

Safeguarding

A measure taken to protect someone or something or to prevent something undesirable.

Protect from harm or damage with an appropriate measure.

- *English Oxford Dictionary definition*

Types and Signs of Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons whether it is deliberate or unknowingly causes them harm or violates their rights.

Child abuse is categorised in to four main types:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

Adult abuse is more diverse. It is categorised in to ten types:

- Physical
- Domestic
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial or material
- Modern slavery
- Organisational
- Discriminable
- Neglect/acts of omission
- Self-neglect

More than one type of abuse may be happening at one time.

In more detail:

Physical Abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, throwing, drowning, misuse of medication or any other abuse which causes physical harm. Physical abuse is not accidental.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness to a child. Shaking or hitting babies can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI). Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child, perhaps giving them medicine they don't need and making the child unwell – this is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

A child having an injury doesn't necessarily mean they are being abused – this could have happened as an accident. A cause for concern could be a pattern of regular injuries, or if the accident the child explains doesn't match the injuries caused.

All physical abuse concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, even if the witness interprets an incident as reasonable chastising. An incident may only seem small, however it could be significant piece of information in a case.

Physical Abuse Facts & Statistics:

- *1 in 14 children have experienced physical abuse*
- *Disabled children are over 3 times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children*
- *Over 6,000 children were identified as needing protection from physical abuse in 2015/16*

Facts and figures collected from NSPCC – more information on statistics found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/physical-abuse/physical-abuse-facts-statistics/>

Sexual Abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts and sexual assault. A child is sexually abused when they are forced or enticed to take part in sexual activities.

A child may be enticed to engage in sexual activities through grooming which may not necessarily involve any level of violence. The child may not be aware this is happening. Activities may include assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching the outside of clothing. Non-contact sexual abuse also could occur – this includes children looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in inappropriate sexual ways or the grooming of a child (including via the internet).

Sexual Abuse Facts & Statistics

- *1 in 20 children in the UK have been sexually abused*
- *1 in 3 children sexually abused by an adult did not tell anyone*
- *Over 2,900 children were identified as needing protection from sexual abuse in 2015/16*
- *Over 90% of sexually abused children were abused by someone they knew*
- *Around a third of sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people*

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetuated by adult males. Women also commit acts of sexual abuse, as do other children.

Facts and figures collected from NSPCC – more information on statistics found here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse/sexual-abuse-facts-statistics/>

Emotional/ Psychological Abuse – sometimes called psychological abuse is making a child believe they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or only valued to meet the needs for another person. It can involve someone deliberately trying to scare them or isolating/ignoring them. It can also involve extreme bullying and cyber bullying. A child may not be able to express their views or beliefs. Persistent emotional maltreatment may affect a child's emotional development and health.

A child suffering emotional abuse is often suffering another form of abuse as well, though this is not always the case.

There are two types of emotional abuse:

Passive emotional abuse: when a parent or carer denies a child of the love and care they need to be happy and healthy. Passive emotional abuse can be just as impacting as active emotional abuse, though it is much harder to identify. It is recognised in 5 categories:

- Emotional unavailability – the parent/carer has a weak relationship with the child, they do not connect with them and give them love/care
- Negative attitudes – offering no praise or encouragement, they have a low opinion of the child and do not support them
- Developmentally inappropriate interaction with the child – speaking/acting inappropriately in front of a child or expecting/asking a child to perform tasks which they are not emotionally mature enough to do
- Failure to recognise a child's individuality – a child not being able to develop their own personality or fulfil their emotional needs as an individual, but using the child to fulfil their own emotional needs
- Failure to promote social adaptation – a child not being encouraged to socialise with other children and make their own friends

Active emotional abuse: when a parent or carer of a child intentionally scares or verbally abuses a child.

Active emotional abuse has been defined as:

- spurning (rejecting)
- terrorising
- isolating
- exploiting or corrupting.

Emotional Abuse Facts & Figures:

- *1 in 14 children have experienced emotional abuse by a parent or guardian.*
- *Nearly 20,000 children were identified as needing protection from emotional abuse last year*
- *Emotional abuse is the 2nd most common reason for children needing protection from abuse in the UK*

Facts and figures collected from NSPCC – more information on statistics found here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/emotional-abuse/emotional-abuse-facts-statistics/>

Neglect and acts of omission – the most common type of abuse with children. A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.

A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm.

They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.

Types of neglect

Physical neglect - failing to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter. Failing to adequately supervise a child or provide for their safety.

Educational neglect - failing to ensure a child receives an education and has equal opportunities.

Emotional neglect - failing to meet a child's needs for nurture and stimulation, perhaps by ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them. It's often the most difficult to prove.

Medical neglect - failing to provide appropriate health care, including dental care and refusal of care or ignoring medical recommendations.

Neglect Facts & Figures:

- *1 in 10 children have experienced neglect*
- *Over 26,000 children were identified as needing protection from neglect in 2016*
- *Neglect is the most common reason for taking child protection action*

Facts and figures collected from NSPCC – more information on statistics found here:

Domestic Abuse - domestic violence (also named domestic abuse or family violence) is a pattern of behaviour which involves violence or other abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting, such as in marriage or cohabitation. It is often used by one partner/cohabitee to gain power/control over the victim. It can include controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. However it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse.

Domestic abuse can include:

- sexual abuse and rape (including within a relationship)
- physical harm - punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object
- financial abuse - withholding money or preventing someone from earning money
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- invasion of privacy - reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening behaviour to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet

Domestic Abuse Facts & Figures:

- *Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse*
- *1 in 5 teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends*
- *130,000 children live in households with high-risk domestic abuse*

Facts and figures collected from NSPCC – more information on statistics found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/domestic-abuse-facts-statistics/>

Modern Slavery - human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Adults/children being forced in to a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment and exploited for criminal gain. The impact can be devastating for victims.

Modern Slavery Facts & Figures:

There were an estimated 40 million people in slavery globally in 2016 and 10,000 – 13,000 potential victims in the UK.

Facts and figures collected from the government – more information on statistics found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/655504/6.39_20_HO_Modern_Slavery_Awareness_Booklet_web.pdf

Financial Abuse – including coercion to take extortionate loans and threats to recover debts, theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adults financial affairs or arrangements, including connection to wills, property or inheritance. Financial abuse can occur when a carer/parent has control over the victims finances.

Example: A disabled boy called Tom is cared for by carer, Tina. Tina takes Tom's money to do his shopping each week. Tina never gives Tom any of his change. Tom is unable to recognise he is being abused.

Organisational Abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or home. It can occur when care is given in the victim's own home. Incidents can be one offs, or on-going ill-treatment. Organisation abuse can be through poor professional practise as a result of the structure, policies and procedures or through neglect.

Discriminable Abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Self-neglect - covers a wide range of behaviour when abuse is in the form of neglect from the individual to themselves. This can include hygiene, health or surroundings and can include behaviours such as hoarding that causes risk of harm.