**Neglect**

**Abandonment**

The desertion of a child without arranging for his reasonable care or supervision. Usually, a child is considered abandoned when not picked up within two days.

**Expulsion—**theblatant refusal of custody, such as the permanent or indefinite expulsion of a child from the home, without adequately arranging for his care by others or the refusal to accept custody of a returned runaway.

**Shuttling—**when a child is repeatedly left in the custody of others for days or weeks at a time, possibly due to the unwillingness of the parent or the caregiver to maintain custody.

**Nutritional neglect—**when a child is undernourished or is repeatedly hungry for long periods of time, which can sometimes be evidenced by poor growth. Nutritional neglect often is included in the category of “other physical neglect.”

**Clothing neglect—**when a child lacks appropriate clothing, such as not having appropriately warm clothes or shoes in the winter.

**Other physical neglect—**includes inadequate hygiene and forms of reckless disregard for the child’s safety and welfare. (e.g., driving while intoxicated with the child, leaving a young child in a car unattended).

**Medical neglect**- encompasses a parent or guardian’s denial of or delay in seeking needed health care for a child as described below:

**Denial of health care—**the failure to provide or to allow needed care as recommended by a competent health care professional for a physical injury, illness, medical condition, or impairment. The CAPTA amendments of 1996 and 2003 contained no *Federal* requirement for a parent to provide any medical treatment for a child if that treatment is against the parent’s religious beliefs. However, CAPTA. Also designates that there is no requirement that a *State* either find or be prohibited from finding abuse or neglect in cases where parents or legal guardians act in accordance with their religious beliefs. While CAPTA stipulates that all States must give authority to CPS to pursue any legal actions necessary.

1. To ensure medical care or treatment to prevent or to remedy serious harm to a child or.
2. To prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatment from a child with a life-threatening condition (except. in. the. cases. of. withholding. treatment. from. disabled. infants) all determinations will be done on a case by case basis within the sole discretion of each State.

**Delay in health care—**the failure to seek timely and appropriate medical care for a serious health problem that any reasonable person would have recognized as needing professional medical attention. Examples of a delay in health care include not getting appropriate preventive medical or dental care for a child, not obtaining care for a sick child, or not following medical recommendations. Not seeking adequate mental health care also falls under this category. A lack or delay in health care may occur because the family does not have health insurance. Individuals who are uninsured often have compromised health because they receive less preventive care, are diagnosed at more advanced disease stages, and, once diagnosed, receive less therapeutic care.

**Inadequate supervision**

**Inadequate supervision**- encompasses a number of behaviors including:

**Lack of appropriate supervision-** Some States specify the amount of time children at different ages can be left unsupervised, and the guidelines for these ages and times vary. In addition, all children are different, so the amount of supervision needed may vary by the child’s age, development, or situation. It is important to evaluate the maturity of the child, the accessibility of other adults, the duration and frequency of unsupervised time, and the neighborhood or environment when determining if it is acceptable to leave a child unsupervised.

**Exposure to hazards-** Examples of exposure to in and out-of-home hazards include: Safety hazards—poisons, small objects, electrical wires, stairs, drug paraphernalia;

Smoking—second-hand smoke, especially for children with asthma or other lung problems; Guns and other weapons—guns that are kept in the house that are loaded and not locked up or are in reach of children;.

Unsanitary household conditions—rotting food, human or animal feces, insect infestation, or lack of running or clean water; Lack of car safety restraints.

**Inappropriate caregivers-** Another behavior that can fall under “failure to protect” is leaving a child in the care of someone who either is unable or should not be trusted to provide care for a child. Examples of inappropriate caregivers include a young child a known child abuser or someone with a substance abuse problem.

**Other forms of inadequate supervision-** Additional examples of inadequate supervision include: Leaving a child with an appropriate caregiver, but without proper planning or consent (e.g. not returning to pick up the child for several hours or days after the agreed upon pickup time or not giving the caregiver all the necessary items to take care of the child);

Leaving the child with a caregiver who is not adequately supervising the child (e.g. the caregiver is with the child, but is not paying close attention to the child due to constantly being distracted by other activities);

Permitting or not keeping the child from engaging in risky, illegal, or harmful behaviors (e.g. letting a child smoke marijuana).

Another common but complex example is single, working parents who are having difficulty arranging for appropriate back-up child care when their regular child care providers are unavailable. For example, a mother may leave her child home alone when the child care provider fails to show up. If the mother does not go to work, she can lose her job and will not be able to take care of her child. However, if she leaves the child alone, she will be guilty of neglect. It is important that parents in situations similar to this receive adequate support so that they are not forced to make these difficult decisions.

**Environmental neglect**

Some of the characteristics mentioned above can be seen as stemming from environmental neglect, which is characterized by a lack of environmental or neighborhood safety, opportunities, or resources. While children’s safety and protection from hazards are major concerns for CPS, most attention focuses on the conditions in the home and parental omissions in care. A broad view of neglect incorporates environmental conditions linking neighborhood factors with family and individual functioning, especially since the harmful impact of dangerous neighborhoods on children’s development, mental health, and child maltreatment has been demonstrated. CPS workers should be aware of this impact on the family when assessing the situation and developing case plans. For example, they can help parents find alternative play areas in a drug-infested neighborhood, rather than. Have their children play on the streets.

**Emotional neglect**

Typically emotional neglect is more difficult to assess than other types of neglect, but is thought to have more severe and long-lasting consequences than physical neglect. It often occurs with other forms of neglect or abuse, which may be easier to identify, and includes:

**Inadequate nurturing or affection**—thepersistent, marked inattention to the child’s needs for affection, emotional support, or attention.

**Chronic or extreme spouse abuse**—the exposure to chronic or extreme spouse abuse or other domestic violence.

**Permitted drug or alcohol abuse**—the encouragement or permission by the caregiver of drug or alcohol use by the child.

**Other permitted maladaptive behavior**— the encouragement or permission of other maladaptive behavior (e.g. chronic delinquency, assault) under circumstances where the parent or caregiver has reason to be aware of the existence and the seriousness of the problem, but does not intervene.

**Isolation—**denying a child the ability to interact or to communicate with peers or adults outside or inside the home.

**Educational neglect**

Although State statutes and policies vary, both parents and schools are responsible for meeting certain requirements regarding the education of children. Types of educational neglect include:

**Permitted chronic truancy**—permitting habitual absenteeism from school averaging at least 5 days a month if the parent or guardian is informed of the problem and does not attempt to intervene.

**Failure to enroll or other truancy**—failing to homeschool, to register, or to enroll a child of mandatory school age, causing the child to miss at least 1 month of school without valid reasons.

**Inattention to special education needs**— refusing to allow or failing to obtain recommended remedial education services or neglecting to obtain or follow through with treatment for a child’s diagnosed learning disorder or other special education need without reasonable cause.

**Newborns addicted or exposed to drugs**

As of 2005, 24 States had statutory provisions requiring the reporting of substance-exposed newborns to CPS. Women who use drugs or alcohol during pregnancy can put their unborn children at risk for mental and physical disabilities. The number of children prenatally exposed to drugs or to alcohol each year is between 409, 000 and 823,000. One study showed that drug-exposed newborns constitute as many as 72 percent of the babies abandoned in hospitals. Another study found that 23 percent of children prenatally exposed to cocaine were later abused or neglected, compared with 3 percent who were not prenatally exposed. To address the needs. Of these children, the Keeping Children and Families. Safe Act of 2003. (P.L. 108-36, sec. 114(b)(1)(B)) mandated that States include the following in their CAPTA plans:

(ii). Policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protection service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure including a requirement that health care provider involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition of such infants, except that such notification shall not be construed to

(I) Establish a definition under Federal law of what constitutes child abuse; or

(II) Require prosecution for any illegal action.

(III) The development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms;

(IV) Procedures for the immediate screening risk and safety assessment, and prompt investigation of such reports.

**Homelessness and neglect**

It is unclear whether homelessness should be considered neglect; some States specifically omit homelessness by itself as neglect. Unstable living conditions can have a negative effect on children, and homeless children are more at risk for other types of neglect in areas such as health, education, and nutrition. Homelessness is “considered neglect when the inability to provide shelter is the result of mismanagement of financial resources or when spending rent resources on drugs or alcohol results in frequent evictions.”