

## 05. TYPES OF ABUSE



Safeguarding legislation describes 5 main types of abuse and we explain them here for your understanding.

### **Physical abuse:**

this means... deliberately hurting a child or adult and can include hitting, slapping, pushing, pinching, or even burning.

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse can include:

- bruising that's inconsistent with the explanation,
- scratches or scrapes, especially around the neck, wrist or ankles,
- bruises or burns,
- trying to hide injuries.
- and covering or flinching.

### **Sexual abuse:**

this occurs when the victim is involved in sexual activities or relationships to which they have not given consent, which they do not fully understand, or if they are a child. This can include:

- rape or sexual assault,
- indecent exposure,
- penetration, or attempted penetration, of intimate areas
- or sexual harassment.

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse can include:

- change in usual behaviour, such as withdrawal, bedwetting, aggressiveness and self-injury, inappropriate sexual behaviour or language, feelings of guilt or shame, refusing personal care, disturbed sleep and nightmares.

### **Emotional/psychological abuse:**

this happens when a person's self-confidence is undermined by threats, humiliation or degrading comments.

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### Examples of emotional abuse are::

- bullying,
- threats of harm or being abandoned,
- ignoring, shouting or swearing,
- Or controlling behaviour, threats and intimidation.

### And signs of this type of abuse can include:

- confusion and anxiety,
- signs of depression,
- sleep disturbances,
- changes in appetite,
- Or loss of interest in socialising.

### Neglect:

this is a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to have a negative impact on a person's health and well-being. It can be as a result of intentional or non-intentional acts, or failure to act.

Signs and symptoms of neglect can include:

- poor personal hygiene, failure to give medication, dehydration or weight loss, unkempt appearance or unsuitable clothing for the weather or situation, and repeated or unexplained accidents.

### Financial abuse:

this abuse happens when someone uses another person's money or property inappropriately.

**Examples of financial abuse are:** theft of items or money, pressure to give money or items, unexplained withdrawal of money, unusual interest from a third party in financial matters, or purchases that are unrelated to the individual's needs, such as a car or holiday.

**Signs and symptoms of financial abuse include:** not being able to pay bills with no explanation, sudden withdrawal of money from accounts, things of value going missing. Maybe the person managing finances is hard to get hold of or uncooperative, or poor financial recording or monitoring in a care setting.

**What to do if...** If you have any reason to believe or suspect that a child or adult at risk is being abused – physically, sexually, emotionally, financially, or through neglect – you must report it straightaway.

**If it isn't safe, it isn't the church.**