

## Healthy Parenting in Ohio

Although parenting in every culture has similarities, each culture brings its unique perspective to the role of parents, expressions of approval and disapproval and the teaching of values. Because our community, like the world, is rich and diverse, generally we don't define one culture's child-rearing practices as "right" and another's as "wrong." We understand that there will be differences and being different isn't wrong.

But in the State of Ohio there are laws which provide a framework for what is "right" and what is "wrong" within broad parameters in terms of the treatment of children. It is important for newcomers to our country and our state to know about those parameters and to ensure that their parenting practices are within the bounds of the law. It is possible that some practices in one culture or nation may not be considered acceptable here in the U.S. and in Ohio. The laws were designed to protect children and keep them from harm, but laws reflect one culture's values.

For this reason ACTION OHIO has prepared this brochure, to assist in helping newcomers to our community learn about the law and the limits set to ensure the growth, development and well being of children.

### Legal Terms Worth Knowing:

***Child Maltreatment  
Endangering Children  
Permitting Child Abuse***

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# Building A Healthy Family In Ohio

*Especially for  
Immigrant  
& Refugee  
Families*



## ACTION OHIO

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# Defining Child Maltreatment & Endangering Children

## Child Maltreatment

There are four major types of child maltreatment:

### Neglect

#### Physical

Lack of supervision, housing, clothing, medical attention, food

#### Emotional

Lack of support, attention and affection for the child

#### Educational

Lack of education or attention to special education needs

### Physical Abuse

Non-accidental injury of a child

### Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity upon or with a child by a third party

### Emotional Abuse

Pattern of behavior which interfere with the psychological and/or social development of a child such as criticism, threats, and rejection

### **A child is**

- A person under 18 years of age.
- A person under 21 years of age who has mental or physical disabilities.

## Endangering Children

As a parent, it is a serious **CRIME** for you to:

- 1) Abuse a child;
- 2) Torture or cruelly abuse a child;
- 3) Administer corporal punishment or physical discipline that is *excessive* and creates a substantial risk of serious physical harm to a child, or physically restrain a child in a cruel manner or for a long time.
- 4) Repeatedly administer unnecessary disciplinary measures to a child, when such measures create a substantial risk of seriously impairing a child's mental health or development.

For a complete listing and definition, refer ORC section 2919.22.

## Permitting Child Abuse

Even if you are not the one who harms a child, it is also a **CRIME** for you to permit a child to be:

- 1) Abused;
- 2) Tortured;
- 3) Administered *excessive* corporal punishment or other physical disciplinary measure that causes serious harm to a child;
- 4) Physically restrained in a cruel manner or for a prolonged period,

unless you had no available means to prevent the harm to or death of the child and you took timely and reasonable steps to call for help.

For a more detailed definition, refer ORC section 2903.15(A) & (C).

## Challenges Raising Children

Raising children is a challenging task. It is even more difficult when a family moves to a new country. Children adapt more quickly than their parents to a new culture. To succeed in school, they must learn how to communicate and behave in new ways.

As children adapt to new customs and a new language, parents fear that their children are losing their connection to their family values. Tension builds between younger and older generations. Both are responding to the pressures of being in a new place and of being required to make many changes.

Children adapting to a new culture may rebel against traditional family practices and customs. Even the most loving and understanding parents may feel rejected and insulted by their children's behavior. Within the U.S. culture, it is considered normal for teenagers to go through a period of challenging parental authority. Our community has resources to help parents through this trying time. There are organizations and agencies designed to provide support and encouragement.

- Talk to your children and share family stories and family pride.
- Help your children understand that your family heritage and customs enrich your new community.
- Know that you are not alone in experiencing tension and anxiety as a parent and as a newcomer.
- Contact local community organizations for support, resources and information.