuse.
2. Wearing clothes that cover the body, even in hot weather.
3. Health problems such as malnutrition, lack of hygiene, and inappropriate clothing for the weather conditions.

#### **2. Changes in the minor's behaviour:**

1. Withdrawal, timidity, passivity, excessive aggression, bouts of anger
2. Changes in appetite or sleeping patterns, as well as changes in behaviour and habits that are difficult to explain.
3. Constant fatigue, apathy, lack of zest for life, and indifference as a general attitude towards reality, with a tendency to run away from reality.

4. Avoidance of certain people or places, as well as fear of certain people or places.
5. Sudden difficulties at school, deterioration in academic performance, and changes in the minor's style of functioning or sudden abandonment of previous interests.
6. Seclusion and isolation from peers.
7. Seeking constant attention from the teacher, constantly drawing attention to oneself, or "sticking" to the teacher.
8. Excessive caution, constant tension, and a 'wait-and-see' attitude.
9. General lack of trust in others.
10. Stealing, lying, and cheating.
11. Expression of resentment and fear of returning home or to parents.
12. Specifically related to sexual abuse of a minor: pseudo-mature sexual behaviour, sexually provocative behaviour, aggressive sexual behaviour towards adults or peers, simulation or imitation of sexual activities, depiction of sexual content in behaviour or creations, compulsive masturbation, and scratching in intimate places.

**3. Signs of harm or violence reported by a minor include:**

- 1) Explicit statements by the minor indicating that they have been harmed, or signs of experiencing violence through drawings, stories, or behaviour.;
- 2) Statements by a minor that may indirectly indicate violence, such as recounting that it happened to their friend.

**4. Family factors related to violence against a minor:**

- 1) Violent behaviour exhibited by parents or guardians towards the minor
- 2) Observable tension in the relationship between the minor and the parent or guardian, alongside the minor visibly demonstrating fear towards the parent or guardian
- 3) Lack of response from the parent or guardian to the emotional and physical needs of the minor
- 4) Family experiencing socio-economic or psycho-social stress, including a decline in economic status, loss of employment, relocation, sudden negative family events (e.g. divorce, death, serious illness, or the arrival of a new child)
- 5) Disrupted relationships and conflicts between parents or guardians
- 6) Parental exposure to violence during their childhood

- 7) Negative or unrealistic perceptions of the minor
- 8) Substance addiction issues in parents or caregivers
- 9) Psychological and personality problems in parents or guardians (e.g., high authoritarianism, strictness, low impulse control, or depressive tendencies).