

TYPES & SIGNS OF ABUSE

Abuse is the serious mistreatment of a person which causes, or is likely to cause them harm.

ABUSE TYPE

EXAMPLES

SIGNS

Physical Abuse

Causing physical pain, suffering, or an injury to another person.

Hitting/punching.
Shaking.
Scratching.
Choking.
Excessive use of restraints.

Bodily injuries (e.g. bruises, welts).
Unlikely explanations for injuries.
Hiding injuries.
Wariness of physical contact.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual behaviour with or towards another person without their full consent, or where the person doesn't have sufficient capacity to consent.

Rape/sexual assault.
Sexual kissing, touching, fondling.
Displaying pornography to a child.
Taking sexual images of a child.

Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge.
Sexually transmitted infection.
Genital soreness or injury.
Wariness of physical contact.

Psychological Abuse

Persistent emotional mistreatment of another person causing severe adverse effects on their emotional development and wellbeing.

Relentless bullying or criticism.
Persistent shaming or humiliating.
Withholding attention/affection.
Making threats to abandon.

Poor self-image/confidence.
Lack of connection with parents.
Difficulty controlling emotions.
Extra vigilant disposition.
Difficulty forming relationships.

Neglect

Failure of a caregiver to provide a person with the necessities of life or adequate care causing severe adverse effects on their development and wellbeing.

Not providing adequate food, clothing, shelter.
Not providing necessary medical or dental treatment.
Leaving a child in an unsafe place.
Depriving a child of education.

Unsanitary personal hygiene.
Untreated medical or dental issues.
Malnutrition/weight loss.
Unsuitable clothing for conditions.

Domestic/Family Violence

Violence between family members or between current or former intimate partners.

Physical assault.
Threats of violence.
Coercive sex.
Restricting access to money.

Fear of a spouse/partner.
Bodily injuries (e.g. bruises, welts).
Hiding injuries.
Isolation from friends and family.
Reluctance to leave children with a spouse/partner.

Spiritual/Religious Abuse

Exploiting a person's religious beliefs or faith to control, punish or exploit them.

Distorting scripture to exploit.
Stopping a person from taking part in religious practices.
Forcing a person to take part in religious practices.

An unexpected crisis or loss of faith.
Sudden separation from the Church.
Mistrust of religious figures.