

06. OTHER AREAS OF RISK



In this section, we explore contexts or situations where harm and abuse can occur.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is a form of psychological and emotional abuse that takes place within a faith context. Sufferers therefore experience being controlled, coerced and pressurised within churches and places of worship. It is possible that other forms of abuse will be occurring alongside spiritual abuse (such as sexual or physical abuse or neglect). Currently there is no single agreed definition of spiritual abuse. However, the Church in Wales Provincial Safeguarding Team recognises the definition suggested by Dr Lisa Oakley as:

“Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. However, holding a theological position is not in itself inherently spiritually abusive, but misuse of scripture, applied theology and doctrine is often a component of spiritually abusive behaviour.”

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals and aspirations that may place them or the public in danger, if they act upon those beliefs. Local authorities have a duty to identify vulnerable individuals and families at risk of radicalisation from all forms of extremism.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage occurs in any marriage where one or both people do not (or cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example,

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when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking the individual's wages or not giving them any money) can also be a factor used to control individuals or force them to comply with the marriage.

FGM

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason to do so. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting, and by other terms. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It's illegal in the UK and is recognised as child abuse. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including: social media, text messages, emails, online chats, online gaming and live-streaming sites.

Online abuse, is classified into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful online material.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users.
- conduct: personal online behavior that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

Domestic Abuse

Is any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive or threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 years or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. All five types of abuse may occur within a domestic setting and be included within the recognised term of domestic abuse, i.e. emotional/psychological; physical; sexual; financial; neglect.

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Modern Slavery

Modern day slavery is the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. Modern slavery is all around us, but often just out of sight. From the outside, it can look like a normal job. Things like making our clothes, serving our food, picking our crops, working in factories, or working in houses as cooks, cleaners or nannies. But these individuals can face threats and violence, insufficient wages be forced into huge debt, or have their passport taken away.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a form of slavery. It involves:

- forcing children and adults to move in order for them to be exploited in some way.
- moving them to another place within one country or, often, another country.
- It involves using threats, force or deception to make them do something against their will.
- And using them to make money or provide services for their traffickers.
- They may look underfed, be unwell or injured or seem frightened, they may be unwilling to talk or they may even be living in overcrowded housing.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is the coercion or manipulation of children or adults at risk into taking part in sexual activities. It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment, that can include money, mobile phones and other items such as, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, 'protection' or affection. Children or adults at risk are often unable to recognise the exploitative nature of these relationships and give consent.

What to do if... If you know or suspect that any child or adult is the victim of, or is at risk of abuse, then you must pass on your concerns straightaway.

Because, if it isn't safe it isn't church.