

# Child Abuse Cases: A Guide for the Community



CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## Reporting Child Abuse

In cases of emergency, call 911.

If you know or have reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, call the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register at 1-800-342-3720.

A call to the New York State Register can result in a report being sent to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the assignment, within 24 hours, of a caseworker to investigate the call.

## Family Court

If there is credible evidence that abuse or maltreatment has taken place, ACS may file a petition in Family Court when the abuser is a parent, or person legally responsible for the child. The proceeding in Family Court is a civil proceeding and does not involve criminal penalties. The purpose of a Family Court proceeding is to protect children from maltreatment and to safeguard their physical and emotional well-being. A lawyer will represent the child in Family Court. Contact the Family Court for more information at 212-374-8748.

## Criminal Cases

In certain cases of physical or sexual abuse, the case will be forwarded to the District Attorney's Office and the Manhattan Special Victim's Squad (MSVS) of the Police Department. If the Police Department makes an arrest, the case will be prosecuted as a criminal matter by the District Attorney's Office.

## New York County District Attorney's Office Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau

80 Centre Street  
4th Floor  
New York, NY 10013  
212-335-4300

## Northern Manhattan Office

(located in the Harlem  
State Office Building)  
163 West 125th Street  
7th floor  
New York, NY 10027  
212-864-7884

## Witness Aid Services Unit

100 Centre Street  
Room 231  
New York, NY 10013  
212-335-9040

## Website

[www.manhattanda.org](http://www.manhattanda.org)





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Dear Friends,

Every year in the United States, nearly 1 million children are victims of child abuse. Approximately 1,000 reported cases involve a fatality. Child abuse may involve physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or parental neglect. Child abuse not only affects its victims, but their families and the community as a whole. This brochure provides information about the services available through the Manhattan District Attorney's Office to report, prosecute, and prevent child abuse. The Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau is here to help you.

Sincerely,

Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.

### Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau

The Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau was created in recognition of the strong correlation between domestic violence and child abuse. The Bureau handles investigations, arrests, and prosecutions of serious crimes against children under the age of 14, whether committed by family or non-family members. The Bureau is comprised of specially trained Assistant District Attorneys who have extensive experience in prosecuting serious cases. There is an Assistant District Attorney from this Bureau on call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

The Bureau investigates child abuse cases through a multi-disciplinary approach in coordination with the New York City Police Department, the Administration for Children's Services, child protection agencies, and medical professionals throughout the city. This cooperation promotes an effective and efficient response to child abuse, while minimizing additional trauma to the child victims.

A Child Victim Specialist is available to work with victims and their families to provide support and counseling while the case is pending. A child-friendly waiting area also makes a visit to the Bureau more comfortable for children and their families.

### Internet Crimes Against Children

The Bureau investigates and prosecutes individuals who sexually exploit children via the Internet through the manufacture and distribution of child pornography. The Bureau also investigates and prosecutes individuals who seek to make contact with children over the Internet to engage them in sexual activity.

### Abandoned Infant Protection Act (PL §260.03)

The District Attorney's Office encourages parents of unwanted newborns to take steps to ensure the safety of their children. If a baby is left physically unharmed within 5 days of birth in a safe location such as a hospital, fire station, or police precinct, and an appropriate person is promptly notified of the child's location, the New York County District Attorney's office will not prosecute the parent.