

# Do You Suspect a Drug Endangered Child?



## What to look for:

- Evidence of children in the home
- Evidence of physical, sexual, mental abuse of children
- Child's appearance (e.g., poor overall hygiene, including dental; inappropriate or insufficient clothing; etc.)
- Drugs and/or drug paraphernalia
- Weapons (e.g., guns, knives, etc.)
- Pornography/sex paraphernalia
- Chemicals
- Any strong odors
- Food availability in refrigerator and cupboards
- Sleeping conditions/arrangements
- Fire hazards
- Pest and animal hazards (e.g., rodents, roaches, feces, etc.)
- Poor home conditions
  - Building code violations
  - Exposed wiring
  - Broken windows
  - Holes in flooring or wall
  - Functional utilities (water, gas, air)
  - Presence of mold
- Evidence, or lack thereof, of school attendance

**\*\*If you suspect a Meth lab – get out, call Hazmat\*\***

## Law Enforcement Steps to Take:

- Notify Supervisor/NARC unit
- Contact Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Document all evidence
  - Record smells
  - Take pictures, measurements
  - Videotape home, surroundings
  - Record interviews, if standard practice
- Establish who lives in the home
- Establish caretaker
- Interview neighbors
- Coordinate interview of children with CPS
  - Remember to be child-friendly (i.e., no leading questions)
  - Encourage the children to draw pictures
- Follow established medical protocols
- Charge child crime (endangerment charge) as applicable
- Decontaminate (as needed)

## Child Protective Services Steps to Take:

- Respond in a timely manner
- Coordinate investigative steps with law enforcement
- Obtain general description of home environment, including:
  - environmental hazards,
  - children's access to drugs,
  - pictures and measurements, etc.
- Share case history, family history, and prior history with CPS with law enforcement
- Document all evidence (record interviews, if standard practice)
- Establish who lives in the home
- Establish caretaker
- Interview neighbors
- Coordinate interview of child with law enforcement
  - Remember to be child-friendly (i.e., no leading questions)
  - Encourage the children to draw pictures
- Arrange transport of child
- Follow established medical protocols

## Additional Resources:

Fire • Enforcement • EMS • Hazmat • Compensation Medical • Welfare Fraud

**For more information on drug endangered children, visit our web site  
[www.NationalDEC.org](http://www.NationalDEC.org)**



*This project was supported by Grant No 2006-MU-GX-0002 awarded to National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*