

Minister Destiny Testimony Schools

Adult: Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

Adult — Class Book · Section 2

Minister Destiny Marie Morgan
Minister & Founder

A Prayer Before You Begin

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Lord, bless this reader on their journey. Guard their health in body, mind, and spirit as they study. Open their heart to knowledge and their mind to understanding, and let what they learn here become light in their hands. Guide them to the places where they are needed — to help others, and to save lives, safely. Bless their steps, their work, and every life their learning will one day protect.

Amen.

— Minister Destiny Marie Morgan

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Minister Destiny Testimony Schools — Adult: Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early.

Published by Minister Destiny Marie Morgan, Minister & Founder.

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The lessons in this book are educational information, Massachusetts-first, and are not legal advice. If you have a real case, talk to a lawyer. Help lines: National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 · 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call/text 988) · Childhelp 1-800-422-4453.

How This Book Works

This book is one class of Minister Destiny Testimony Schools — Adult: Section 2 — Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early. It is the study book for this class's test. Everything the test asks is taught in this book, in plain language: the full lesson, Words to know, the stories to think through, the Try-this activity, and Resources to keep.

Minister Destiny Testimony Schools is a free school. The classes, the tests, and the certificates are free online at destinymorganbooks.com — nothing about this class costs money. This book is the print edition, for people who want the class in their hands. You never need to buy a book to take a class or a test.

How to use this book: read the lesson, learn the Words to know, think through the stories, and do the activity. Try the word search for fun. Then take the Chapter Test at the back of the lesson — printed without answers marked. Score 80% or higher to complete the class and earn its certificate (the certificate page is in this book; write your name on it after you pass). The Answer Key is at the back of the book, for parents, teachers, and self-checking after you finish. Go at your own pace.

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Before You Start

This lesson is educational information, Massachusetts-first, and is not legal advice. Laws, reporting rules, and agency procedures vary by state and by case. If a child may be in danger right now, call 911. If you have a real case involving your family, talk to a lawyer — legal aid organizations help many parents for free.

Before you start

- **This school never asks your name.** Your progress and quiz answers stay on your own device. If you pass this section's quiz (80% or higher, retakes allowed), you earn a downloadable certificate with a blank line — you write your own name on it after you save it. Quiz answers are not shown; if you miss a question, re-read the lesson and try again.
- This section is not here to shame parents, grandparents, or caregivers. Most harm to children does not start with a person deciding to be cruel. It starts with stress, exhaustion, addiction, untreated illness, poverty, or a parent who was never taught another way — and who waits too long to ask for help. The truth in this lesson is plain: **help asked for early is support; the same problem found late can become a report, a case, and a courtroom.** Learning the signs — in your own home and in homes around you — is how children stay safe and families stay together.

Section 2 — Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

Minister Destiny Testimony Schools — Adult

The lesson

1. What child abuse and neglect actually mean

People often picture only one kind of harm. In real life, child abuse and neglect cover four broad kinds of harm, and a child can experience more than one at the same time.

Physical abuse is non-accidental injury: hitting that leaves marks, shaking, burning, biting, or punishment that causes pain or injury beyond brief discomfort. A single incident can be abuse; it does not have to happen ten times.

Neglect is the failure to provide basic care a child needs: enough food, safe shelter, clothing for the weather, medical care, supervision appropriate to the child's age, and schooling. Neglect is the most commonly reported concern, and it is often tied to a parent's circumstances — no money, no childcare, depression, addiction, or a home situation that has fallen apart — rather than to a parent not loving a child. The law still treats a child's unmet needs seriously, whatever the reason behind them.

Emotional abuse is a pattern that damages a child's sense of worth and safety: constant belittling, threats, rejection, terrorizing a child with threats of harm or abandonment, or exposing a child to repeated violence in the home. One bad argument is not the same as a pattern; a home where a child is afraid every day is.

Sexual abuse is any sexual contact or sexual exploitation involving a child, including showing a child sexual material or using a child to make it. A child can never consent to this, and it is never the child's fault, no matter what the child did, wore, or agreed to.

Hold on to one principle that runs through this whole section: **the standard is the child's experience and the child's needs — not the adult's intention.** "I didn't mean it" may matter for what help or consequence follows, but it does not erase harm that already happened.

2. The signs — what to watch for in children and in adults

No single sign proves abuse or neglect. Children get bruises playing. Teenagers withdraw for ordinary reasons. What raises concern is a **pattern**, a sign that does not fit the explanation given, or several signs appearing together.

Signs that can appear in a child:

- Bruises, welts, or burns in unusual places (ears, neck, torso, buttocks), in shapes that suggest an object, or at different stages of healing — especially in a baby or a child who is not yet walking.
- A child who flinches at raised hands, watches adults anxiously to gauge their mood, or seems afraid to go home.
- Sudden changes: a outgoing child turning silent, grades collapsing, sleep problems or nightmares, regression such as bed-wetting after it had stopped, or new aggression.
- A child who is often hungry, steals or hoards food, wears the same dirty clothes, has untreated dental or medical problems, or is frequently left alone or caring for younger siblings.
- Sexual knowledge, language, or behavior far beyond the child's age, or fear of a particular person or place that the child cannot explain.
- A child who tells you something directly. Children rarely invent detailed accounts of harm, and a disclosure — even a partial or jumbled one — should always be taken seriously.

Signs that can appear in a caregiver:

- Explanations that keep changing, or an injury blamed on a sibling, a pet, or the child in a way that does not match the child's age or ability.
- Describing a child in harshly negative terms — always "bad," "evil," or "a liar" — or showing little concern about an injury.
- Isolating the child from school, doctors, relatives, and activities, so few other adults ever see the child.
- A home situation in visible collapse: no utilities, unsafe conditions, adults incapacitated, or very young children supervising other children.

Trust the accumulation, not any one item. And remember the other side of this lesson: if you recognize signs of *strain* in your own family — snapping more, dreading the evenings, feeling unable to cope — that recognition is not a verdict on you. It is the early-warning system working, and subsection 5 is about acting on it while acting is still simple.

3. How reporting works, step by step

Many adults freeze because they do not know what actually happens after a report. Here is the general road in Massachusetts.

1. **Someone becomes concerned.** It might be a teacher, a nurse, a neighbor, a relative — or you, about your own situation.
2. **A report is made.** In Massachusetts, concerns about child abuse or neglect are reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the state child-welfare agency; you can find current reporting information through mass.gov. If a child is in immediate danger, the report is a 911 call — police first, paperwork second. The

national Childhelp hotline (1-800-422-4453) can also talk you through what to report and how, anywhere in the country.

3. The report is screened. The agency decides whether the concern, if true, meets the threshold for a response, and how quickly. Not every report leads to an investigation — reports can be screened out — but reporters are not expected to prove anything first. Reporting is passing on a reasonable concern, not making an accusation in court.

4. If there is a response, expect contact and visits. A social worker may visit the home, speak with the child, the caregivers, and others who know the family, and look at the child's living conditions. This stage is about gathering information, and it is where calm cooperation, honesty, and documentation help a family most.

5. A decision is made. Concerns may be found unsupported, in which case the matter generally closes. Or they may be supported, which can lead to an open case with services and expectations for the family — and in the most serious situations, where a child is judged unsafe at home, emergency removal and a family court case.

6. Services and follow-up. An open case usually means a family assessment, a service plan, and regular contact for a period of time. Section 8 of this school covers family court and child welfare in depth.

Mandated reporters. Some adults are *required by law* to report when they have reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected. In Massachusetts this includes many professionals who work with children and families — for example teachers and school staff, medical and mental-health professionals, childcare workers, social workers, and law-enforcement officers, among others. Two things matter about this rule. First, the trigger is *reasonable cause to believe*, not proof — mandated reporters must report early, on suspicion that meets that standard, and let the agency investigate. Second, failing to report can itself carry legal consequences for the mandated reporter. If you work in one of these roles, learn your employer's reporting procedure before you need it.

What about everyone else? Any person may report a concern, and you do not need to be certain. If you are debating with yourself, a useful question is: "If this were happening and I said nothing, could I live with that?" You can also call Childhelp first just to talk through what you have seen — getting advice is not the same as filing a report, and it can help you decide.

What NOT to do when you suspect harm: do not try to investigate like a detective, do not interview the child repeatedly or press for details (one calm listening, then let professionals do their part), do not confront a suspected abuser in a way that could increase danger to the child or to you, and do not promise a child total secrecy — instead, say honestly: "I may need to tell people whose job is keeping you safe."

4. The consequences — for adults who harm, and for families

Consequences fall on two tracks at once, and families feel both.

The child-welfare track. A supported report can mean an open DCF case, required services, monitoring, and court involvement in family court. In serious cases children are placed with relatives or in foster care while the case proceeds, and a parent's path back is reunification work: services, visits, and demonstrated change over time. This track is about safety decisions, and it can move fast at the beginning — which is why early legal advice matters so much for parents.

The criminal track. Physical and sexual abuse, and severe neglect, can also be crimes prosecuted in criminal court, with penalties that can include probation, mandated programs, and incarceration, plus the collateral consequences Section 1 covered — effects on housing, jobs, licenses, and custody. A criminal record involving harm to a child is among the most damaging records a person can carry for employment involving children, and often for employment generally.

The long track — the child. Research and plain experience agree: unaddressed harm in childhood follows people into adult health, relationships, school, and work. That is the deepest reason this lesson insists on *early*. Stopping harm at the stage of strain, a harsh pattern, or a first incident prevents the version of the story where a child carries it for decades.

A necessary balance: consequences are not the whole picture, and most reports do not end in removal or prosecution. Many end in services — a visiting nurse, childcare help, treatment, a family support worker — that leave a family stronger. The system is imperfect, and families can find it frightening and intrusive; both things are true at once. But fear of the system is the worst reason to delay getting help that is available *without* the system, which is the next subsection.

5. Getting help early — before there is anything to report

This is the heart of the section. Every one of these steps is easier, cheaper, and more private *before* a crisis than after one.

1. **Name the strain honestly.** Write down what is actually breaking down: sleep, money, a child's behavior, your own temper, drinking, depression, no childcare, a partner conflict. Vague overwhelm is hard to fix; a named problem often has a named resource.
2. **Build a relief valve before you need it.** Identify one or two safe adults who could take the children for an hour, an evening, or a weekend — and ask *now*, while it is a normal favor between family, not an emergency. If no one exists, that is exactly what family support programs and parenting groups are for; mass.gov is a starting point for finding local family support services.
3. **Use the pause skills for your own temper.** When you feel anger rising toward a child: put the baby or child in a safe place (a crib, a room with a trusted older person), step into another room, slow your breathing, splash cold water, and do not return until your body has settled. A child left crying safely for ten minutes is unharmed. A child

handled in rage can be harmed in seconds. Never shake a child — shaking can cause catastrophic brain injury or death, even once, even briefly.

4. Treat the drivers, not just the moments. If drinking or drug use is part of the picture, SAMHSA's helpline (1-800-662-4357) is free, confidential, and available day and night. If depression, anxiety, or trauma symptoms are driving the strain, 988 (call or text) is a starting point for mental-health crisis support, and Crisis Text Line (text HOME to 741741) works when talking out loud is impossible. Treating a driver is parenting work — it protects your children directly.

5. Ask professionals before they have to ask you. Pediatricians, school counselors, childcare providers, and family resource staff hear "I'm struggling, what help exists?" every week. Asking early reads as a parent protecting a child — because that is what it is. It is also far better, if a concern ever does arise, that the record shows a parent who sought help.

6. If you are worried about someone else's child, act while it can still be support. Offer the concrete thing — a meal, a school run, an afternoon with the kids — and share this lesson's resources. If what you see crosses into suspected abuse or neglect, report it using subsection 3. Support and reporting are not opposites; sometimes the report is how a family finally gets services.

Words to know — Section 2

- **Neglect** — failure to provide the basic care a child needs: food, shelter, clothing, medical care, supervision, and schooling.
- **Mandated reporter** — a professional who is required by law to report reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected.
- **Reasonable cause** — the reporting standard: facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe abuse or neglect may be occurring — suspicion meeting that standard, not proof.
- **Screening** — the agency's initial decision about whether a report meets the threshold for a response, and how urgent that response is.
- **Supported / unsupported** — the finding after a response: supported means the agency concluded abuse or neglect occurred; unsupported means it did not reach that conclusion.
- **DCF** — the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, the state child-welfare agency.
- **Service plan** — the written set of services, steps, and expectations a family works on while a child-welfare case is open.
- **Disclosure** — a child's telling, in words or behavior, that harm has happened to them.

- **Removal** — the emergency taking of a child into protective custody when the child is judged unsafe at home.

Myths vs facts — Section 2

- **Myth:** You should only report if you are sure abuse is happening. **Fact:** The standard is reasonable cause to believe, not certainty. Investigating is the agency's job; waiting for proof can leave a child unprotected.
- **Myth:** A report automatically means children are taken away. **Fact:** Removal is for situations judged immediately unsafe. Many reports are screened out, and many cases result in services to the family with children remaining at home.
- **Myth:** Neglect only happens in families that do not care. **Fact:** Neglect is most often bound up with poverty, untreated illness, addiction, and collapse of support. The child's needs are still real — and so is the help that exists before a crisis.
- **Myth:** If a child does not tell anyone, nothing serious can be happening. **Fact:** Most abused children do not disclose promptly. Fear, loyalty, threats, shame, and not having words for it all silence children — which is why adults watch for patterns of signs.

Think it through — Section 2

Kayla babysits her neighbor's son, Micah, age 4, two afternoons a week. Over three weeks she notices Micah is ravenously hungry when he arrives and eats as if he is storing food. His clothes are increasingly dirty, he has fallen asleep mid-play from exhaustion more than once, and yesterday he flinched hard when Kayla raised her arm quickly to catch a falling cup. His mother, who works double shifts, has mentioned her boyfriend "watches him" overnight. Kayla asks: *"I haven't actually seen anyone hurt him. Am I overreacting if I do something?"*

Walk it through: (1) List what Kayla actually has: not proof, but a cluster — food-seeking behavior, declining hygiene, exhaustion, and a fear response — appearing and worsening over weeks. That is exactly the "pattern, not single sign" picture subsection 2 describes. (2) The standard for reporting is reasonable cause to believe, and Kayla does not have to investigate further, interview Micah with probing questions, or confront the boyfriend — those steps can add risk. (3) Her practical options: call Childhelp (1-800-422-4453) to talk through what she has observed, or make a report to DCF using the reporting information on mass.gov; if she ever believes Micah is in immediate danger, call 911. (4) Notice the framing: reporting is not declaring the mother a bad parent. A double-shift mother relying on an unsafe arrangement is precisely the kind of situation where a report can result in services and a safer plan — and where silence risks the story Kayla would never forgive herself for.

One more real-life story — Section 2

Andre, a father of two, caught himself one night gripping his 6-year-old son's arm hard enough to leave fingerprints of bruising after the boy spilled juice for the third time that evening. Andre had lost hours at work, was sleeping four hours a night, and had started drinking most evenings "to switch off." He sat on the kitchen floor and cried after his son went to bed — then did three things the next day: he called his sister and asked if the boys could stay with her every Friday night so he could sleep; he called SAMHSA's helpline (1-800-662-4357) and started the process of getting treatment for his drinking; and he told his children's pediatrician, plainly, "I'm too angry too often, and I need help before I hurt my kids." The pediatrician connected him with a parenting support program instead of reacting with alarm.

Takeaway: Andre's story is this section working as designed. The same facts — a bruise, a drinking problem — discovered later by a teacher could have become a report and a case. Raised by Andre himself, early and honestly, they became support. Asking first changes everything about how help arrives.

Try this — Section 2

Complete this family early-warning worksheet. Honest answers are the point; nobody collects it.

- I can name the two situations most likely to push me toward losing my temper with a child.
- I have written down my pause plan: where the child goes to be safe, where I go, and what I do to settle.
- I have named two safe adults who could take the children in a pinch — and I have actually asked them.
- I know the supervision my children need at their current ages, and who provides it when I work or sleep.
- My children have had needed medical and dental care, or I have an appointment or a plan to get it.
- I have saved these numbers in my phone: Childhelp 1-800-422-4453, 988, SAMHSA 1-800-662-4357, Poison Control 1-800-222-1222.
- If I saw the signs from subsection 2 in a child I know, I know my steps: do not investigate, do not promise secrecy, call Childhelp or report through mass.gov information, and call 911 if a child is in immediate danger.

Resources to keep — Section 2

- **911** — if a child is in immediate danger.
- **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453** — confidential guidance on recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect, and on getting help.

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** — **call or text 988** — for a caregiver whose own mental-health crisis is part of the strain.
- **Crisis Text Line** — **text HOME to 741741** — silent, text-based crisis support.
- **SAMHSA National Helpline** — **1-800-662-4357** — free, confidential referrals for substance-use and mental-health treatment.
- **Poison Control** — **1-800-222-1222** — for accidental poisoning or medication emergencies involving a child.
- **mass.gov** — for current Massachusetts information on reporting child abuse and neglect to DCF and on family support services.

What you earned / what's next — Section 2

Section 2 complete (quiz score 80% or higher): You can name the four kinds of harm, recognize patterns of signs in children and caregivers, walk a report from first concern to decision, explain what a mandated reporter is, and — most importantly — list the early-help steps that protect children long before any report is needed.

Good to know — what neglect is not

Neglect is about a child's real needs going unmet over time — food, supervision, medical care, schooling, safety — not about everyday parenting choices or a child's own preferences. A child who chooses not to eat a vegetable at dinner is a child with an opinion, not a neglected child. A family that serves simple meals because money is tight, dresses a child in hand-me-downs, or parents differently than a neighbor would is not neglecting anyone. The line this section teaches is unmet need and real risk: a pattern of a child going without what they must have, or being left in danger — not a single ordinary moment of family life. Keeping that line clear protects families twice: it keeps help aimed at children who truly need it, and it keeps ordinary parents from being judged for ordinary days.

Word Search — Section 2

Find the words from this class's Words to know. Words run across, down, or diagonally.

H	Q	N	E	E	T	P	R	H	A	C	H	M
I	E	D	D	Y	E	A	N	I	K	I	X	O
N	X	H	N	G	V	J	X	N	V	G	A	O
G	Z	Z	Z	O	S	G	U	E	X	H	I	C
F	Z	W	M	V	Y	V	P	G	E	A	I	I
N	H	F	U	N	W	H	W	L	F	C	U	D
P	D	F	I	S	C	R	E	E	N	I	N	G
W	Y	F	X	F	Z	B	W	C	G	V	E	E
O	W	T	M	P	X	C	Y	T	K	R	E	O
Z	O	V	D	I	S	C	L	O	S	U	R	E
H	Z	R	E	M	O	V	A	L	E	W	A	I
S	I	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	P	L	A	N
R	E	P	G	C	C	Y	R	Y	G	O	A	I

Words to find: Neglect · Screening · Serviceplan · Disclosure · Removal

Chapter Test — Section 2

Answer every question. Score 80% or higher to complete this class and earn its certificate. The answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this book — for parents, teachers, and self-checking after you finish.

1. Which of these best describes neglect?

- A. A child choosing not to eat a vegetable at dinner
- B. A parent who raises their voice once during an argument
- C. Failure to provide the basic care a child needs — food, shelter, supervision, medical care, schooling
- D. A family living in a small apartment

2. What standard must be met before a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is appropriate?

- A. Proof beyond a reasonable doubt
- B. Reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect may be occurring — suspicion meeting that standard, not proof
- C. The child must have visible injuries
- D. Two other adults must agree with you first

3. Kayla babysits 4-year-old Micah and notices over three weeks that he is ravenously hungry, increasingly dirty, exhausted, and flinches when she raises her arm to catch a falling cup. She has seen no one hurt him. What does this lesson teach?

- A. Wait until she witnesses an actual injury before doing anything
- B. Question Micah repeatedly until he explains everything
- C. Confront the boyfriend and warn him she is watching
- D. A worsening pattern of signs can meet the reporting standard — she can call Childhelp to talk it through or report, without investigating herself

4. What is a mandated reporter?

- A. Any parent who reports their own child
- B. A journalist who covers family court
- C. A professional required by law to report reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected
- D. A social worker who investigates reports

5. A child begins telling you something that sounds like a disclosure of harm. What should you do?

- A. Listen calmly, do not press for details or interview the child repeatedly, and pass the concern to the proper reporting channel
- B. Promise total secrecy so the child keeps talking
- C. Tell the child to wait until there is more proof
- D. Confront the person the child named before reporting

6. Which action best fits this school's rule for a parent who feels anger rising toward a baby?

- A. Hold the baby closer until the feeling passes
- B. Wake the baby fully so the crying finishes sooner
- C. Put the baby in a safe place such as a crib, step into another room, and return only when settled — and never shake a child
- D. Give the baby to the oldest sibling, whatever their age

7. Why does this lesson say 'I didn't mean it' does not settle whether harm occurred?

- A. Because intentions are never considered by anyone
- B. Because the standard is the child's experience and needs — intention may affect what follows, but it does not erase harm
- C. Because parents are always presumed to be lying
- D. Because only judges may discuss intentions

8. A supported report leads to an open child-welfare case. What does that usually involve first?

- A. Automatic permanent removal of the children
- B. Immediate criminal charges in every case
- C. Nothing — a supported finding closes the matter
- D. A family assessment, a service plan, and regular contact — with services aimed at safety

9. Which of these is an early-help step this lesson recommends BEFORE any crisis?

- A. Waiting until a teacher notices a problem
- B. Naming two safe adults who could take the children in a pinch — and actually asking them in advance
- C. Keeping struggles completely private so no one judges you
- D. Moving to a new town to start over

10. Andre notices he left bruising on his son's arm, is drinking nightly, and asks for help the next day — calling family, SAMHSA, and the pediatrician. Why does the lesson treat this as the model response?

- A. Because the same facts discovered later could become a report and a case — raised early and honestly, they become support instead
- B. Because asking guarantees no one will ever be concerned
- C. Because doctors are required to keep all parenting problems secret
- D. Because treatment erases the bruise from the record

Certificate — Section 2

Minister Destiny Testimony Schools

Certificate of Completion — Section 2: Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

This certifies that

Name (write your name here)

has completed

Minister Destiny Testimony Schools — Adult

Section 2: Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

Date completed: _____

Presented by **Minister Destiny Marie Morgan**, Minister & Founder

Congratulations. You learned to see the signs early and to act early — because a child protected in time is a family kept whole. Asking for help is strength, and you now know where to find it. — Minister Destiny Marie Morgan

Educational completion certificate only — not a state license, POST certification, or government credential.

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My Agenda — Class Tracker

Everything in this agenda is yours to write in. It stays in your book — nothing is collected.

Step	Done	Date	Score	Grade
Week 1 — Study the lesson				
Week 2 — Study + Words to know				
Week 3 — Stories + Try-this activity				
Week 4 — Chapter test (pass at 80% or higher)				

Letter grades: A 90–100 · B 80–89 · C 70–79 · D 60–69 · F below 60.

My goals for this class

Write the goals you are working toward in this class — and for yourself.

My Weekly Planner

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Notes

Resources to Keep

This class's resources, in one place. Keep this page.

- 911 — if a child is in immediate danger.
- Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453 — confidential guidance on recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect, and on getting help.
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988 — for a caregiver whose own mental-health crisis is part of the strain.
- Crisis Text Line — text HOME to 741741 — silent, text-based crisis support.
- SAMHSA National Helpline — 1-800-662-4357 — free, confidential referrals for substance-use and mental-health treatment.
- Poison Control — 1-800-222-1222 — for accidental poisoning or medication emergencies involving a child.
- mass.gov — for current Massachusetts information on reporting child abuse and neglect to DCF and on family support services.

Answer Key

For parents, teachers, and self-checking after you finish the chapter test.

Section 2 Test — Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

1. A child choosing not to eat a vegetable at dinner
2. Reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect may be occurring — suspicion meeting that standard, not proof
3. A worsening pattern of signs can meet the reporting standard — she can call Childhelp to talk it through or report, without investigating herself
4. A professional required by law to report reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected
5. Listen calmly, do not press for details or interview the child repeatedly, and pass the concern to the proper reporting channel
6. Put the baby in a safe place such as a crib, step into another room, and return only when settled — and never shake a child
7. Because the standard is the child's experience and needs — intention may affect what follows, but it does not erase harm
8. A family assessment, a service plan, and regular contact — with services aimed at safety
9. Naming two safe adults who could take the children in a pinch — and actually asking them in advance
10. Because the same facts discovered later could become a report and a case — raised early and honestly, they become support instead

Sources & Credits

The lessons in this book were written for Minister Destiny Testimony Schools from public sources — official websites, public health and safety organizations, help lines, and the law itself. The sources each chapter was built from, and the help resources it points you to, are listed under that chapter's name, with credit, so you can check anything in this book and keep learning. Court opinions and laws are public documents that belong to everyone. Everything here is retold in the school's own plain words — nothing in this book is copied from anyone else's book.

Section 2 — Child Abuse and Neglect: The Signs, How Reporting Works, the Consequences, and How to Get Help Early

- 911 — if a child is in immediate danger.
- Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453 — confidential guidance on recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect, and on getting help.
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988 — for a caregiver whose own mental-health crisis is part of the strain.
- Crisis Text Line — text HOME to 741741 — silent, text-based crisis support.
- SAMHSA National Helpline — 1-800-662-4357 — free, confidential referrals for substance-use and mental-health treatment.
- Poison Control — 1-800-222-1222 — for accidental poisoning or medication emergencies involving a child.
- mass.gov — for current Massachusetts information on reporting child abuse and neglect to DCF and on family support services.
- A report is made. In Massachusetts, concerns about child abuse or neglect are reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the state child-welfare agency; you can find current reporting information through mass.gov. If a child is in immediate danger, the report is a 911 call — police first, paperwork second. The national Childhelp hotline (1-800-422-4453) can also talk you through what to report and how, anywhere in the country.
- Build a relief valve before you need it. Identify one or two safe adults who could take the children for an hour, an evening, or a weekend — and ask now, while it is a normal favor between family, not an emergency. If no one exists, that is exactly what family support programs and parenting groups are for; mass.gov is a starting point for finding local family support services.
- Treat the drivers, not just the moments. If drinking or drug use is part of the picture, SAMHSA's helpline (1-800-662-4357) is free, confidential, and available day and night. If depression, anxiety, or trauma symptoms are driving the strain, 988 (call or text) is a starting point for mental-health crisis support, and Crisis Text Line (text HOME to 741741) works when talking out loud is impossible. Treating a driver is parenting work

— it protects your children directly.

- I have saved these numbers in my phone: Childhelp 1-800-422-4453, 988, SAMHSA 1-800-662-4357, Poison Control 1-800-222-1222.

- Help lines: National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 · 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call/text 988) · Childhelp 1-800-422-4453.

The school itself is free: every class in this book, with its test and certificate, is free online at destinymorganbooks.com.

About the Author

Minister Destiny Marie Morgan is an ordained Muslim minister. She was ordained on May 15, 2025, through the Universal Life Church, and she is registered clergy in Massachusetts.

Her ministry is advocacy — standing up to injustice and helping people, locally and internationally.

She is the founder of Minister Destiny Testimony Schools, a free school. She built it so people can learn for free what cost her years to learn — people who may not have jobs, good credit, or loans, and who deserve real knowledge anyway. Every class is free online, for every age, with no sign-up and nothing collected.

She is also the author of two testimony series — Chronicles of Destiny Morgan and The Chronicle Trials — her own story, in her own words. Those books are her testimony; these school books are her teaching.

Follow her Amazon Author Page to find every new book as it comes out.

The school is free online at destinymorganbooks.com.

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From Minister Destiny

You finished this book — but the learning does not stop here. Keep your resources close, keep asking questions, and use what you now know to help the people around you. If this book helped you, pass it to someone who needs it. I built this school for you, and I am proud of you for showing up for yourself. — Minister Destiny Marie Morgan

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