



## Summary for Parent and Carers

# What is child abuse?

There are four main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

## Physical abuse

This is when someone hurts a child or young person on purpose. Physical abuse can include:

- Hitting
- Shaking
- Making a child ill
- Using an implement such as a belt, stick wire flex etc to discipline

**Please tell someone if you have any concerns.** Signs and symptoms of physical abuse might be:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries / marks / burns
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched

## Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone is told, asked or forced to take part in sexual activities. There are many different ways in which a young person can be sexually abused, including:

- Making them do sexual things either to themselves or with other people
- Involving them in the making of films, videos or DVDs or taking photos and videos on mobile phones that involve sexual activity
- Making them watch sexual behaviour

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse might be:

- Extreme reactions such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- These are only a few. Please tell someone if you have any concerns.

## Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse happens in many different ways. It can affect how a young person or child feels about themselves, how they feel they fit in, with friends, at school, or where they live. Examples can be:



- Being made to feel inadequate, wrong or unhappy
- Being unfairly blamed
- Being bullied
- Being made to feel frightened or in danger
- Seeing or hearing someone from home being hurt by another member of the family (domestic violence)

Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse might be:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- These are only a few. Please tell someone if you have any concerns.

## Neglect

Neglect is when a child or young person is not being properly looked after. This could damage their health or wellbeing. These very basic needs include:

- Safety at home ( includes not being left at home alone)
- Proper shelter / clothing / cleanliness
- Any necessary medical treatment including dental care
- Protection from physical and emotional harm or danger - this includes protecting them from someone else who may be abusing them.

Signs and symptoms of neglect might be:

- Constant hunger, tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- These are only a few. Please tell someone if you have any concerns.

**If you or someone you know is being abused then please tell someone.**