

6 Warning Signs That Your Child Is Emotionally Abused At Home



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Written by Tavishi Dogra | Updated : December 2, 2022 9:10 PM IST

Emotional abuse, often called psychological abuse, is a pattern of behaviour that reduces a child's sense of self-worth and impedes their emotional development. It has awful long-term effects, including an increased prevalence of sickness and mental health concerns. "No, it wasn't that terrible, the other children had it worse." When a parent emotionally abuses an adult, they say, "I'm susceptible," and try to hide their pain so they don't upset other people.

In addition to withholding compassion and support, family members, particularly parents, subject children to emotional abuse by rejecting, criticising, threatening, shaming, and mocking them. They may ridicule, insult, and call the children names. **Emotional child abuse** is centred on power and control. Through emotionally destructive and harmful words and actions, the abuser manipulates and exercises control over the child. **Dr Malini Saba, Psychologist, Founder & Chairman of Anannke Foundation,Discusses Six Warning Signs Your Child Is Being Emotionally Abused at Home.**

- In the top spot:** To adequately care for their children, parents must address their physical, mental, and emotional requirements. Nonetheless, when a parent continuously prioritises their desires over a child's, this can lead to abuse, mainly if the child is too young to support itself. Examples of this parenting include frequently leaving young children unsupervised at home to go on dates, using guilt to coerce their children or adolescents into staying at home rather than spending time with friends, etc.
- Isolation:****Parents frequently use isolation** as a form of emotional abuse to gain control over their children by severing ties with friends, family, and loved ones, which hinders their capacity to develop social skills and seek help. Common signs include aggressively discouraging children's interactions and communication with family and others, continuously making reasons for why they can't meet friends, and arbitrarily and repeatedly putting the child in their room for unknown amounts of time. Abusive isolation differs from, for example, grounding a teen for a week as a consequence of engaging in harmful activity, such as substance abuse, during a party.



- Intimidate the child:** Intimidation is an extreme form of emotional abuse since it leads the child to feel helpless, hopeless, and afraid. This behaviour may emerge in a variety of ways. For example, when a child confronts a parent about something, the parent has unexpected emotional outbursts, causing the child to feel unsafe expressing their thoughts and concerns. When they disagree with a child, they yell, scream, and curse at them, **calling them derogatory names** and occasionally throwing objects. Ineffective emotional management, a lack of empathy, and a solid drive to control the child can lead to parental intimidation. A parent with a borderline personality disorder may use pressure to prevent their children from leaving, for example, by threatening to never talk to them again if they hang up the phone or leave the house, etc.
- Refusing affection:** Emotional abuse is often more challenging to recognise than physical abuse. In other instances, it is not determined by what a parent does but rather by what they do not do. For example, parents intentionally withhold affection to manage their children's behaviour. This includes avoiding embraces, "I love you," and vocal expressions of praise. When a parent gives a child the cold shoulder after telling them, they cannot spend the holidays with them or express an opposing viewpoint, this subtle aggressive gesture conveys the message that their love is conditional, causing the youngster to seek their approval to obtain affection.
- Neglect:** Neglect is one of the most prevalent kinds of emotional abuse against children. In other words, a parent may be physically or mentally incapable of caring for their child. Neglect occurs when a parent fails to provide a child's fundamental requirements, such as food, clothing, sleep, sanitation, and medical care. Emotional neglect may include: refusing to respond with compassion or love when a child is suffering, ignoring them when they call out for help; not providing psychological support for the child, Permitting the use of alcohol and drugs; etc.
- Comparison:** Humans instinctively compare. A parent may see another couple's child is better behaved, just as a child may notice their parents are stricter. Verbal comparisons can be abusive. For example, parents may compare by asking, "Why can't you paint or dance like your friend?" In multi-child families, **parents may compare children to siblings**. This could make the child feel inferior to and resentful of their sibling, causing rivalry and damaging the relationship. The parent probably isn't comparing the child to others to harm them but rather to encourage them to behave in a manner that is more appealing to them.

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