

Child abuse

YOUR concern?

What is it?

What should **YOU** do?

What will happen?

What is it?

Child abuse can happen to any child, at any time, at any place, but children with disabilities are especially vulnerable. It can be committed by anyone – adults or children.

Physical Abuse

When children are physically hurt or injured by others, for instance by hitting, shaking or squeezing.

Sexual Abuse

When children are used by others to meet their own sexual needs. This might include specific sexual contact or showing children pornographic material including videos and on the internet.

Emotional Abuse

When children are persistently denied love and affection. Children tend to suffer when they are constantly shouted at, ridiculed, used as scapegoats or live in a violent environment.

Neglect

Where there is failure to meet a child's basic needs for food, warmth, protection, education and care including medical care.

NSPCC local number	01733 207620
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Textphone	0800 056 0566
Parentline	0808 800 2222
Childline	0800 1111

YOU can make a difference



Remember:

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Who can you contact?

Children's Social Care Services

Referral and Assessment
Children's Services
Bayard Place
Peterborough
PE1 1FB
01733 864180

Police

Thorpe Wood Police HQ
Thorpe Wood
Peterborough
PE3 6SD
0345 456 4564

You can speak to the duty social worker during office hours. Outside of office hours, the Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: 01733 234724

Out of hours calls will be directed to the control room.



What are the signs?

Signs may include any of the following:

Any unexplained injuries
Fear, watchfulness, over anxiety to please
Unexplained bruising or marks
Small round burns
Frequent absences from school

Comments about sexual activity
Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour
Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards others
Unexpected reaction towards people(fear, weariness)
Repeated urinary or genital infections
Pregnancy/sexually transmitted diseases

Withdrawn, anxiousness, lacking in confidence/self belief
Self harm and eating disorders
Demanding/attention seeking
Unwillingness to communicate
Repetitive nervous behaviour e.g. rocking/hair twisting

Unsuitable clothing
No help sought when child becomes ill/injured
Poor hygiene (smelly/dirty)
Left alone or with unsuitable carers
Thin, pale, lacking in energy
Exposure to risk/danger (home safety/substance abuse)

If you see any of them that arouse your suspicions or make you feel uneasy, it could be wrong.



How can I be certain that a child is being abused?

You may not be certain but if there are any of these signs it is very important that you take action.

What should you do?

- Listen to the child
- Take what the child says seriously
- Act quickly
- Share your worries with Children's Social Care Services, the Police or NSPCC – they are there to help you
- Continue to offer support to the child

What if I am not sure?

If you are unsure you may prefer to discuss your concerns with someone who works with children and families. This could be your GP, health visitor, a social worker or teacher. (All schools have a named teacher for Child Protection)

What will happen?

The person you speak to will take your concerns seriously and may refer the matter to a social worker from Children's Social Care Services, who will then contact you.



I'm worried about giving my name

If you feel very strongly that you cannot give your name you need not do so – your concerns for a child will still be looked into. Your name and address will be kept confidential if you request it.

How will a social worker find out if a child is being abused?

The social worker will check their records to see whether the child and family are already known to them. Enquiries often start with asking a teacher, health visitor or doctor who knows the child. In most cases there will be a discussion with the parent and the child. Sometimes it becomes clear at an early stage that there is no foundation to the concerns.

Will I be told what happens?

Because of the highly confidential nature of this work, you may not hear the outcome of the enquiries but Children's Social Care Services will send you a written acknowledgement of your concerns.

Don't

- delay
- probe or push the child for explanations
- assume someone else knows and will help the child
- be afraid to voice your concerns, the child may need urgent protection and help.

YOU must act.

