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Hertfordshire

Safeguarding Adults Board

Working together to prevent abuse

Keeping You Safe from Abuse

How to protect yourself and report abuse



'All vulnerable adults have a right to live and work, be cared for, and be supported in an environment free from abuse, harassment, violence or aggression'

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Learning Disability Services
0300 123 4042
www.hertsdirect.org/hcs



This leaflet tells you how to get help if you or a friend is being hurt or badly treated. This is called abuse.

Abuse is always wrong and if you are upset or scared there are people who can help.



What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly.

You may be upset or frightened.

You may be scared to speak out or stop them.



Abuse may happen once or many times. Abuse may happen anywhere. It can happen in your home, in a care home or hospital, or where you spend your day or night. It can also happen in a public place like a bus stop or a shop.



Abuse is always wrong. It is never your fault.



Anyone can abuse you even important people like your friends, family or someone who works with you. Strangers can also abuse you.

If you are abused, you may feel angry, unhappy, upset or confused.



Even if the person has told you it is a secret or that they will hurt you, you need to tell someone you trust.

There are different kinds of abuse



Physical abuse

When someone hurts you on purpose, for example hitting, kicking or biting.



Sexual abuse

When someone touches your body or private parts in ways you do not like or want.

This includes taking photos of you naked, kissing you, making you touch them, having sex with you when you don't want to and when you have said no.

Neglect

When the people who are supposed to help you don't look after you properly.

For example, not giving you enough food, not keeping you warm and safe or not taking you to the doctor if you are ill.

This may be because they are not able to look after you or they choose not to look after you.





Emotional abuse

When people say bad things to you. For example shouting, threatening you or swearing. They may hurt your feelings, not listen to you, say you are stupid or make you sad, frightened or upset.

This might include bullying and calling you names, or they may laugh at you because of your disability.



Financial abuse

When people take, or control, your money or things without asking you.

This might include stealing from you or using your money to buy things for themselves.



What to do if you or someone you know is being abused

Abuse is always wrong and you must tell someone you trust so we can stop the abuse happening. Even if someone tells you it's a secret.

You might feel scared or worried or you may have been told not to say anything.

There is help available to stop abusive behaviour

You could tell:

- a police officer
- a doctor or nurse
- a social worker, care worker or support worker
- a fire fighter
- an advocate
- anyone else you trust like a friend or your family.



Don't be scared to speak up.

If you are worried about abusive behaviour you need to tell someone.



You can also tell Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Community Services at any time by ringing **0300 123 4042**

If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use our text phone number on **0300 123 4041**



If there is a danger to life, a risk of injury or a crime is taking place, please call the Police by dialling **999**

You should use 101 to report less urgent crime or disorder, to contact the police with a general enquiry or to speak to a local officer.

You could also talk to POhWER, an independent support group:

01438 740162 (North Herts)

01438 846010 (South Herts)



For more information about keeping yourself safe please go to **www.hertsdirect.org**