

# Say **NO** to abuse.

Safeguarding adults from abuse



Westminster City Council

[westminster.gov.uk](http://westminster.gov.uk)

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City of Westminster



2 Say **NO** to abuse.

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4 Say **NO** to abuse.

# What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone does or says something to hurt you or to make you feel upset, scared or frightened. You may be too scared to tell them to stop or even to ask for help from someone else.

- Abuse is always wrong.
- Abuse is not your fault.

Anyone can abuse, such as a family member, care worker or someone you should be able to trust.

There are different kinds of abuse and we have given examples on the next eight pages.



# Physical abuse.

This is when someone hurts you or threatens to hurt you.



It can include:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Punching
- Pulling hair
- Spitting
- Forced to take medication

# Sexual abuse.

This is when someone makes you do sexual things that you do not want to do.



This can make you feel sad, angry or frightened. Sexual abuse can be something that is done to you by another person. It can be something you are made to do to yourself.

Examples are:

- Touching of bottom
- Touching of breasts
- Touching of penis or vagina
- Saying to you words that are sexual that make you feel uncomfortable
- Being forced to watch sexual acts
- Being made to touch other people in these places

# Emotional abuse.

This is when someone hurts you or threatens to hurt you.



This is when someone hurts your feelings, shouts or threatens you.

Some examples are:

- Calling you names
- Laughing at you
- Ignoring you
- Blaming you for things which are not your fault
- Someone may say, "If you tell somebody what I have done, I will hurt you."



# Financial abuse.

This is when someone takes your money or belongings without asking.



Financial abuse can include:

- Stealing your money
- Being forced to pay for other people's things
- When your money is spent without your permission
- When you don't have a say about how your money is spent
- Not being able to spend your own money

# Neglect.

Neglect is when your care or support is not enough to meet your needs.



This can include:

- Feeling cold much of the time
- Feeling hungry much of the time
- Having only dirty or old clothes to wear
- Being put in danger
- Not getting the medical help you need
- Being ignored – no one talking to you

# Discriminatory abuse.

This is when people do or say bad things or treat you unfairly because you are different.



It can be because of:

- Your skin colour
- Your disability
- You are lesbian or gay
- Your language or religion

# Institutional abuse.

This is when you are in a hospital or a care home and the way things are done make you feel sad, frightened or angry.



Institutional abuse can include:

- Not having enough staff to look after you
- Rules or routines are decided by the managers and staff only
- Not having any choice about what you want to do and when you want to do it, such as what you want to eat and when
- Your personal items are used for other people
- Not being able to go into the community to do things you would like
- Not having the transport to take you where you need to or would like to go

# What are my rights?

Everyone has the right to be free from abuse, free from neglect and free from harm. Some adults may be at a higher risk of abuse due to their age, disability or illness.

You have the right not to be abused.



# Who can abuse?

Anyone can behave in a way that is abusive.

It might be someone you know, such as a carer or family member or someone you should be able to trust.





# Where abuse can happen

Abuse can take place anywhere.



...at a care home



...at college



...at a day centre



...in the street



...at work



...at home



...in hospital



...in the club

# What I can do if I am abused

- You should tell someone you trust if someone has hurt you or that you are unhappy.
- Tell them as soon as possible. You should tell them what has happened to make you unhappy.
- It is a good idea to write down why you are unhappy in a letter or ask someone to do it for you. You can keep a copy.

# What I can do to keep safe

Personal and home safety tips can be found online at [www.met.police.uk](http://www.met.police.uk)

People you could tell and ask for help include:



...a care inspector



...a care worker



...a doctor

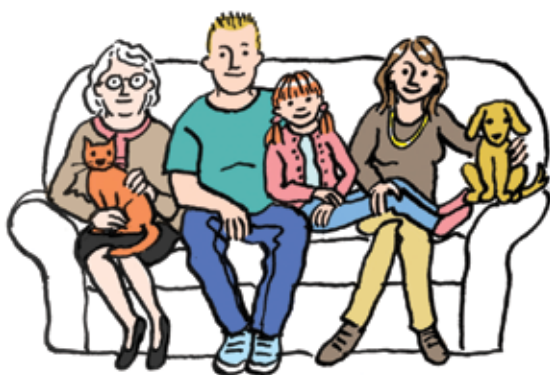




...a social worker



...friends



...family



...a police officer



...a nurse



...staff who support you

# What you should not do if you are aware someone is being abused

What you should not do if a vulnerable person confides in you they have been abused.

- Do not confront the person you think is responsible for the abuse.
- Do not disturb or destroy anything that may be evidence.
- Do not start to investigate the situation.
- If the person is in immediate danger, you should call the emergency services by dialling **999**.



# What if the abuse is also a crime?

If the abuse is also a crime such as assault, racial harassment, rape or theft you should involve the police.

If the police are involved, we will work with them to support you.

If you are worried about contacting the police, you can always contact Adult Social Care to talk things over first.



# What about my money and preventing fraud?

It is important to make arrangements with someone you trust who will look after your money, possessions or property on your behalf when you are no longer able to. It ensures control will go to the person you choose and helps reduce the risk of financial abuse to you. You must do this while you are still well enough to make your own decisions.

Arrange to pay your bills by Direct Debit or standing order to make sure they get paid on time and reduce the risk of debt if you forget to pay. This can then continue if you find it difficult to remember things.



## Preventing fraud

- Don't send money or give out any personal details to anyone until you have checked that they are genuine.
- Always talk to a professional, family member or friend if you are unsure.
- Treat all callers in person and on the telephone as bogus until you are sure that they are genuine

## Reporting financial abuse

If you are worried that your money is being misused, or think that someone you know is being taken advantage of, please tell someone. You will be listened to and your concerns will be taken seriously.

# When abuse is from someone I know

Often couples or a household member can struggle to care for one another if the situation changes. The person looking after you may feel under pressure and may no longer be able to manage caring for you or another household member. To stop this happening, you might want to:

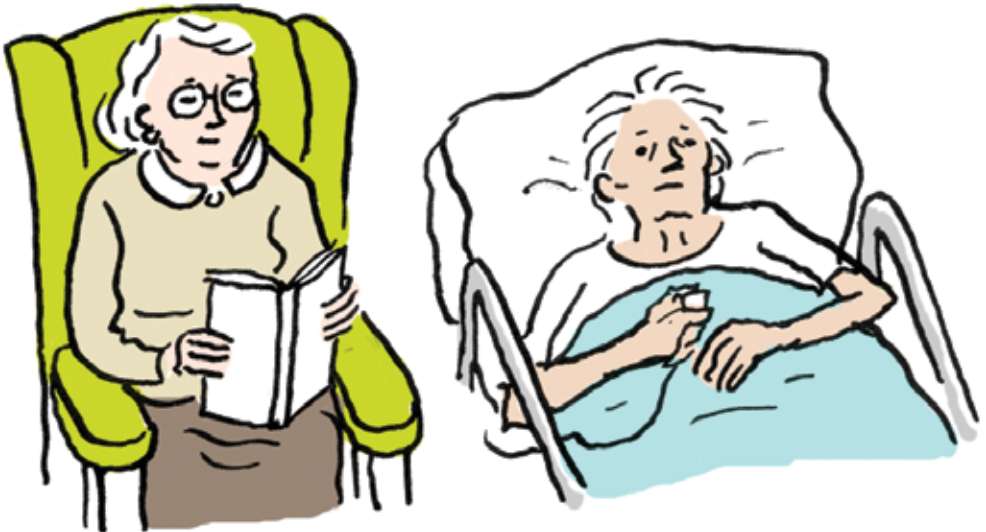
- talk about what you may be able to do if things change
- be aware of local services which can help, such as having a care worker from an agency to help with personal care
- talk to your extended family about the support they might be able to offer.



# Residential or nursing care

If you receive residential or nursing care and you are worried about any aspect of your care or treatment, please do not keep silent.

- Speak to someone you trust. If you have no one that visits you, you could talk to a professional or voluntary visitor, for example, the chiropodist or the hairdresser.
- Make sure you know what to expect from the care home. Has the manager given you a booklet about what you can expect? If not, ask for one.
- Try to get involved in the activities inside and outside of the care home – make sure you are not isolated.
- Speak to an inspector when they visit or a social worker.



# Safe ways to use the internet – stopping online abuse

It's important to keep yourself safe and secure so that you can make the most of the web to explore, create and collaborate. So:

- Secure your passwords
- Don't reply if you see a suspicious email, instant message or webpage asking for your personal or financial information
- Never enter your password if you've arrived at a site by following a link in an email or chat that you don't trust
- Don't send your password via email and don't share it with others
- Avoid online offers of gifts
- Keep your device clean of malware by always updating your operating systems and software
- Lock your screen or device
- Use secure networks



# Conmen and bogus callers

## Always:

- use your door-chain when answering the door and install a peephole and an outside light
- ask to see the caller's identity card and check it thoroughly.
- if you feel unsure ask the caller to wait on the doorstep while you phone the company to check
- lock the door while you go and phone and don't open the door until you are sure.
- ask the caller to return at an agreed day and time when you have someone with you.
- don't let callers put pressure on you to let them in
- if in doubt – keep them out
- if you are suspicious – ring the police

View the Office of Fair Trading website [www.offt.gov.uk](http://www.offt.gov.uk) for information on dealing with scams and search for its 'Scambuster' leaflet

The National Careline website has useful information on a number of subjects including bogus callers and 'scams'





# What happens when you tell the council?

If you have contacted social services, a member of staff will come and talk to you as quickly as possible.

- if there is immediate danger, we will aim to visit you or the person you are concerned about straight away
- if there is a significant risk of harm, we will aim to visit within 24 hours.

For other reports of abuse, we will usually visit within five working days.

## Working with you

We will usually ask your permission – or the permission of the vulnerable person you are worried about – before we do anything or share any information about the situation with other people. The only exception to this is in situations where others may be at risk of abuse or the person is not able to make their own decisions because of mental disability.





Is a vulnerable  
adult that you know

**mistreated?**

**bullied?**

**hit?**

**neglected?**

**hurt?**

**exploited?**

**silenced?**

**Abuse. Don't ignore it. Report it.**

Telephone in confidence: 020 7641 2176

Email: [safeguardingadults@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@westminster.gov.uk)



# THANK YOU

To everyone in Chelsea, Hammersmith, Fulham, Kensington and Westminster, including members of the Safeguarding Adults Reference Group, who helped to write this booklet and to **VOICE UK** and **CHANGE** for their support.

## **VOICE UK 0808 802 8686**

VOICE is a national charity which works with people with learning disabilities and their families to stop them suffering abuse and help them if they have been abused. They campaign to change the law so that people with learning disabilities can be safe.

## **CHANGE 0113 388 001**

CHANGE is a national organisation for people with learning disabilities who are deaf or blind. CHANGE campaigns for equal rights, good services and access to information.

## **Illustrations**

The illustrations in Say NO to abuse are by Teresa Robertson, © 2013.