

What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone does or says things to you to make you feel upset or frightened.

- You may be too scared to speak out or stop them
- You may be abused on purpose, or by someone who may not realise that what they are doing is abusive
- It's when someone has power over you, and
- You do not agree to what is happening to you

There are different types of abuse

Physical abuse

This is when someone physically hurts you

Physical abuse can be:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pulling hair
- Pinching or shaking
- Or giving someone too much medication so they find things difficult to do

Sexual abuse

This is when someone makes you do sexual things that make you sad, angry or frightened

Sexual abuse is being touched where you do not want to be touched

- Your private parts
- Your bum
- Your breasts
- Your penis or vagina, or being made to touch other people in these places

Emotional abuse

This is when people say bad things to hurt your feelings, shout at you or threaten you.

Examples of emotional abuse are:

- Calling you names
- Laughing at you
- Blaming you for things when it's not your fault
- Treating you like a child
- Ignoring you

Financial abuse

This is when someone takes your money or belongings without asking

Financial abuse can be:

- Stealing your money
- Being forced to pay for other people's things
- When you don't have a say in how your money is spent

Neglect

Neglect is when your care or support is not enough to meet your needs

Neglect can be:

- Being cold much of the time
- Being hungry much of the time
- Having only dirty clothes to wear
- Being put in danger

Discriminatory abuse

This is when people say or do bad things to you, or treat you unfairly because you are different

Discriminatory abuse is being treated unfairly because you:

- Have different colour skin
- Have a different religion
- Are disabled
- Are lesbian or gay
- Speak a different language

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is when you cause harm to yourself by injury, not eating or not washing

Self-neglect can be:

- When you don't look after yourself by not washing, not eating the right foods or letting yourself get ill
- Where you live gets very untidy or you don't throw rubbish away
- When you don't let other people help you

Slavery

This is when people keep you against your will or force you to do things you don't want to do

Slavery can be:

- Making you work to pay back money you owe
- Making you work when you don't want to and not pay you
- When someone makes you do sexual things
- Making you commit a crime
- Making you work in someone's house and not pay you

Institutional abuse

This is when people who are paid to look after you do things in ways that might hurt you or not help you enough

Institutional abuse can happen when:

- There are not enough staff to help everyone
- People are not helped to do things for themselves
- People are not given choices
- Things happen when staff want them to, not when you need it, such as bedtimes and mealtimes

Who might abuse you?

Anyone could abuse you. It might be someone you know or a stranger

Where might this happen?

Abuse can happen anywhere, at any time

- In a house
- At work
- At a day care centre or college
- On the computer
- In a hospital
- At a club

Who can I tell?

Tell someone you trust. Do this as soon as you can.

- My family
- The police
- A friend
- A social worker
- A nurse
- An advocate
- Someone at church
- A care inspector
- Staff who support you
- A doctor

What happens next?

- Tell someone you trust or tell someone in social services or the police
- They will listen to you
- They will help you stay safe
- They will find out more
- They will give you help and support