

# What is abuse?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment.



Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children and adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (including via the internet).

They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights and is always harmful.**

## Types of Abuse:

### Adults

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological (including emotional)
- Financial or material
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Self neglect
- Domestic violence
- Modern slavery

### Children

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

## Further Information

For more detailed guidance visit [www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk)

Your Safeguarding Co-ordinator can advise you on different types of abuse.

More information about particular safeguarding issues can be found in: **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)**, **Safeguarding Children – Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 (Wales)**, **The Care Act 2014**, **The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014**.





## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than child or adult protection.

### Safeguarding children and promoting their welfare includes:

- Protecting them from maltreatment or things that are bad for their health or development.
- Making sure they grow up in circumstances that allow safe and effective care.

### Safeguarding adults includes:

- Protecting people's rights to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- It is about promoting well being, providing protection from harm and taking views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.

## Key Points to consider

**Safeguarding** is everybody's responsibility, it is not for you to investigate or decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult talk to your **Safeguarding Representative** or **Co-ordinator**.

## Responding to a concern

- Ensure the immediate health and safety of the person – dial **999** if necessary.
- **Listen, reassure**, don't pass judgement or make promises about what will happen next.
- Do not put words into the person's mouth.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding, their culture and use of language.
- Do not interrogate the person but be **calm** and **reassuring**.
- Try not to be alone with the person.
- Be clear about what you are going to do next and when.
- Tell them who you will need to contact i.e. the **Safeguarding Representative** or **Safeguarding Co-ordinator**.
- **Do not promise total confidentiality** but explain that the information will be treated with great care and shared with specific professionals who need to know.
- **Make careful notes** including **dates** and **times** of the incident. **Sign** them and **keep them securely**.
- Consult the **Safeguarding Representative** or **Safeguarding Co-ordinator** as soon as possible.
- If none of the above is available, consult **Social Care Services** or the **Police** directly.
- Provide the person with some means to contact you and **be clear about arrangements for any further contact with you**.
- **Do not contact the person about whom the allegation or concerns are being raised** to tell them about the information, you could be putting a child or other adult in serious danger.

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Your local contact details can be found on the back cover.

Abuse continues if secrecy surrounds it.

