

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Bowls Durham

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- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child/vulnerable adult.
- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/vulnerable by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Children/vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet.
- They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children

What is child abuse

- An abused child is a girl or boy under the age of 18, who has suffered
- physical injury,
- neglect,
- emotional or
- sexual abuse
- Vulnerable adults may be of any age over 18, but often they will have a disability or medical condition, and/or are an older person

Who is an abused child

- Child/vulnerable adult abuse is a term used to describe the way that people (usually adults but sometimes other children or young people) harm children
- Usually the adult is someone the child/vulnerable adult knows well such as a member of the family, neighbour or family “friend”.

Who would abuse a child

Child abuse can take place anywhere where children spend time, such as

- at home
- in nursery
- at school
- local youth club
- in public places
- Children may also be abused via the internet or other technology.

Where are children abused

Abusers may be anyone:

- Any age
- Male or female (including sexual abuse)
- From any social class, culture or faith
- 'Nice' people
- Professionals such as teachers, religious leaders or social workers
- Related to the child
- Other children or vulnerable adults

Who abuses children

We know that all of the below are risk factors which may increase the likelihood of abuse in children's/vulnerable adult lives

- Domestic abuse/violence
- Parents'/carers' problematic drug/alcohol abuse
- Child/vulnerable adult has previously suffered abuse
- Parents/carers highly critical of child
- Parents/carers who don't show warmth to the child
- Parents/carers with problematic mental health problems
- Parents/carers who perceive the child to be "difficult"
- Parents/carers who have unrealistic expectations of their child
- Baby ill within first 6 months of life
- A child with disabilities
- Parents with learning difficulties
- Family breakdown
- Isolated families
- Poverty or deprivation

What do we know

These categories are used for children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and for statistical recording:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

What are the categories of abuse

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

Physical abuse

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Emotional abuse

Sexual abuse involved forcing or enticing a child/young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It can also include allowing children to view pornography or engage in sexual activity with another child

Sexual abuse

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's/vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment:
- to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger:
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers: or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Neglect

- **Financial Abuse** is another name for stealing or defrauding a vulnerable adult of goods and/or property. It is always a crime but is not always prosecuted. Sometime the issue is straightforward, for example a careworker stealing from an older person's purse, but at other times it is more difficult to address

Financial

The effects of abuse are wide ranging and usually long lasting, and can include:

- Low self esteem
- Problematic behaviours
- Educational problems, e.g. slow to develop speech
- Relationship difficulties
- Mental health problems
- Substance (drug and alcohol) abuse
- Self harm including actual or attempted suicide
- Difficulty in parenting their own children
- Permanent disability
- Death as a result of the abuse (particularly if physical abuse or neglect)
- Failure to thrive and achieve the best of their ability

What are the effects

- Immediately inform the Bowls Durham Safeguarding Officer and seek advice
- If a child/vulnerable adult discloses abuse to you tell them that you will help keep them safe
- Do not promise to keep it secret if a child/vulnerable adult asks you to. Tell them that you must report it
- Listen to the child/vulnerable adult and make a record of what has been said or noticed
- Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions as to what might of happened
- It is not your responsibility to investigate
- Report your concerns to the local authority safeguarding children services or NSPCC

What should I do if I suspect a child/vulnerable adult is being abused