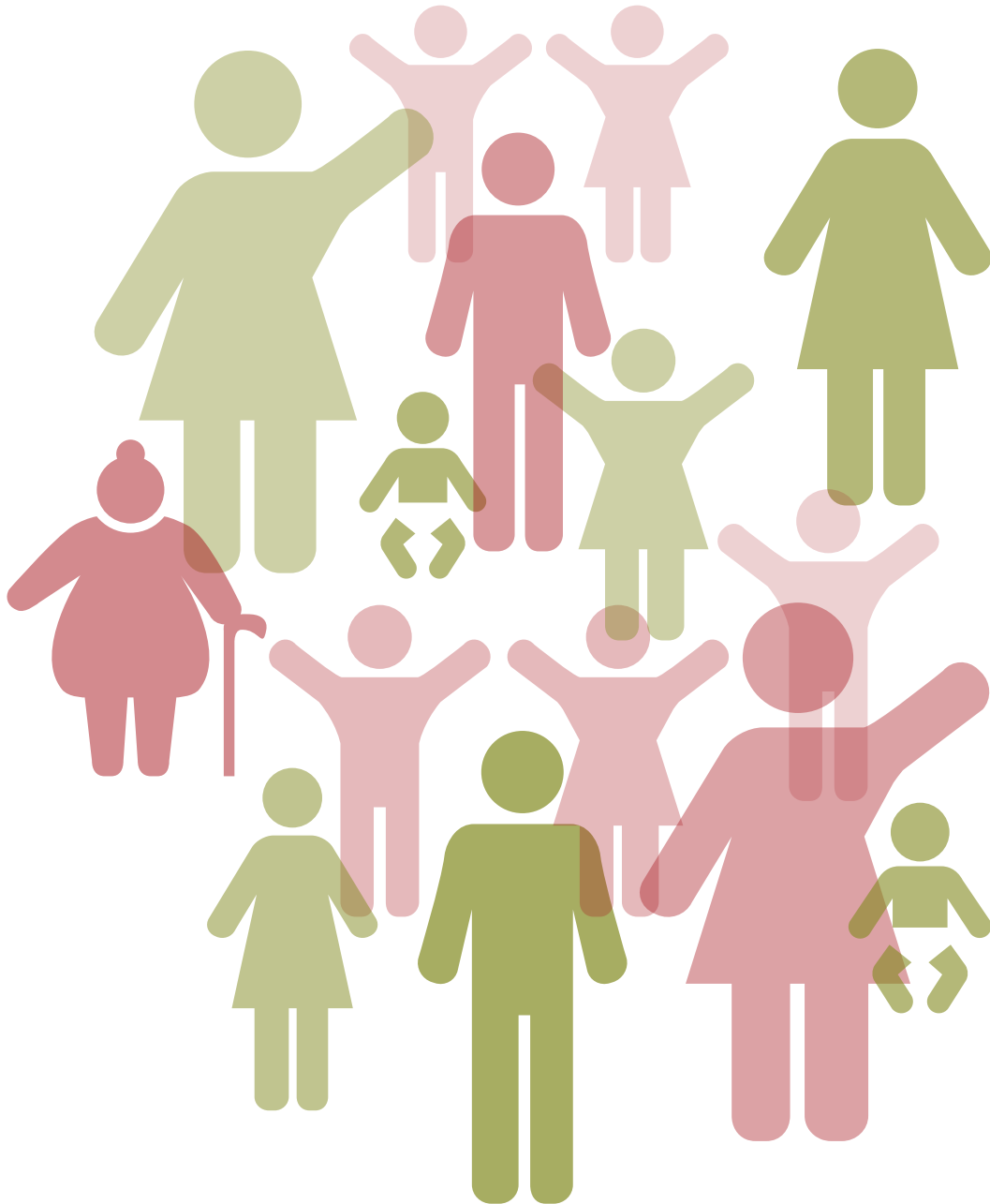


2016 Edition

SAFEGUARDING

Creating Safer Space



Foundation Module **and** Foundation
Module Refresher **Handbook**



CREATING SAFER SPACE

Foundation Module

CONTENTS

Planning for Safety	Page 3
Definitions	Page 4
Physical Abuse - Children and Young People	Page 6
Physical Abuse - Adults	Page 8
Emotional Abuse - Children and Young People	Page 10
Emotional Abuse - Adults	Page 12
Neglect - Children and Young People	Page 14
Neglect - Adults	Page 16
Sexual Abuse - Children and Young People	Page 18
Sexual Abuse - Adults	Page 20
Financial or Material Abuse - Adults	Page 22
Discriminatory Abuse - Adults	Page 24
Institutional Abuse - Adults	Page 25
Spiritual Abuse - Children, Young People and Adults	Page 27
Domestic Abuse	Page 29
Emerging types of Abuse	Page 32
Abuse using Social Media	Page 32
Child Sexual Exploitation	Page 36
Trafficking	Page 38
Modern Slavery	Page 40
Self-Neglect (Adults)	Page 43
Radicalisation	Page 44
Background Information	Page 46
What can make it hard for people in churches to respond to a concern?	Page 47
Why children and adults may find it hard to tell	Page 47
Responding well to concerns	Page 48
Guidelines on touch for people who work with children	Page 49
Useful Resources	Page 49
Notes and Reflections on the Foundation Module	Page 51



SAFEGUARDING

Creating Safer Space

FOREWORD

Welcome to this updated training *Handbook* and thank you for taking the time to give your attention to what has emerged as a growing and integral part of our church life.

Five years ago the Methodist Church committed itself to introducing *Creating Safer Space Foundation* and *Leadership Modules* for all members, church workers and ministers to equip them for undertaking work with children and vulnerable adults in a safe, clear way consistent with the Church's mission and purposes.

Thousands of members have subsequently benefited from this programme during a period of unprecedented change in relation to public understanding of abuse – within society at large and churches specifically. The Methodist Church's own Past Cases Review has taken us along a painful path of learning, apology and subsequent commitment to improved practices and procedures. This work is ongoing. Many of the new examples in this *Handbook* are taken from the Past Cases Review.

Whatever your specific role within the Church, this training will serve as a basic starter to understand safeguarding and our collective responsibility for it. For those of you who come to this with prior learning and experience, it gives a clear marker for where the Methodist Church stands and how our safeguarding commitments are made real across the Church's work.

This *Handbook* with its updated *Foundation Module* and new *Foundation Module Refresher* have been prepared after wide consultation to give you the most up to date understanding of the Church's safeguarding. Please use it during your training and frequently refer to it within your work. In this way, together we can ensure our churches are truly safe spaces for all.

Tim Carter

Safeguarding Adviser

September 2016

PLANNING FOR SAFETY

THE FOUR Ps

<p>PREMISES</p> <p>Risk assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● appropriate for age and ability ● well lit (inside and out) ● chairs and tables ● access to kitchen ● toilets – access and supervision ● plugs, sockets and cables etc ● heating guards ● entrances and exits secure – in and out ● knowing who is on the premises <p>Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● process for repairs and cleaning 	<p>PEOPLE</p> <p>Safer recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● application form ● assessment/selection process ● references/DBS checks <p>Job description or brief role outline</p> <p>Supervision and Support</p> <p>Induction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● training provision ● accountability (who is in charge) ● annual review ● handling complaints <p>Vigilance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● teamwork ● personal safety and working alone
<p>POLICIES and PRACTICE GUIDANCE</p> <p>Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● safeguarding children and young people ● safeguarding adults ● practice guidelines on domestic abuse ● model safeguarding policies <p><i>(Currently under revision, September 2016)</i></p> <p>Joint Policy on Safer Recruitment 2015</p> <p>Methodist Church Practice Guidance on carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as part of Safer Recruitment for England and Wales August 2015</p> <p>Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church</p>	<p>PRACTICE EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● registers of attendance ● consent forms ● incidents and record keeping ● confidentiality ● what happens if... (operational guidance) ● number of leaders/ratios for safe supervision ● insurance ● planning for an emergency ● internet safety ● 'out of club' contact (ie contact outside regular planned sessions) ● communication with parents/carers

DEFINITIONS

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people: Any child or young person under the age of 18.

Abuse and neglect of children and young people definitions:

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

NSPCC, June 2016

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Education, March 2015

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.


Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, September 2006

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is understood by the Methodist Church as:

- protecting children from abuse and neglect
- preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

ADULTS

Vulnerable adult: Any adult aged 18 or over, who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or as it risk of, abuse or neglect; and as result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect (*Care and Support Statutory Guidance*, issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health).



Adult at Risk: An adult who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. (*Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 1 – Introduction and Overview*, Welsh Government, 2016)
(Note the definition in the UK Care Act 2014 of “vulnerable adult” has been specifically replaced in Wales by “adult at risk”.)

Abuse of vulnerable adults and safeguarding: Safeguarding (vulnerable adults) means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse and neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s well-being is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feeling and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.
Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. Patterns of abuse may vary and include:

- serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and ‘grooms’ individuals (sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse)
- long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse; or
- opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health

Adult safeguarding is understood by the Methodist Church as: the concepts of prevention, empowerment and protection to enable adults who are in circumstances that make them vulnerable to retain independence, well-being and choice, and to access their right to a life free from abuse and neglect.

Other useful definitions include:

Adult and child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children, young people and specific adults who are suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect. This is essential as part of promoting a safe Church.

Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, a community or an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child, young person or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Definition

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.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Education, 2015
Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006

Examples

- children being hit
- babies being shaken
- children being bitten
- deliberate burning with a cigarette end
- dunking a child in very hot water.

Possible indicators of physical abuse in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- bruising
 - in unusual places, eg around the mouth
 - in unusual patterns, eg symmetrical bruises indicating a child has been gripped
 - in particular shapes, eg fingertip bruising; belt marks
- burns/scalds, especially in significant shapes such as an iron or cigarette end
- adult human bite marks
- serious injury when there is a lack of, or an inconsistent, explanation
- untreated injuries
- unusual fracture.

Children may be:

- unusually fearful with adults
- unnaturally compliant with their parents/carers
- wearing clothes that cover up their arms and legs
- reluctant to talk about or refuse to discuss any injuries, or fearful of medical help
- aggressive towards others.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- seeing a child being hit by a parent, children's or youth worker
- noticing a child or young person with bruising or bite marks in an everyday setting such as a mother and toddler group, junior church, uniformed organisation or youth club activity, or on a pastoral visit to the home
- someone else (a child or adult) telling you about an incident.



Case example

A junior church worker saw a parent hitting her learning disabled teenage son after church when told he had not been behaving well during the session. The worker told her leader who made a note and told the minister who contacted the DSO for advice the same day.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

ADULTS

Definition

The non-accidental infliction of physical force, which results in pain, injury or impairment.

Examples

- hitting
- assault
- slapping
- pushing
- pinching
- kicking
- hair-pulling
- punching
- forcing (including force-feeding)
- inappropriate application of restraint techniques or other physical sanctions
- the use of incorrect moving and handling techniques which are potentially dangerous and are known to cause distress
- isolation or confinement
- the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in health
- misuse of prescribed medication; overdosing or under-dosing.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 1 – Introduction and Overview, Welsh Government, 2016


Possible indicators of physical abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other (non-abusive) explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- a history of unexplained falls, minor injuries or malnutrition
- injuries inconsistent with the lifestyle of the person
- unexplained bruises or untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- injuries to the head, face or scalp
- poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene
- dehydration and/or malnutrition without illness-related cause
- broken spectacles/frames,
- physical signs of being subjected to punishment, or signs of having been restrained
- loss of weight
- a vulnerable person telling you they have been hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- varicose ulcers, or pressure sores
- injuries reflecting the shape of an object
- unexplained burns, rope burns or cigarette burns.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- seeing an adult being hit or pushed by a relative, carer or another adult at a church event or in a care home or hospital
- noticing something that might indicate abuse at a church event or service, in their own home whilst on a pastoral visit or in a care home or hospital setting

- 
- hearing directly from the person involved (or their relatives and friends) about their experience.

Case example

A pastoral visitor visited an older church member, with early onset dementia, and was concerned to see faded bruises on his face. He was not able to explain clearly what had happened, but the pastoral visitor was aware from her contact with his son, also a church member, that the family is finding it difficult to cope. The pastoral visitor decided to consult with the minister before doing anything else.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Definition

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child 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. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. **Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.**

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Education, 2015
Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006

Examples

- parents who see their children negatively and deserving of maltreatment
- parents who expect more of their children than they can achieve developmentally
- children being exposed to domestic abuse
- adults not recognising a child's individuality
- parents who are emotionally unavailable to their children
- adults grooming a child through persuasion, coercion and deceit for the adult's own ends (eg sexual abuse)
- bullying.

Possible indicators of emotional abuse in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- behaviour extremes: children may be overactive or withdrawn
- lacking in confidence or self-worth
- lack of concentration
- physical symptoms without an apparent cause
- difficulty in trusting adults or very anxious to please adults
- reluctance to go home; fear of parents being contacted
- socially isolated
- behaviour that expresses anxiety, eg rocking, hair-twisting or thumb-sucking
- self-harming behaviour
- substance misuse
- sleep and/or eating disorders
- school non-attendance
- running away.



Examples you may come across in a church setting

- seeing behaviour that is out of the ordinary and requiring of attention such as a reluctance or refusal to go home
- noticing over time behaviour in children's or youth settings that causes concern and may form a pattern
- hearing stories from the child and/or their peers about relationships and conditions at home.

Case example

A church arranged a series of all age events for young people aged from 5-18, but didn't plan well enough for different age groups. Younger children were intimidated by the behaviour of the older teenagers but a worker also shouted at them repeatedly about their own behaviour, failing to provide an age appropriate response and appreciate their needs.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

ADULTS

Definition

Emotional or psychological abuse is behaviour that has a harmful effect on a vulnerable adult's emotional health and development. All abuse of vulnerable people has an emotional impact.

Examples

- scolding or treating like a child (infantilisation)
- making a person feel ashamed of involuntary behaviour
- blaming someone for attitudes or actions or events beyond their control
- use of silence
- humiliation
- bullying/harassment
- verbal abuse
- intimidation
- controlling or creating over-dependence
- lack of privacy and dignity
- deprivation of social contact (eg deliberate isolation/denial of access to visitors)
- threats to withdraw help and support
- denial of cultural and spiritual needs
- denial of choice
- failing to respond adequately to emotional needs.

Possible indicators of emotional abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- alteration in psychological state (eg the person appears to be withdrawn, agitated or anxious in general)
- the person appears to be frightened of making choices or expressing their wishes
- hesitation in speaking openly
- unexplained fear
- confusion or disorientation
- anger without apparent cause
- a vulnerable person telling you they are being verbally or emotionally abused
- tearfulness
- unusual behaviour (sucking, biting, or rocking)
- changes in sleep patterns.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- noticing a change in behaviour or demeanour
- seeing humiliating or bullying behaviour in the home, care home or hospital setting
- hearing from relatives and friends about concerns
- church members experiencing challenging or even violent behaviour from an individual that has no obvious cause or is a new development.



Case example

One day after church, a minister asked an elderly member how she was. She broke down and told him about her daughter shouting at her all the time and trying to take control of her finances. The elderly person does not want the minister to tell anyone because she fears it would harm her relationship with her daughter, but she wants this behaviour to stop. She doesn't know what to do.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Definition

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child'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; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Education, 2015
Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006

Examples

- parents not providing adequate physical care
- parents not ensuring proper and timely medical attention
- adults not providing oversight of children to ensure they are safe from danger.

Possible indicators of neglect in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- children whose personal hygiene and state of clothing is poor
- children who are constantly hungry and frequently tired
- developmental delay
- low self-esteem
- socially isolated
- poor skin tone and hair tone
- untreated medical problems
- failure to thrive with no medical reason
- poor concentration
- frequent accidents and/or accidental injuries
- eating disorders
- begging and stealing.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- children and young people arriving unaccompanied at, or not being picked up from, planned sessions when, in your judgement, it is not safe for them to go home alone
- children and young people arriving at sessions inadequately clothed and with poor physical appearance
- parents speaking in a pastoral conversation about their own limited capacity to support their child adequately especially if the child has a disability or special needs.



Case example

Church members noted that two children attending junior church, affected by a painful parental separation, were looking increasingly dishevelled and uncared for. The parents were seemingly focused on their own situation and were not able at that time to prioritise their children's well-being. Church members reported this to the minister/safeguarding officer and took action to provide care and support to the children.

ADULTS

Definition

Neglect is the repeated withholding of adequate care which results in the adult's basic needs not being met. It can be intentional or unintentional and includes acts of omission. This may also be evidence of self neglect which has to be balanced with an individual's wish to make decisions for themselves.

Examples

- denial of educational, social and recreational needs
- lack of adequate heating/lighting
- lack of adequate food/fluids
- inappropriate medical care; inappropriate use of medication or over-medication
- lack of attention to hygiene
- lack of attention to toe and fingernails
- lack of attention to teeth (natural or false)
- denial of religious or cultural needs.

Possible indicators of neglect in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- poor hygiene and cleanliness
- clothing which is inadequate or in poor condition
- dirt, faecal or urine smell, or other health and safety hazards in the vulnerable person's living environment
- persistent hunger
- dehydration
- weight loss
- the vulnerable person has an untreated medical condition
- poor physical condition; rashes, sores, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- evidence of failure to seek medical advice or summon assistance as required
- evidence of failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- change in appearance and perceived reduction in the level of self care skills
- noticing someone's poor physical condition especially in a care home or hospital
- poor living conditions seen on pastoral visits
- family members not being there to help their vulnerable relative
- sustained reluctance by the adult to accept offers of help and support despite limited mobility, poor health, hoarding or dirty living conditions.



Case example

A young adult with a number of emotional vulnerabilities relating to a previous history of abuse volunteered to work in a youth club, but found it difficult to maintain boundaries. This led to her becoming anxious about her situation and she started to not take care of herself. The deterioration in her condition was eventually noticed by the group leader, who had initially failed to spot her vulnerabilities and take appropriate protective measures.

SEXUAL ABUSE

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Definition

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 (eg rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

*Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Education, 2015
Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006*

Examples

- showing a child pornographic images
- filming or taking photos of a child in sexual poses or acts
- touching a child's genitalia
- sexual assault
- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- children being sexually exploited
- children being trafficked for sexual exploitation
- 'sexting' and making inappropriate use of social media to share pictures
- grooming through social media or more direct methods.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- sexual knowledge which is inappropriate for the child's age
- sexualised behaviour in young children
- children hinting at sexual activity
- evidence of grooming activity by a significant adult
- frequent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain
- unexpected pregnancy especially in very young girls
- lack of concentration, restlessness
- the child or young person is socially withdrawn
- the child or young person is overly compliant
- the child or young person has poor trust in significant adults
- regressive behaviour, onset of wetting (after having been dry) – day or night
- self-harming behaviour
- eating disorders
- sexually transmitted disease.

NHS Choices Website, September 2015



Examples you may come across in a church setting

- noticing an unusually close relationship between a young person and a worker
- evidence of social media or texting contact outside church policy limits
- seeing or hearing about out of session contacts and private or secret meetings
- inappropriate discussion and intrusive questioning about sexual matters in formal or informal conversations between workers and young people
- innuendo in conversations
- tolerance of behaviour which suggests loose sexual boundaries or disrespectful relationships between young people
- private behaviour taking place in a public setting
- taking photos and filming without consent
- noticing adults (known or unknown) on or around the premises when there are no planned meetings and only children present
- failure by adults in positions of responsibility to adhere to safe working practices designed to minimise risk to young people and protect workers (eg poor supervision arrangements at night on residential trips or sleepovers)
- noticing behaviour suggestive of child sexual exploitation as described above
- sudden appearance of a 'relative' who has come to stay from abroad.

Case example

A new male worshipper at church began to speak after the morning service with a young woman who had just performed a liturgical dance and started to ask about her clothing. The young woman reported this behaviour to her minister and after consultation with the district safeguarding officer, supported the young woman to make a statement to the police. They visited the male church worshipper and warned him about his future behaviour.

SEXUAL ABUSE

ADULTS

Definition

Sexual abuse is the involvement of a vulnerable adult in sexual activities or relationships, without informed or valid consent.

Examples

- offensive or inappropriate language, including sexual innuendos and sexual teasing
- sexual harassment
- inappropriate looking
- inflicting pornography on an individual
- inappropriate touching
- masturbation in a public setting
- indecent exposure
- coercion into an activity
- rape or sexual assault
- photography
- online and social media abuse.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- unexplained changes in behaviour
- a significant change in sexual behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- bruises around the breasts or genital area
- unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- torn, stained or bloody underwear
- unexplained infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- hints about sexual abuse
- sleep disturbances
- self-harming
- a vulnerable person telling you they have been sexually assaulted or raped.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- noticing or hearing reports of behaviour, such as in the examples above
- being aware of overly tactile behaviour at times when contact is 'allowed' (eg during passing the peace or when meeting and greeting)
- inappropriate discussion and intrusive questioning about sexual matters in house group or other pastoral settings
- abuse of church or other social media opportunities.



Case example

A minister was invited to provide pastoral care and support to a survivor of sexual abuse. The survivor had a number of vulnerabilities as well as being quite isolated in the local community. The relationship developed from a pastoral one, through friendship to a sexual relationship which was unwanted on the part of the survivor. The survivor made a complaint to the Connexion through the local complaints process.

FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

ADULTS

Definition

Financial or material abuse is the denial of access of the individual to money, property, possessions, valuables or inheritance, or improper or unauthorised use of funds via omission, exploitation or extortion through threats. Although financial abuse can occur in isolation, research has shown where there are other forms of abuse, there is likely to be financial abuse occurring. Although this is not always the case, everyone should also be aware of this possibility.

***Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health
Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 1 – Introduction and Overview, Welsh Government, 2016***

Examples

- misuse, embezzlement or theft of a person's money, property or possessions
- refusing a person access to their own money, property or possessions
- pressure in connection with wills, testaments, property, inheritance etc
- extortion of money, property or possessions through theft
- failing to account satisfactorily for the use of a person's money, property or possessions, fraudulent use of money
- misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits (eg personal income subsumed into household income)
- loans made to anyone if made under duress, threat or dishonestly extracted.


Possible indicators of financial abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- a disparity between assets and living conditions, reluctance to incur expenses when finances should not be a problem (eg little food in the house, wearing worn out clothes) – the natural thriftiness of some should be borne in mind
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle; lack of amenities, such as personal grooming items, appropriate clothing, that the vulnerable person should be able to afford
- deliberate isolation of a vulnerable person by caregivers
- unexplained disappearance of items from a vulnerable person's house
- unexplained withdrawals from bank or building society accounts
- sudden inability to pay bills
- person managing finances is uncooperative
- carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- recent changes of deeds or title to property, or sudden and unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents
- the sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to an older person's affairs or possessions.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- sudden and significant change to a person's regular offertory contribution without apparent reason

- 
- learning about a vulnerable adult receiving unwanted attention from another church member (this may be indicative of sexual abuse as well)
 - the sudden development of unlikely inter-generational friendships connected with unusual generosity on the part of another church member (this grooming behaviour may also be indicative of sexual abuse)
 - a church member offering to spend exceptional amount of time with (or do odd jobs and shopping for) vulnerable adults and not accepting church pastoral policy boundaries
 - hearing directly from a vulnerable adult about changed financial arrangements made by relatives, especially relating to wills
 - learning about what you judge to be potentially premature seeking of power of attorney
 - pastoral visits to private and care homes revealing inadequate clothing, toiletries and other essential products.

Case example

A relative contacted her aunt's minister to tell her that her cousin has persuaded her aunt to change her will in favour of them – to the exclusion of all other family members. The aunt has always been a staunch church member and welcomes the pastoral support offered by the church. Recently, however, she has been a less regular worshipper. The aunt has told her niece that she felt obliged to change her will as she relies so much on the other niece's everyday help. She told her niece that she was "made to sign" at a solicitor's office. After discussion with the DSO, and weighing up this information, it was passed to the aunt's social worker for consideration.

DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

ADULTS

Definition

Discriminatory abuse, including racist and sexist abuse, exists when values, beliefs or culture result in the misuse of power that denies opportunities to some individuals or groups. This also applies to age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and religion.

Equalities Act, 2010

Examples

- unequal treatment
- inappropriate use of language: racist remarks, sexist remarks, derogatory remarks or verbal abuse
- humiliating behaviour
- lack of respect towards a person's culture
- comments about disability
- bullying or other forms of harassment
- deprivation of normal social contact and cultural identity
- deliberate exclusion.

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse towards vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- lack of respect shown to people
- offensive comments which may be racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist
- withdrawal and social isolation
- poor self-esteem
- poor quality care
- the vulnerable person prefers not to be cared for by certain member(s) of staff/volunteers
- a staff member/volunteer may seem to avoid working with certain groups of people.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- offers to take on church leadership roles unreasonably overlooked
- observations made in formal or informal meetings about the supposed characteristics of identified individuals or groups based on gender, racial or sexual stereotyping
- reported examples of discriminatory behaviour made by church members and other church users.

Case example

A male minister denied access to church pastoral records to a steward from a different ethnic group to him. This meant that she was unable to complete some tasks required of her in her given role as the pastoral lead within the steward team.

INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

ADULTS

Definitions

Organisational abuse includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting (such as a hospital or care home, for example) or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one-off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health

Abuse can occur in institutions as a result of regimes, routines, practices and behaviours that occur in services that vulnerable adults live in or use and which violate their human rights. This may be part of the culture of a service to which staff are accustomed. Thus such practices may pass by unremarked upon by staff. They may be subtle, small and apparently insignificant, yet together may amount to a service culture that denies, restricts or curtails the dignity, privacy, choice, independence or fulfilment of vulnerable adults.

Wales Interim Policy & Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse manual, revised January 2013, Adult Protection Fora

Examples

- authoritarian or rigid management
- lack of leadership or supervision and monitoring of staff or volunteers
- poor care standards
- lack of positive responses to complex needs
- rigid routines
- inadequate staffing
- insufficient knowledge base within the institution
- disrespectful attitudes among staff
- inappropriate use of physical interventions (control and restraint) by poorly trained staff
- poor practice in the provision of intimate care
- not taking account of an individual's needs, culture, religion or ethnicity.

Possible indicators of institutional abuse towards vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns:

- lack of flexibility or choice for people using the service
- inadequate staffing levels
- inappropriate or poor care
- no opportunity for drinks or snacks
- failure to promote or support a person's spiritual or cultural beliefs
- a culture of treating everyone 'the same', which is different from treating everyone 'equally'
- dehumanising language
- absence of individual care.



Examples you may come across in a church setting

- noticing poor quality environments, poor care practice and concern about staff attitudes during pastoral visits to care homes or hospitals
- noticing pressure sores on less mobile adults.

Case example

A pastoral visitor went to see an elderly church member in a residential care home. She was struck by the smell of urine that greeted her, and whilst speaking to the member she noticed two or three people crying out for assistance from staff. There seemed to be a delay before anyone came and the staff member who did come looked annoyed. The church member told the visitor this often happens mid afternoon as that's when the shifts change and the staff are "in a meeting". The pastoral visitor decided to keep a note and pay another visit at the same time of day to see what happens.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Spiritual abuse is not a category of abuse recognised in statutory guidance. However the Methodist Church recognises its significance in its safeguarding policies.

Definition

Spiritual abuse is coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of Scripture or the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context.

Oakley and Kinmond, *Journal of Adult Protection* 16:2, 2014

This abuse may include:

- the misuse of Scripture, the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, with a requirement to be obedient to the abuser
- enforced accountability and pressure to conform
- requirements for secrecy and silence, with isolation from others external to the abuse context
- oppressive teaching
- censorship of decision making
- intrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals
- the denial of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Examples

It might be seen in a leader who is intimidating and imposes their will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. They may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or, more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

Possible indicators of spiritual abuse

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

All abuse of children, young people and adults can lead to the crushing of people's spirit and damage their sense of identity, sense of self and personal confidence, consequently harming their spiritual development. This is particularly the case when the source of the abuse is the Church.

Those who have been spiritually abused experience:

- huge betrayal leading to deep distrust and self-isolation
- silencing by their abuser
- a changed and damaged view of church
- feeling misunderstood
- long-term distress

- loss of church as safe space
- powerlessness.

Children and young people

Research for the Department for Education and Skills' *Child Abuse Linked to Accusations of 'Possession' and 'Witchcraft'* (Stobart, 2006) reported that:

- from January 2000 to mid 2005, 38 cases were identified, involving 47 children where children had been accused of being evil, of being possessed by spirits or of having connections with witchcraft
- of these children, half had been born in the UK. Half were from Africa. Boys and girls were equally at risk. The majority were aged between 8 and 11
- children identified by their carers as being possessed exhibited a range of behaviours including bed wetting, physical or learning difficulties, nightmares and challenging behaviour
- the children were abused in a range of ways, often in an attempt to rid them of evil spirits.

This research published in 2006 remains a standard text referenced by most local safeguarding children's boards in 2015. However the Metropolitan Police have recorded a steadily increasing number of cases being referred from 9 in 2011 to 27 in 2014. In total the Met have received 148 allegations of spiritual abuse linked to spirit possession or witchcraft between since 2004 and 2014 (Community Care, October 2014).

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- tithing that causes hardship
- church members fearful of not attending church regularly and of ignoring or disobeying the pronouncements of the minister or other church leader
- healing ministries that cause a significant emotional response
- expecting people to make unreasonable choices between the church and family or other personal relationships
- adults and children speaking in a manner that suggests that they are submissive to the will of a named leader to the extent that their sense of personal identity is reduced and confidence levels decline
- social media being used to bully, coerce or frighten members (adults or children and young people) to comply with church teachings or to isolate them from the rest of the church community.

In churches with close links to cultures and communities who retain a belief in spirit 'possession', you may come across:

- reports of special services taking place away from formal church settings and at unusual times
- heard observations made by parents and others about an individual child being evil or 'spirit possessed'
- observations of children and young people whose demeanour has suddenly changed or who exhibit signs of physical abuse (see also the section on physical abuse for indicators), social isolation, confusion and disorientation
- observations of children whose school attendance or levels of academic achievement drop suddenly
- a church from one of these communities is hiring church premises for their own worship and shows a marked reluctance to share their safeguarding policies or respond to inquiries about their practices.

Case example

A youth leader asked some young people to take part in a project they were reluctant to join, but he persuaded them to take part by telling them Jesus would expect them to as a sign of their faith. When the young people shared this at home, some parents complained to the minister about their concerns.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Definitions

Domestic violence includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department of Education, 2015

Domestic abuse includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.

Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006

Domestic abuse is usually a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour through which an abuser seeks power over their partner or a family member. It is rarely a one-off incident. It occurs across all of society. In some communities this can also take the form of 'honour' based violence.

A new criminal offence was introduced in 2015 which closed the gap in the law around patterns of controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate family relationship (Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015). This offence criminalises patterns of coercive behaviour where they are perpetrated against a family member. The behaviour, when viewed in isolation, may appear innocuous, but the cumulative effect on a victim may be significant, causing damage and distress.


The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (known as 'Clare's Law') allows an individual to ask police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past and enables an agency or an individual to ask the police to release information concerning an individual being at risk of domestic violence.

Domestic abuse and children

Witnessing or hearing domestic abuse is very distressing for a child, and causes serious harm. Children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening are at risk of other types of abuse too. Children can experience domestic abuse in different ways. They might:

- see the abuse
- hear the abuse from another room
- see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- be hurt by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse.

Exposure to violence, parental conflict and the distress of a caregiver is extremely anxiety-provoking for children. Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious damaging impact on children's physical safety and emotional well-being and constitutes emotional abuse. Children may also suffer because domestic violence has an effect on parents' capacity to provide care for their children.



In 2009 it was estimated that 200,000 children (1.8%) in England lived in homes where there is a known risk of violence or domestic violence (Laming, 2009). Figures published by the NSPCC in 2011 suggest that one in five children have witnessed some form of domestic abuse (Radford, L et al (2011) *Child Abuse in the UK Today*).

There is a close link between parental violence and violence to children. Between 50% and 70% of children living with domestic violence are directly physically or sexually abused themselves. Nine out of ten young people who report neglect also report living with domestic violence. Children may suffer directly or indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic violence.

Domestic abuse towards women and young people

Women are more likely to experience the most serious forms of domestic violence and are more likely to be killed or seriously injured by their partner, ex-partner or lover. However there are also male victims and domestic violence occurs in same sex relationships. The 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales found that, overall, 28.3% of women and 14.7% of men had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16.

The definition of domestic violence in England and Wales was expanded in March 2013 to include victims aged 16 and 17 years old.

Teenage girls aged 16-19 are most at risk of domestic abuse (Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2013/14). 13.1% are likely to experience violence from their partners or ex-partners. Other figures suggest that 1 in 5 teenagers have been abused by their boyfriend or girlfriend (Barter et al (2009) *Partner Exploitation and Violence in Intimate Teenage Relationships*).

Possible indicators of domestic abuse towards adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

The person (more usually a woman):

- has unexplained bruises or injuries
- becomes unusually quiet or withdrawn
- has panic attacks
- has frequent absences from work or other commitments
- wears clothes that conceal bruises even on warm days
- stops talking about their partner
- is anxious about being out or rushes away
- is always accompanied by their partner
- becomes more isolated, withdrawing from friends and family.

“Everyone has arguments and everyone disagrees with their partners, family members and others close to them from time to time. We all do things we regret and cause unhappiness to those we care about. But if this begins to form a consistent pattern, then it’s an indication of domestic abuse.” (Women’s Aid, 2010)

Examples you may come across in a church setting:

- hearing about someone kept from seeing friends or family, or stopped from starting a new course or job
- seeing or hearing someone constantly belittled and humiliated or regularly criticised
- someone telling you about being afraid of their partner or threatening to hurt them or their



children

- physical signs of abuse (eg bruising, abrasions etc)
- seeing or hearing about lost or broken possessions
- seeing changes of appearance and behaviour, reportedly at the wish of a partner
- hearing directly or learning about a partner wanting to know about the other's whereabouts at all times and suspecting him/her of having an affair.

For children who might witness domestic abuse:

- physical and emotional neglect may result in basic needs for food and warmth not being met
- under-stimulation leading to cognitive delay
- difficulty in communicating distress
- signs of anxiety, fear and worry
- school behaviour and attainment impaired
- poor school attendance due to absence to protect parent or younger children
- self blame for parental behaviour
- unplanned separations causing distress and disruption to friendship networks
- embarrassment about unpredictable parental behaviour
- taking on caring responsibilities for themselves and their parents
- isolation caused by reluctance to talk about family issues
- denying own needs and feelings
- stress-related illnesses
- confused and torn loyalties.

Case example

The wife of a local preacher told her minister about prolonged domestic abuse but stated that she did not wish to take any action. The minister's response was not to do anything and so the abuse continued. Eventually they decided to separate but both parties sought the backing of the minister to support them pastorally.

Case example

The wife of a steward in the church eventually left her husband and went with her two children, aged 10 and 12, to a refuge. She had experienced years of physical and verbal abuse, which the children had heard and witnessed; they had experienced it as very frightening. Although people in the church had known what was happening, no support was offered. The children were, for many years after, anxious and lacking in confidence – being fearful to leave their mother to go to school or youth club activities.

EMERGING TYPES OF ABUSE

ABUSE USING SOCIAL MEDIA

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Social media (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, etc) is increasingly being used to harm or harass children, young people and adults in a deliberate manner. This can include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate the recipient. It may also include threatening a person's earnings, employment, reputation or safety.

Working Together (2015) does not identify abuse using social media or online abuse as a separate category of abuse but notes that it can be a feature of emotional or sexual abuse. However, the Methodist Church recognises its significance in its *Safeguarding Children and Young People* policy (2010). In respect of children and young people, the NSPCC offers this definition and summary description:

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

NSPCC website: Online abuse definition, June 2016


For adults the *Care and Support Statutory Guidance* issued under the Care Act, 2014, Department of Health, includes cyberbullying as a form of emotional abuse.

The Methodist Church Children & Youth website *the Well* offers a wide range of helpful policy documents and practice guides: www.childrenandyouth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Social-Media-Guidelines-for-workers.pdf

Examples of online abuse

Cyberbullying is the term used to define various forms of psychological abuse akin to conventional bullying, communicated via the Internet. For example:

- sending obscene short text messages
- sending obscene and offensive content and intimidating children via messenger applications
- obscene content conveyed during online chats
- ridiculing someone by creating a profile or blog copies with false or humiliating information
- sending threats through communicators
- publishing private video footage or photographs of an individual without their consent.



In Wales the main forms of online child abuse relate to:

- content including harm through exposure to images, text and audio
- contact including harm through interactions with others, eg on-line grooming
- conduct including harm arising from how children and young people behave when communicating between themselves or adults online, eg cyberbullying and cyber-stalking.

(The Protection of Children and Young People at risk or experiencing harm through the use of Information Communication Technology All Wales Protocol, July 2015)

Cyberbullying usually occurs in the context of social networking sites which may be public.

Mobile phone tools such as SMS or photographic and video footage captured using a mobile phone may also be used as a means of cyberbullying.

Sexting is the term used to describe the sending of sexually suggestive or explicit messages or photographs, typically via mobile phone. While this can be consensual in the first instance, many images end up widely circulated or posted online, especially when relationships end. The originator quickly loses all control over the images, often with embarrassing, and potentially devastating consequences. 'Sexting' is also illegal. By sending an explicit image, a young person is producing and distributing child abuse images and risks being prosecuted, even if the picture is taken and shared with permission.

Grooming is the preparation and psychological manipulation of a child or adult with the intent of sexual abuse or exploitation. This can happen online:

- the first step of grooming is to gain the trust of a minor, with the groomer presenting his/her actions as beneficial for the minor
- this may occur in the context of private communication via messenger programmes
- it may also occur in forums or social networking sites; the individual who is initiating the grooming may have some sort of stature or position in the website which makes it easier to form a relationship with a minor
- the goal of these interactions is to arrange a meeting with the minor, or to manipulate the minor so as to obtain pornography
- grooming can be the cause of psychological harm due to the techniques used by the groomer; it also creates a harmful model of minor-adult relationships.

Harassment: repeatedly sending offensive, rude and insulting messages.

Denigration: posting derogatory information about someone, and/or digitally altered photographs.

Flaming: fighting online, often using vulgar language.


Impersonation: hacking another's email or social media account to post embarrassing material.

Outing and trickery: sharing another's secrets or tricking someone into revealing embarrassing information.

Cyber-stalking: repeated threats or online activity that makes a person afraid for their safety.

Trolling: the starting of arguments in online communities with online insults, provocations and threats.

Addiction is the excessive use of the computer that interferes with daily life to the extent that children and young people spend numerous hours playing computer games, chatting, or surfing the net while forgetting their responsibilities or even to eat.



Inappropriate content is a generic label for any sort of Internet content, whether verbal, visual or audio which may be illicit, dangerous, or age-inappropriate and yet publicly available.

Offences relating to indecent images: taking, making, showing, distributing, possessing with intent to show or distribute; advertising for showing or distributing.

Note: the pace of the development of technology means that constant updating is needed to understand the potential ways children, young people and adults can be abused using social media. Useful websites for keeping up-to-date are:

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse/keeping-children-safe/
www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
www.parentsprotect.co.uk/
www.iwf.org.uk/
www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware

Possible indicators of abuse using social media towards children, young people and adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

Without having access to their mobile, tablet or computer, it can be difficult to know if someone is experiencing cyber abuse. Some indicators of this form of abuse may include a child or an adult:

- spending much more or much less time online, texting, gaming or using social media
- withdrawing from the family, spending a lot of time alone
- being quiet, upset or outraged after using the Internet or texting
- being secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- being reluctant to let parents/carers or family members anywhere near their mobile, tablet, laptop, etc
- having lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- comments made on local church or circuit Facebook sites
- evidence of e-communications to children and young people about church events sent from personal email accounts and/or late at night
- reports received from children and young people about unwanted contacts or abusive communications that have caused distress
- an adult vulnerable through loneliness, bereavement or disability being targeted by someone using a false identity.

Case example

A 14-year-old female member of the church youth group told her minister that a young man, aged 16, had asked for a naked photo of her and she had sent him one. She is now upset because she thought he would show it to other people. The minister accessed the guidance published in *the Well* and showed her how she can get help and if necessary report her concerns to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre).



Case example

Daniel has learning difficulties and five years ago moved away from his home town and church with high hopes of becoming more independent from his family, buoyed up by his share of an inheritance from his grandmother. However it ended sadly – Daniel’s new ‘friends’ involved him in an online scam which resulted in his receiving a suspended sentence for fraud and losing most of his savings.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Definitions

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. Children are believed to be at greater risk of sexual exploitation if they:

- are homeless
- have feelings of low self-esteem
- have had a recent bereavement or loss
- are in care
- are a young carer.

Child sexual exploitation is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities. It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment which can include money, mobile phones and other items, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, 'protection' or affection. The vulnerability of the young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent.

Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011

Examples

- Deceiving children into producing indecent images of themselves, engaging in sexual chat online or sexual activity over a webcam.
- An adult, usually at least five years older, befriending and grooming a young person by focusing on their vulnerabilities. The victim will initially feel they are in a positive and rewarding relationship with the perpetrator.
- Young people are passed by perpetrators through networks, between towns and cities, where they may be forced or coerced into sexual activity with multiple people.
- Young people are used to recruit other young people to take part in so-called 'sex parties' where this can occur.
- Young people in gangs or groups may be sexual exploited as part of gang initiation or as punishment. Young people may also be encouraged to recruit peers into the gang, exposing them to similar treatment and making it difficult to identify perpetrators who control the gang.

Perpetrators may be:

- An adult or another young person
- Male or female
- Any ethnicity
- Visible in everyday life
- Articulate, plausible and 'savvy'.



It is important to note that:

- not all perpetrators will involve money or gifts when they exploit young people.
- young people may not understand that sex they haven't agreed to or forced sex – including oral sex – is wrong and illegal.

Possible indicators of sexual exploitation

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

In addition to the indicators for sexual abuse, in cases of child sexual exploitation some indicators may include young people:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- skipping school or being disruptive in class
- appearing with unexplained gifts or possessions that can't be accounted for
- experiencing health problems that may indicate a sexually transmitted infection
- having mood swings and changes in temperament
- using and misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour, such as over-familiarity with strangers,
- dressing in a sexualised manner or sending sexualised images by mobile phone (sexting)
- showing signs of unexplained physical harm, such as bruising and cigarette burns.

Case example

A youth worker befriended young women in the youth club who were unhappy at home. He texted them encouraging secrecy; told them how much he cared for them and valued them; he gave them presents offered them trips and outings.

TRAFFICKING

Definition

Human trafficking is the movement of a person from one place to another into conditions of exploitation, using deception, coercion, the abuse of power or the abuse of someone's vulnerability.

Adult victims are trafficked all over the world for little or no money – including to and within the UK. There is no typical victim and some victims don't understand they have been exploited and are entitled to help and support. Victims are often trafficked to a foreign country where they cannot speak the language, have their travel and identity documents removed, and are told that if they try to attempt an escape, they or their families will be harmed.

People may be trafficked for the following purposes:

- domestic servitude
- forced involvement in criminal activity
- forced labour
- sexual exploitation
- organ/tissue exploitation.

All of the three following elements below need to be present in order for trafficking to have occurred, unless the victim is under the age of 18, in which case only the ACT and the PURPOSE need to be present.

The ACT – recruitment, transportation, movement, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.

The MEANS – control by threat, use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or the giving of payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim.

The PURPOSE – exploitation of a person, which includes prostitution and other sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices, and the removal of organs.

www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/crime-threats/human-trafficking

The Guardian (6.5.16) reported that the number of children identified as being trafficked in the UK increased from 671 in 2014 to 982 in 2015, according to the National Crime Agency. Issues raised include:

- the majority of the children arrived unaccompanied from Europe
- Albanian, Vietnamese and British were identified as the most common nationalities of children trafficked or at risk of being trafficked
- the rise in children being lured into work, sexual exploitation or criminal activities is likely to be an underestimate.

This is an emerging aspect of abuse and as awareness grows we may find there are people in our church congregations who have been trafficked and who seek help from the church to escape their situation.



Case example

A lay worker shared her church's experience:

There were concerns and growing tensions within the community about the number of houses in poor condition which were being privately let to large groups of Eastern European people. There were often 20 or more people living in one small terraced house, with a high turnover of residents. We decided to set up a small, volunteer led project to offer support to the residents around accessing local services, registering with GPs, etc. This led to a number of people sharing their stories with us; it transpired they had been trafficked to the UK for forced labour or sexual exploitation. This was a real eye opener and wasn't what we expected to discover.

This example links to sexual exploitation (p.36)

Case example

A young woman told a Methodist Church project:

I was brought from my country of origin to the UK by a woman who was a member of my church. She promised me a job working in a new branch of my church in London. However, when I arrived I was made to work as a domestic servant; cleaning, cooking and given no money and very little food. I ran away and have been homeless ever since. I spend my nights in a homeless shelter and my days walking the streets. I am too afraid to speak to the police.

This example links to modern slavery (p.40)

MODERN SLAVERY

Definition

The process of coercing labour or other services from a captive individual, through any means, including exploitation of bodies or body parts.

Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the business of Modern Slavery* (2009)

A social and economic relationship in which a person is controlled through violence or the threat of violence, is paid nothing, and is economically exploited.

Kevin Bales, *Slavery Today* (2008)

Modern slavery takes many forms and includes forced labour and debt bondage. In the UK it often involves human trafficking.

Pre-trafficking: People are vulnerable to being trafficked and enslaved due to age, gender, social and economic status, 'cultural' practices, migration, geography/location, civil unrest, poverty and lack of opportunity. It could be that an individual's own aspirations, such as academic, economic, career, relationship or travel, led them into being a victim of slavery.

Examples

- forced labour
 - workers being held under lock and key
 - workers only allowed out to go to work
 - workers being accompanied by controllers at all times
 - workers having no control of documents
- forced and early marriage
- sexual exploitation
- criminal exploitation
- domestic servitude.

Possible indicators of children, young people and adults being in modern slavery

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

Post-trafficking indicators include:

- trauma
- complex medical, emotional, mental and practical needs
- potential for financial, legal and physical impact of experience to affect long-term recovery
- anger and post-traumatic altruism.
- apparent high resilience which masks trauma

The individual:

- appears to be in a dependency situation
- their travel, identity, financial documents are held by someone else
- is unsure of home/work address
- may be living and working at the same address
- may appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood
- is isolated, with limited social contact or time off, and limited contact with family
- seems to be bonded by a debt
- is experiencing threats, such as against themselves or family members
- is unable to negotiate working conditions or to leave their employment situation
- is on low pay or has excessive deductions made for food, accommodation, transport
- may look malnourished or unkempt, lacking access to medical care, hygiene facilities and education
- might wear the same clothes day in and day out.
- has an expression of anxiety, fear or mistrust.

The reality is that while some of these indicators are obvious, the coercion and control is more subtle.

www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism

www.salvationarmy.org.uk/human-trafficking

www.modernslavery.co.uk/index.html

This is an emerging aspect of abuse and as awareness grows we may find there are people in our church congregations who are in slavery or who seek help from the church to escape their situation.

Case example

A city centre minister shared the following:

I arrived at church to find a young couple huddled in the doorway; they had slept there all night. We brought them in and made them a cup of tea. They had come to the UK having been promised work in a factory. He had worked for one month on a building site but received no wages. When he asked for payment he was assaulted. She thought she was to be a child-minder, but instead was told she would be working in a brothel. When she refused, her purse and travel documents were taken away. The couple were too afraid to speak to the police, but decided that a church might help them get home. I gave them contact details for their embassy and paid for their coach ticket to get there. I never saw them again. It was only later that I realised they may have been victims of modern slavery and wish I had responded differently.



Case example

A project manager in a church drop-in for people who are homeless shared this story:

We began to notice men in vans pulling up outside the centre and speaking with our clients on the way in. Some of our clients seemed very afraid of them. Our volunteers found them intimidating. Eventually a client told us that these men were offering people jobs and somewhere to stay, with a good rate of pay. He said he knew of some people who had accepted these jobs and who he had never seen again.

Case example

A volunteer in a church-based money advice centre told us:

One of our clients was a young woman with three children all under the age of four. She was very anxious that we get her benefits sorted out as quickly as possible. We noticed she was very thin, always looked very tired, and had bruises and cuts on her arms; one so badly infected that we had to take her for emergency hospital treatment. One day she phoned and asked us to visit her in hospital. She had been assaulted by her husband and husband's brother. We found out her husband's family was forcing her to work gathering scrap metal all day, and then in the evenings, cooking and cleaning for all the extended family.

This example links to Domestic Abuse (p. 29)

SELF-NEGLECT (ADULTS)

The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance includes self-neglect in the categories of abuse or neglect relevant to safeguarding adults with care and support needs. There is no equivalent reference in the Wales Code to self-neglect.

Definition

The term 'self-neglect' refers to an unwillingness or inability to care for oneself and/or one's environment. It encompasses a wide range of behaviours, including hoarding, living in squalor, and neglecting self-care and hygiene; failure to provide oneself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, healthcare, medication (when indicated) and safety precautions. It is linked to:

- increased incidence of depression
- the onset of dementia
- feelings of low self-esteem
- a history of trauma, abuse or bereavement
- hoarding or no possessions at all
- reclusive or co-dependent on sibling or pet
- substance misuse
- self-harm.

Possible indicators of self-neglect in adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- dehydration, malnutrition (or obesity), untreated medical conditions, poor personal hygiene
- hazardous living conditions (eg improper wiring, no indoor plumbing, no heat, no running water)
- unsanitary living quarters (eg animal/insect infestation, no functioning toilet, excrement present)
- inappropriate and/or inadequate clothing, lack of the necessary medical aids (eg glasses, hearing aids, dentures)
- grossly inadequate housing or homelessness.

Examples you may come across in a church setting

- an older person in the earlier stages of Alzheimer's whose memory loss and disorientation means they lose the capacity to follow daily routines
- someone experiencing depression who loses interest in taking good care of themselves
- a family experiencing poverty who are unable to maintain their home.

Case example

A pastoral visitor had visited Mr K (aged 84) weekly for two years. Six months ago, Mr K's son had died suddenly and the pastoral visitor noticed that Mr K seemed to have gone 'downhill'. When he visited the house seemed to be neglected, Mr K seemed not to be washing or shaving and had lost weight.

RADICALISATION

Definition

Radicalisation is when individuals are exploited by extremists to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups and actions. This is not an aspect of safeguarding of which we have experience in the Methodist Church. It is however important that there is an awareness of what it is; who is at risk and the relevant indicators.

There is no clear profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process will be different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame. Given this, it is important that awareness, sensitivity and expertise are developed to recognise signs that an individual is being exploited and put at risk of significant harm.

Children and adults at risk can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include family members or friends, direct contact with members, groups and organisations or through the Internet and social media. This may lead them to the risk of being drawn into criminal activity, which has the potential to cause significant harm.

Factors associated with radicalisation

Identity crisis when an individual is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage, which leaves them uncomfortable with their place in the society around them.

Personal crisis through family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

Personal circumstances such as migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of government policy.

Unmet aspirations with perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.

Criminality through experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/reintegration; previous involvement with criminal groups.

Other critical risk factors

- being in contact with extremist recruiters
- articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders
- accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- possessing or viewing violent extremist literature
- using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- joining extremist organisations
- significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.



Other potential indicators

- use of inappropriate language
- possession of violent extremist literature
- behavioural changes
- the expression of extremist views
- advocating violent actions and means
- association with known extremists
- seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE ABUSE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

The extent and impact of child abuse

Recent research (NSPCC, 2011) set out to establish the extent of child abuse. It had previously carried out a survey ten years prior and aimed to see what had changed. Researchers asked 1,761 18-24 year olds about their childhood experiences and compared their replies with those given in the earlier survey. This research is carried out every ten years so this gives the most up to date picture of what we know about the extent and impact of child abuse.

- Around one in four 18-24 year olds reported experiences of severe physical violence, sexual abuse or neglect in childhood.
- The number of young adults experiencing severe violence, forced sex and prolonged verbal abuse during childhood has dropped over the last 30 years.
- Young adults from lower socio-economic groups and those with separated parents reported significantly higher levels of physical violence, coerced sexual acts, regular verbal aggression and parental lack of care and supervision during childhood.
- Almost 20% of 11-17 year-old children have been physically attacked by an adult, raped or sexually assaulted or severely neglected during their lives.
- Severely abused and neglected children were almost nine times more likely to attempt suicide, and almost five times more likely to self-harm, than children not severely abused and neglected.
- Children who suffered several types of maltreatment were significantly more likely to have enduring physical, learning or psychiatric problems.

For more information and more recent research into specific aspects of child abuse the NSPCC publishes a wide range of research reports. Go to www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/ (this includes the annual *How Safe are Our Children?* survey report).

Disabled children and abuse

Disabled children are more vulnerable to all forms of abuse because of: negative attitudes towards disability; a higher chance of their being bullied; isolation; a greater likelihood of being cared for outside the family for at least part of the week, and greater difficulty for disabled children in communicating their experiences.

Who abuses children and young people?

The abuse of children can be by:

- parents
- other carers
- other children
- people employed, or volunteering, to work with them
- institutions.

Adult abuse

Statistical evidence is less available for adults, but it is essential to acknowledge that adult abuse is widespread. According to www.elderabuse.org.uk, over 500,000 older people are abused in the UK each year. Both older men and women are at risk of abuse, though the majority of victims are women over the age of 70.



WHAT CAN MAKE IT HARD FOR PEOPLE IN CHURCHES TO RESPOND TO A CONCERN?

Why individuals may fail to respond to a cry for help

- fear they may be wrong
- doubts about the child's or vulnerable adult's truthfulness
- anger and distress
- the child or adult asking them not to tell
- uncertainty about procedures and consequences
- unresolved feelings
- rationalising that there may be other reasons for the child or adult's behaviour
- not wanting to interfere in a family.

Why churches may fail to respond to a cry for help

- they may not want to hear or it may be too hard to hear
- the person/family concerned is too well known and respected
- the limits of confidentiality/confession may not be well understood
- confusion about false allegations
- a desire to keep it within the church
- those with responsibility feeling they need to handle everything themselves
- not knowing who to consult
- failing to recognise what's going on and/or its significance
- being unaware of or misapplying policies and procedures
- acting hastily or too slowly, and not seeking or taking advice
- this doesn't happen in church, does it?

WHY CHILDREN AND ADULTS MAY FIND IT HARD TO TELL

- not knowing it is wrong
- not being able to communicate
- feeling there is no one to talk to who will listen and can be trusted
- they have tried to tell before but not been heard
- feelings of shame and embarrassment
- being dependent on the person who has harmed or is harming them
- fear of not being listened to, understood, taken seriously or believed
- believing that nothing will change
- not wanting to burden others
- fear of getting themselves or someone else into trouble
- fear it will make things worse
- not knowing what can be done
- stigma of involvement with statutory agencies (eg police, children's services etc).
- confusion about pastoral authority (principally relates to adult context).

RESPONDING WELL TO CONCERNS

How to respond to concerns that a child has been/is being abused

Children and young people do not often directly disclose that they have been or are being abused. More often you would become concerned by your observations of changes in the child's behaviour or physical appearance – or because of something another person has told you.

When responding to a child, young person or parent, who shares with you, remember these guidelines.

- NEVER promise to keep a secret.
- React calmly; be aware of your non-verbal messages.
- Don't stop a child or parent who is talking freely about what has happened.
- Don't ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child or parent they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Avoid making comments or judgements.
- Tell the child or parent what will happen next.
- Record using the child or parent's words.

Remember to follow Methodist Church guidelines. Working in isolation is dangerous practice and does not safeguard children. Always share your concerns with a manager or senior colleague, such as minister or safeguarding officer. Some of this is taken from the *Methodist Safeguarding Reference Guide* - available from Methodist Publishing (Ref: PE750) www.methodistpublishing.org.uk 0845 017 8220 – you may want to have this as well as this handout.

How to respond to concerns that an adult has been/is being abused

Adults too may be reticent about direct disclosure of abuse. Generally you would become concerned about signs you observe or something you hear about. The Care Act 2014 speaks about “making safeguarding personal” so this means engaging with them in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, well-being and safety. This is an approach in England with no direct equivalent in Wales.

It is important to understand the circumstances of the observed or reported abuse, and to recognise the adult's capacity to make decisions for themselves, but the primary focus must still be how to safeguard the adult, and so it is essential that you promptly share any concerns you may have with your local church or circuit safeguarding officer. The following guidelines will also apply:

- never promise to keep a secret
- react calmly to what you see and hear, being aware of your non-verbal messages
- don't stop an adult who is speaking freely about the safeguarding issue
- don't ask leading questions
- reassure the adult that they have done the right thing by telling you
- avoid making comments or judgements
- tell the adult what will happen next
- keep good records using the adult's words.

GUIDELINES ON TOUCH FOR PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Touch is very important for children and can be appropriate. It can be a non-verbal way of communicating care, concern and understanding. It might be a natural part of interaction with a child in your care. It could be because of your involvement in play or recreational activities. You might need to touch a child or young person to protect them from danger.

However some children who have been abused may misunderstand the message you intend to convey. In order to ensure the well-being and safety of children, and to promote safer working, it is important that you have a sound appreciation of appropriate boundaries and how to use touch in a safe way.

The following guidelines suggest ways of achieving this:

- Touch should always occur in public. Giving someone a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not yours. This requires you to be self-aware and sensitive to children's feelings.
- Care and concern can be expressed by a touch on the arm or shoulder or a sideways hug.
- Be sensitive to the child's reaction to touch. If a child is not happy with physical contact respect this. You might need to find other ways of conveying your concern for them.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker/volunteer.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Team members can helpfully monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should feel safe and confident to check out issues, discuss any concerns and to constructively challenge anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- As far as possible you need to be aware of the child's culture and the meaning that touch has for them.
- If you have concerns about abuse they should always be reported.

More detailed guidance can be found in sections 13, 14 and 15 of Safer Recruitment Consortium *Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2015)*. www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org

USEFUL RESOURCES

The safeguarding policies and practice guidance of the Methodist Church are all online at: www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding

- *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church (2015)*
- *Practice Guidance for DBS Checks as Part of Safer Recruitment (2015)*
- *Safeguarding Guidance for Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships (2015)*

Other safeguarding policies and practice guidance are currently under review and when produced will be in the Safeguarding section of the Methodist Church website. They will include:

- *Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults*
- *Domestic Abuse*

- *Model Safeguarding Policies*
- Risk assessment guidance.

CHILDREN

www.parentsprotect.co.uk: This is a website created by the Lucy Faithfull *Stop it Now!* campaign against child sexual abuse. It is designed for parents providing information, advice and guidance. However it would also be useful for workers and volunteers.

www.nspcc.org.uk: many useful resources, including research studies and fact sheets.

www.stopitnow.org.uk: a freephone confidential helpline for people with concerns about child sexual abuse which gives advice, support and information 0808 1000 900.

www.childrenandyouth.org.uk: the Methodist Church Children & Youth web page.

ADULTS

www.ageuk.org.uk: useful resources including research studies and fact sheets.

www.elderabuse.org.uk: This is the website for Action on Elder Abuse, an organisation which campaigns specifically against the abuse of older people. It contains useful resources and background information.

www.mencap.org.uk: information and resources about people with learning difficulties.

SOCIAL MEDIA ABUSE

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

www.parentsprotect.co.uk/

www.iwf.org.uk/

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Restored: an international Christian alliance, based in the UK, working to transform relationships and end violence against women.

- Website: www.restoredrelationships.org
- Helpline: 020 8943 7706

Respect: a UK membership organisation for work with domestic abuse perpetrators, male victims and young people.

- Website: www.respect.uk.net

Respect also offers a helpline phone and website service for domestic violence perpetrators:

- Website: www.respectphoneline.org.uk
- Helpline: 0808 802 4040

Refuge: a national charity providing a range of specialist domestic abuse services to women and children.

- Website: www.refuge.org.uk
- Telephone: 020 7395 7700
- 24 hour helpline: 0808 2000 247



NOTES AND REFLECTIONS

What have I learnt today?

A rectangular box containing ten horizontal dotted lines for writing.

What am I going to do now?

A rectangular box containing ten horizontal dotted lines for writing.