

# Identifying Child Abuse

By Amy Bentley



**Dr. Daphne Wong**  
CHOC Pediatrician  
and Child Abuse Expert

Dr. Wong completed her residency in pediatrics at UCLA, where she was chief resident. She served on the faculty at UCLA Medical Center for four years as a part of the general pediatrics and child abuse teams. In 2002, Dr. Wong came to CHOC, where she has been actively involved with the residency program, educating residents, other physicians, the nursing staff, law enforcement officials and social services workers about child abuse issues.

Dr. Wong's philosophy of care: "I enjoy watching my patients grow. I enjoy that I can have a small part in taking care of them and help a child grow healthy and lead a productive life."

**EDUCATION:**

University of Utah School of Medicine

**BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:**

Pediatrics  
Child Abuse Pediatrics

**SIGNS OF ABUSE IN BABIES AND KIDS**

"If a baby isn't cruising, crawling or getting around, a bruise would be worrisome unless there is an explanation," says CHOC pediatrician and child abuse expert

Dr. Wong. Another sign of abuse may be bruises in unusual places, like the abdomen or buttocks, she says. Dr. Wong also cites a new study which found that a history of bruising or oral injury in pre-cruising infants should raise suspicions of abuse. Another clue might be sudden behavior changes. "In older kids, if the child is acting out or suddenly becomes aggressive, something else might be going on," says Dr. Wong.

**RISK FACTORS**

Child abuse doesn't just occur in families with certain income levels or ethnic groups - it happens across the spectrum of all people, including intact and single-parent families, wealthy and lower-income families, says Dr. Wong, adding, "You can't profile or make assumptions." Two major risk factors are adults or parents under stress, including financial stress, and in house hold were there is substance abuse, she says.



Approximately  
**70%**

PERCENT OF CHILDREN THAT DIE FROM CHILD ABUSE ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 4

**PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: TIPS FOR PARENTS**

- Walk away. If a crying baby gets to you, and the child is fed, changed and fine, walk away from the child and take a break. "Close the door and go into another room so you don't have to listen to the crying for a few minutes," says Dr. Wong.
- When stressed or overwhelmed by childcare, reach out to others for help. Seek and build a support system by reaching out to friends, family, neighbors and other parents.
- Use your pediatrician as a resource for help and tips on ways to deal with or discipline your toddler.
- Hire a babysitter once a week to give yourself and your partner/spouse some time away from the child.



**50**  
**YEARS**  
OF EXPERT CARE

For over 50 years, CHOC Children's physicians, nurses and staff have been devoted to improving the lives of children and families in our community. As home to the region's only dedicated pediatric emergency department and other world-class services and programs, from cardiology and neurosurgery to neonatology and orthopedics, CHOC is committed to being the leading destination for children's health by providing exceptional and innovative care.

**For information on the expert care we provide and the health plans we accept, visit [choc.org](http://choc.org)**

**3 million +**

NUMBER OF REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE MADE IN THE U.S. EACH YEAR INVOLVING 6 MILLION+ CHILDREN



About **30%**

PERCENT OF ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN WHO WILL LATER ABUSE THEIR OWN KIDS

