Welcome to Assessing Child Maltreatment. Physical Abuse. This short Computer Aided Training serves as an introduction to Assessing Child Maltreatment, which you will take as a classroom course in cohort training. Developed and presented by the Indiana Child Welfare Education and Training Partnership.
Each type of Child Maltreatment presents its own challenges to Family Case Managers. In this training, you will be introduced to different categories of Physical Abuse.

In addition, you will become more familiar with the following Policies and Tool:

- 4.6-Exigent Circumstances
- 4.14-Examining and Photographing a Child and/or Trauma
- Tool 4.F-Tips for Photographing/Examining Children

Slide notes
Physical Abuse. Each type of Child Maltreatment presents its own challenges to Family Case Managers. In this training, you will be introduced to different categories of Physical Abuse. In addition, you will become more familiar with the following Policies and Tool.

4.6 Exigent Circumstances, 4.14 Examining and Photographing a Child and or Trauma. And Tool 4.F, Tips for Photographing and Examining Children.
While viewing this training, you will complete the Physical Abuse Worksheet questions located in the front section of your Assessing Child Maltreatment (ACM) Participant Manual. Locate the ACM Manual now to complete the worksheet. You will see this icon appear on a slide when the content answers part or all of a worksheet question.

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Physical Abuse occurs when a child’s physical or mental condition is seriously impaired, or seriously endangered, due to an injury as a result of the caregiver’s act or omission. Or there is evidence of illegal manufacturing of a drug, or controlled substance occurring on the property where the child resides.
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Physical Abuse leads to a wide range of injuries such as physical damage, disability, or death. Generally, Physical Abuse refers to non-accidental infliction of injury, or harm to a child by a caregiver.
Slide notes

Physical Abuse Characteristics.

There are three characteristics of injuries that should be considered when assessing Physical Abuse. Each of these characteristics includes information necessary to determine the levels of safety, risk, and needs for the alleged victim.

They are, Physical Description of an injury, Timing of an injury, and Contributing factors of an injury.
Let’s take a closer look at the first characteristic. The physical description of an injury. There are several things to consider in regards to the physical description of an injury, the timing of an injury, and contributing factors of an injury.
First, it is important to consider the location of the injury. Injuries to a child’s head, face, genital region, torso, or stomach raise additional concerns. These types of injuries are more likely to be permanent, and life threatening.
You also need to note the physical size of the injury. The size of a child's injury should be documented in relation to an object, such as a coin, ruler, or pen point. A larger injury does not necessarily make it more severe.
When documenting the physical description of an injury, an FCM should also note its shape. This can potentially help determine the object used to cause the injury. Injuries caused by a Fixed Object, such as an iron, will appear only on the body at the initial point of contact, whereas Wrap-around objects may leave markings beyond the initial point of contact. For example, if a child is struck on the back with a telephone cord, the child may also have markings on their arm from where the cord wrapped around them.
Let’s try an activity. Match the items in column 1 with the correct answer in column 2.
As you have seen, an FCM should document the Type of Injury, by noting its physical description. Included in this description is Multiplicity, or number of injuries; and the Directionality, the linear, or angular line of an injury.
The second characteristic of a physical injury is Timing.
When assessing physical abuse, one should consider the frequency and longevity. Frequency is the number of times an episode of physical abuse has occurred. Longevity is the length of time a mark has been visible on a child and how long the alleged behavior occurred.
Lastly, when assessing physical abuse an FCM needs to consider contributing factors.
There are several factors that may contribute to physical abuse. They include:

- Stressors, or underlying needs, such as finances, illness, family problems, and coping mechanisms.
- Dangerous Acts which are risky behaviors and lifestyles of the caregivers, as well as the child’s living environment.
- Availability of Support, or lack of support.
- Relationship between the victim and perpetrator, for example is the child afraid of them or are they domineering?
- Developmental Factors that would prohibit the child’s ability to communicate his or her needs.
- Personality of the child, which can help determine the need as well as the level and priority of intervention.
- Time of Year is also a factor, since children may not be observable by friends and relatives, if they are travelling on vacations, or wearing winter clothing that would cover marks and bruises.
It is important to note that many of the characteristics of physical abuse should also be considered when assessing for neglect and sexual abuse.
After properly documenting the characteristics of a physical injury, a Family Case Manager (FCM) also must categorize any substantiated physical abuse.

There are several categories associated with Physical Abuse. FCMs should be familiar with each category.

The categories include…

Slide notes

After properly documenting the characteristics of a physical injury, a Family Case Manager also must categorize any substantiated physical abuse. There are several categories associated with Physical Abuse. Family Case Managers should be familiar with each category.

The categories of physical abuse include:
Slide 19 - Physical Abuse Categories - 2

Physical Abuse Categories

- Bone fractures
- Bruises/cuts/welts
- Burns/scalds
- Dislocation/sprains
- Asphyxiation/Suffocation
- Gunshot wounds
- Internal injury
- Poisoning
- Wounds
- Bites

Slide notes
Bone Fractures.
Bruises, cuts, welts.
Burns, scalds.
Dislocation, sprains.
Asphyxiation, suffocation.
Gunshot wounds.
Internal injury.
Poisoning.
Wounds.
Bites.
Abusive Head Trauma is another category of physical abuse. Abusive Head Trauma includes Shaken Baby Syndrome, and Skull Fractures.

DCS and the IU School of Medicine have formed a partnership to provide medical consultation for all children who are alleged to have possible head trauma. This service, called the PEDS program, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A referral for the PEDS program is initiated by DCS each time a report is received involving abusive head trauma. Before returning to your next series of classroom trainings, please complete the series of PEDS trainings.
When documenting physical abuse, an FCM should also consider, Drowning, Near Fatality, and Fatality due to physical abuse, as categories.

Near fatality is defined as a situation where a child has an injury or condition that is certified by a physician as being life threatening. Life threatening is an injury or condition categorized as “serious” or “critical” in hospital records.
Inappropriate Discipline only constitutes child abuse if it can be paired with another category of physical abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse. For example, discipline would be considered inappropriate when a child has bruises, or welts as a result of the discipline.
Illegal manufacturing, or exposure to illegal manufacturing of a drug, or controlled substance is also included as physical abuse because it poses a danger to the child's physical health.
Any report of physical abuse may include more than one category. An FCM may also pair physical abuse allegations with neglect or sexual abuse.

You will learn more about neglect, and sexual abuse in other trainings.
Physical Abuse assessments often involve examination and photographing of children. DCS has established policies for this process. Let's review those policies now…
When completing an examination of a child, an FCM must first gain the consent of the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian refuses, a court order can be sought.

It is important to photograph all of the visible trauma on the child. As well, the child’s face should be included in pictures of injuries when possible. When evidence of physical abuse exists, always coordinate with your local law enforcement agency.
Although it is necessary to gain consent of the parent or guardian before interviewing a child, Exigent Circumstances may exist when an FCM may interview a child without a parent, or guardian consent. Click on the link to review Policy 4.6, which explains conditions required for Exigent Circumstances. Read the policy, and complete the Policy 4.6 questions in the front section of your Assessing Child Maltreatment Participant Manual. You will also learn more about Exigent Circumstances in the training regarding interviewing.
Click on the link to DCS Policy 4.14, Examining and Photographing a Child and/or Trauma. Read the policy, and complete the Policy 4.14 questions, in the front section of your Assessing Child Maltreatment Participant Manual.
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Slide 30 - Wrap-Up

It is important for FCMs to be aware of each of the categories and characteristics of Physical Abuse. Assessment workers need to be familiar with this information as they initiate assessments and within the first 30 days. Ongoing workers need to know the qualifications for additional allegations throughout the life of the case. Become familiar with DCS Policies 4.6 and 4.14 for legal compliance.

Complete the Physical Abuse worksheet in the front of your Assessing Child Maltreatment Participant Manual. Complete the PEDS trainings before returning to your next series of classroom trainings.
Thank you for completing the Assessing Child Maltreatment: Physical Abuse training. ELM will reflect your completion within 24-48 hours. Developed and Presented by the Child Welfare Education and Training Partnership.

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