

What is Adult Safeguarding?



Shropshire Safeguarding
Community Partnership

**Safeguarding is
everybody's business**



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The Care and support statutory guidance defines adult safeguarding as:

“Protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear, or unrealistic about their personal circumstances (DHSC, 2023).”

Who Might Experience Abuse?

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult, aged 18 and above, who:

- has the needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect (DHSC, 2023)



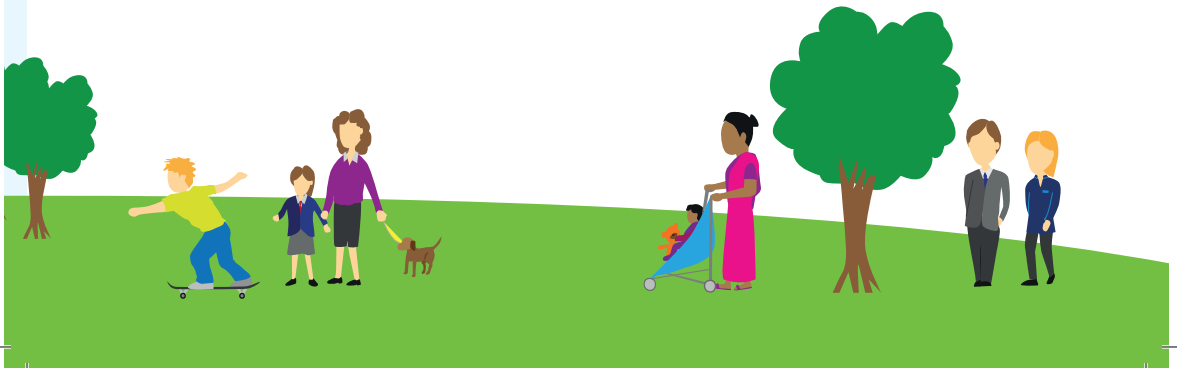
Who is at a Higher Risk?

- People with care and support needs, such as older people or people with disabilities, are more likely to be abused or neglected. They may be targeted because of their vulnerability.
- People with communication difficulties can be particularly at risk because they may not be able to alert others.

Sometimes people may not even be aware that they are being abused; this is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment such as confusion or memory loss. The person harming the adult may try to prevent access to the person they are abusing.

Individual characteristics which may increase the risk of abuse, include:

- Dependence on others, including physical dependency for personal care and activities of daily life
- Poor physical health
- Poor mental health
- Low income
- Not having the mental capacity to make certain decisions about safety, including adults who have fluctuating mental capacity
- Low self-esteem; experience of abuse; childhood experience of abuse



Social / situational factors that increase the risk of abuse may include:

- Being cared for in a care or health setting where the right amount or the right kind of care is not provided
- Isolation and social exclusion
- Bereavement
- Stigma and discrimination
- Being the focus of anti-social behaviour
- Lack of access to information and support
- Informal carers' lack of awareness of the persons needs or acceptance of the impact of their needs. (Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board, no date, World Health Organisation, 2022)

Where Could Abuse Happen?

Although abuse and neglect can happen anywhere including in hospital, a day centre, a club, in a college, a care home or a public place, in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin an adult is most likely to experience abuse in their own home.

Abuse could happen to an adult who lives alone or with others. The person causing the harm is often someone that the adult knows and feels safe with, so it could be a member of their family, a friend or neighbour. The person causing harm could be in a position of trust, such as a health or care professional, social worker or police officer. In some cases, it might be a stranger who harms the adult (NHS England, 2021).



What are the Different Types of Abuse?

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance to the Care Act recognises ten types of abuse (DHSC, 2023):

Physical abuse – someone being hit, slapped, or kicked, being locked in a room, or restrained inappropriately.

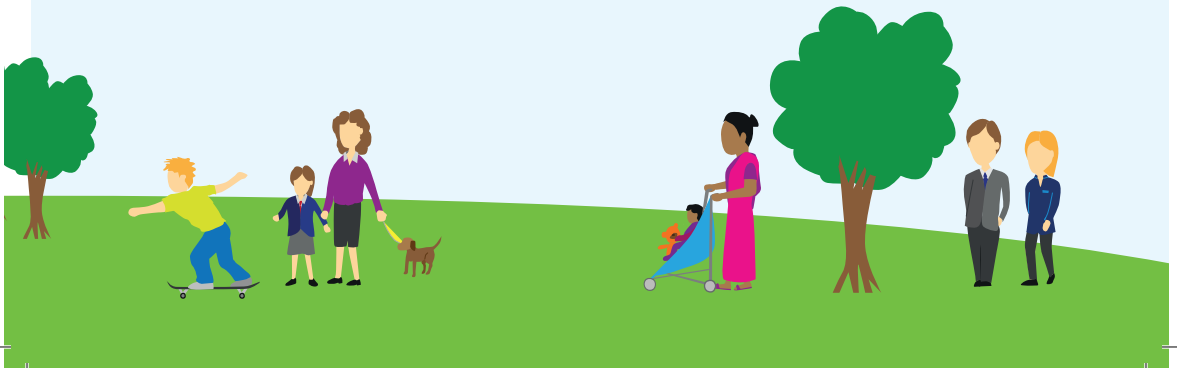
Sexual abuse – rape, indecent exposure, being made to take part in sexual activity when they have not given consent or are not able to give consent. An adult could be exposed to non-contact activity such as being exposed to pornographic material, sexual photography, sexual teasing, or innuendo.

Psychological or emotional abuse – someone being shouted at, bullied including cyberbullying, being made to feel frightened or pressurised into decisions. Being humiliated, blamed, or controlled.

Financial abuse – stealing, fraud, internet scamming, withholding, or misusing someone's money or possessions, abuse of power of attorney for financial gain.

Neglect or Acts of Omission – includes not giving someone the care that they need, ignoring medical, emotional, or physical health needs.

Modern slavery – human trafficking and forced labour, severe exploitation for personal or commercial gain.



Domestic abuse – abuse that occurs between people who are 16 and above and are ‘personally connected’ (see Statutory guidance Domestic Abuse Act 2021) such as intimate partners or relatives. It consists of an incident or pattern of incidents, including physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse or psychological, emotional, or other abuse (Home Office, 2022).

Discriminatory abuse – poor treatment, harassment slurs or similar treatment because of someone’s age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, or religion.

Organisational abuse – systematic poor practice that affects the whole setting, including neglect or poor professional practice resulting from the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation. It includes abuse in an organisation or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in one’s own home where there are inflexible systems and routines in place that stop people making their own choices about their lifestyle, not considering a person’s dietary requirements, inappropriate ways of addressing people and a lack of person-centred care.

Self-neglect – includes an adult neglecting to care of their own personal hygiene, basic needs such as appropriate clothing or neglecting to seek assistance for their own health issues, not taking care of their surroundings such as their home or garden or hoarding items which increase the risks to them. See local self-neglect guidance - Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership [guidance](#) or Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership [guidance](#).



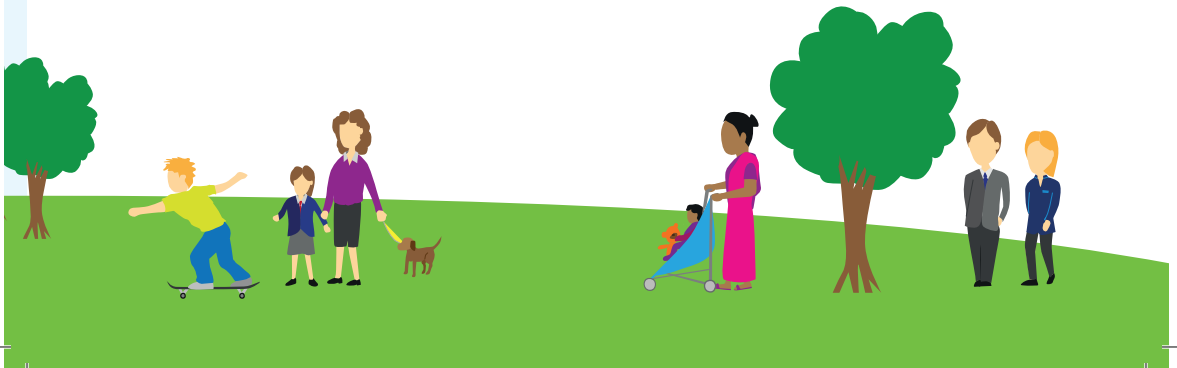
Other forms of abuse can include:

Social Media – including the risks associated with engaging with ‘strangers’ online, giving out too much personal information, sharing content that may be harmful or posting content that can damage someone’s reputation. Discussing these areas can help someone to safely navigate social media in a way that allows them to experience the benefits whilst also being aware of the potential risks.

Mate crime – when someone says they are the adult’s friend, but they do things that take advantage of them, like ask for money. A real friend does not need to be bought, and someone who takes the adults money, asks them to pay for lots of things, or makes them feel uncomfortable is not a true friend. You can view the [Shropshire](#) and [Telford and Wrekin](#) Tricky Friends animation on You Tube.

Cuckooing or home invasion – cuckooing or home invasion is when people take over the home of a person considered ‘vulnerable’. Their home may be used to supply, store or produce drugs. Cuckooing is often associated with gangs and ‘county lines’ activity, involving exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas of the UK using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of ‘deal line’. Gangs frequently exploit children and adults to move drugs and money (NCA, 2022).

Cyber bullying – cyberbullying is bullying and harassment using technology, it includes trolling, mobbing, stalking, grooming or any form of abuse online (National Bullying Helpline, 2022).

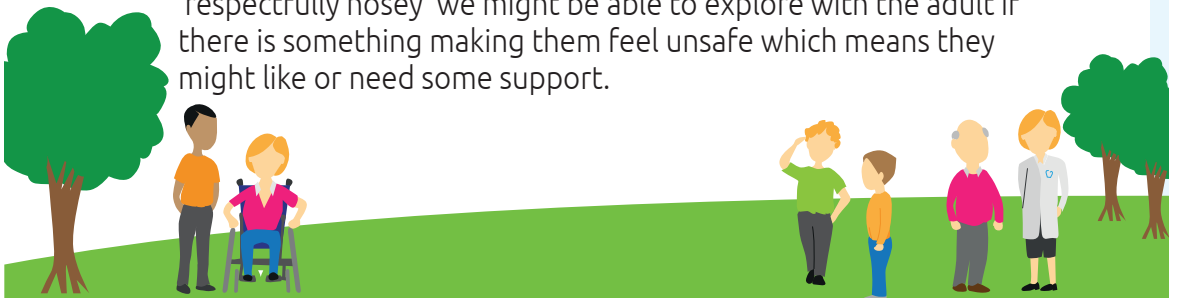


Romance scams or predatory marriage – Romance scams or predatory marriage – A romance scam is where someone convinces the adult that they are romantically interested in them, usually after a short time, they convince the adult to send money to them. Often the adult will have met this person on social media, dating websites, apps, or gaming sites. Criminals use fake profiles to build a relationship with the adult – this is also known as catfishing (UK Finance, 2022). Predatory marriage is a form of economic abuse, or control wherein marriage is a cover for exploitation, economic gain or controlling behaviour. The adult may not have the mental capacity to consent to the marriage.

Fabricated or Induced Illness – Fabricated or induced illness (FII) happens when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the adult. They may try to convince health workers or others that the adult is ill, or that their condition is worse than it really is. This may be because the parent or carer gains something, such as attention, support, or closeness to the adult. Or it may be because they have anxiety or incorrect beliefs about the adult's health, and they need these beliefs to be confirmed and acted upon (NHS, 2019).

Finding out if Someone Feels Unsafe

Sometimes, in our role when we are supporting an adult, we might feel that something is wrong, or a bit 'off,' if it feels wrong, it probably is. In these situations, if it safe to do so, ask the adult if they feel unsafe. When we ask questions about someone feeling unsafe, we are using our 'professional curiosity.' By being 'respectfully nosy' we might be able to explore with the adult if there is something making them feel unsafe which means they might like or need some support.



If you are worried that, someone you know is being abused, support them to talk about it, this might be with you or someone they trust to decide if they need any other help or support including:

- a doctor or a nurse
- a social worker or other professional
- a family member
- a police officer or community support officer
- a volunteer or advocate

Reporting Adult Safeguarding Concerns

The adult should, wherever safe to do so, be involved in decisions about reporting abuse. In some cases, it might be in the public interest to report abuse, for example, where other adults or children may be at risk.

Shropshire: First Point of Contact team on **0345 678 9044**

Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm, and Friday 9am to 4pm.

Outside of these hours if you have urgent adult safeguarding concerns, phone the

Emergency Social Work Team on **0345 678 9040**

Telford and Wrekin: Family Connect Telephone:

01952 385385 (when prompted please select option 3)

Monday to Friday from 9am - 5pm. Outside of these hours

if you have urgent adult safeguarding concerns, phone the

Emergency Social Work Team on **01952 676500**.

If an adult is injured, you may need to support them to seek medical attention or call an ambulance. If you think a crime has been committed, you can call the police, **in an emergency dial 999**, for other calls to the police ring 101.



If the adult cannot make voice calls they can register to use emergencySMS, register now: don't wait for an emergency - To register, text the word 'register' to 999. They will then receive a reply about the service and further instructions. They can also contact emergency services through [RelayUK](#) (for people with hearing and speech difficulties to communicate with anyone over the phone), by downloading the App, Text relay offers text-to-speech and speech-to-text translation services.

What if the Person Does Not Want Help?

If the adult does not want any help from safeguarding, there may be other ways to help them through access to other services, agencies or support from a health or care perspective. If the adult declines a referral to safeguarding but there are other adults or children at risk, action may still be needed in the public interest. Where safe to do so, the adult should be made aware that you are making a referral in the public interest.

Where else can you Get Advice and Support?

Other agencies who may be able to provide advice or support if it is not an adult safeguarding issue include Citizens Advice, Hourglass (confidential services provide information and support to an older person, or anyone concerned about an older person who is at risk of, experiencing or recovering from any form of abuse or neglect. **Helpline: Phone 0808 808 8141**

Age UK, the Fire and Rescue Service. This is not an exhaustive list and there are other organisations offering advice or support, see the local council or Safeguarding Partnership website.



What will Happen When I Report a Safeguarding Concern?

First Point of Contact or Family Connect will:

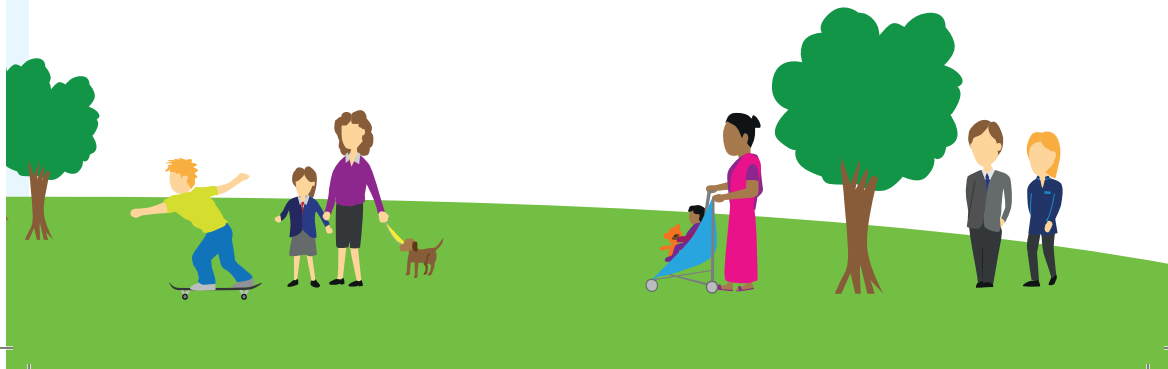
- Listen, and take the issue seriously
- Consider if anyone else might be at risk, sometimes the police might need to be involved
- Decide if it is a safeguarding matter or could be managed in another way

If a safeguarding enquiry under the Care Act is needed, the local authority will decide which agency is best placed to carry out the enquiry. The agency carrying out the enquiry will:

- Talk to the adult, to find out what has happened and what outcomes they want
- Think about whether the adult needs an independent advocate to help them to be heard and represented
- Work with the adult to help keep them safe, including helping them to make changes to be safer
- Talk to other agencies that do, or can provide support

For more information go to:

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership <http://www.shropshiresafeguardingcommunitypartnership.co.uk/>
Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.telfordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/site/index.php>





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