



Don't keep it
to yourself

Worried? Need to talk?



Plain English Campaign's
Crystal Mark applies
to the wording only.

For more information, or to order more copies of this booklet or any other materials available for the general public, please contact:
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www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk

NSPCC 
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

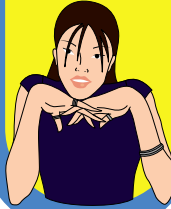
NSPCC 
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

Life can be hard

If you've got a problem or are worried about someone you know, it can be hard to know what to do to make the situation better. **You don't have to manage on your own.** This booklet is designed for you and gives you information about services and people that are there to help.

You might not want to talk to anyone about your worries because you are embarrassed, you might think people won't take you seriously or understand you, or that they might tell someone else when you don't want them to. You might think adults have let you down, so find it hard to trust them. It can be very difficult to talk about your feelings and what's happening in your life, but some problems won't go away if you try to sort them out yourself or ignore them.

TALKING TO SOMEONE CAN MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER AND HELP YOU FIND A SOLUTION.



**NEED
SOME
HELP?**



ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT...?

- Violence
- Relationships and arguments with friends and family
- Abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, neglect
- Bullying
- Family problems and family break-up
- Feeling unhappy, depressed or suicidal
- Alcohol and drugs
- Sex and sexuality
- Violence at home
- Racism
- The illness or death of someone close
- Being in local-authority care (looked after)
- Anything else

If you feel sad, confused or scared, you might not be sure why you feel this way. It's still ok to ask for help.

Know your RIGHTS

You have rights, including a right to:

- say what you think, be listened to and be taken seriously in all matters that affect you
- have an education
- grow up healthy
- a good enough standard of living including a place to live, food and clothing
- not be discriminated against
- have your cultural background and identity valued
- have your best interests put first when decisions are made about you
- be protected from harm, abuse and violence.

Do you know?

Adults and organisations that work with young people should promote these rights. No-one should harm you in any way, and if you are hurt then adults must do something about it. In England and Wales there is a law called the Children Act, and in Northern Ireland there is the Children Order, which says that some professionals have a responsibility for your safety. This includes social services, the police and teachers.

No-one should
harm you in
any way



What is abuse?

Abuse is never your choice and is never your fault

GET THE FACTS

Sometimes when you turn on the TV or look in a newspaper or magazine, there are news stories, documentaries, agony-aunt letters and even story lines in your favourite soap which talk about abuse. It seems that abuse is a word that people use more and more. So obviously everybody must know what abuse means – right?

No, not everyone knows what abuse is. Most people talk about physical or sexual abuse. Actually, there are four kinds of abuse - as well as physical and sexual abuse there's emotional abuse and neglect. So, things can be a bit more complicated than they first seem.

It's OK if you are not exactly sure what abuse is. It's also OK to want to find out more about it so you can keep yourself safe.

Young people may be hurt by an adult or another young person in many ways. Abuse can be any of the following.

- **PHYSICAL** – this includes being kicked, beaten or punched.
- **EMOTIONAL** – this includes constant name-calling, being threatened, being made fun of or made to feel small, and often seeing violence between the people who care for you.
- **SEXUAL** – this includes being touched in a way you don't like, being forced to have sex, made to look at sexual pictures or videos, or anything else that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- **NEGLECT** – when you don't have somewhere to stay, enough food to eat, clothes to keep you warm, or if you are not looked after properly.
- **BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION**, whether by adults or by another young person, are also abusive and can hurt you physically and emotionally. Bullying includes hitting, taking a person's things, name-calling and racist bullying. Discriminating and picking on someone because they are different is not acceptable. You should not suffer in silence or have to deal with these problems on your own. People who can help you with bullying are listed in this booklet.

Turn the page and test your knowledge on what's abuse and what's not...



Know the score



Is it **PHYSICAL** abuse when you score a goal in football or hockey and your team mates slap you on the back or grab you round the neck to celebrate you scoring a goal?

NO

Is it **PHYSICAL** abuse if an adult continuously hits a young person round the head to try to keep them quiet?

YES

Is it **EMOTIONAL** abuse if your mum and dad shout at you in the morning to try to wake you up so you can get ready for school?

NO

Is it **EMOTIONAL** abuse if your parents constantly say you are useless and they wish you had never been born?

YES

Is it **SEXUAL** abuse if your mum gives you a good-night kiss or gives you a hug when you hurt yourself?

NO

Is it **SEXUAL** abuse if an adult tries to touch you around your private parts?

YES

Is it **NEGLECT** if you are 12 years old and your mum pops out to buy some milk at the shop at the end of the street?

NO

Is it **NEGLECT** if, when you come home from school, the people who care for you have gone out for the evening without telling you where they are and left you to look after your little brother and baby sister on your own?

YES

For more information on sexual abuse, you can read *Hands Off!* magazine.

Visit www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/informationresources/forchildren.htm

How does it make you feel?

Abuse creates all sorts of emotions including feeling frightened, alone, confused, angry, unloved, guilty, ashamed or unimportant. Abuse can be very confusing if someone you look up to is the person hurting you. Also, you might like the attention given to you by the person abusing you. That is OK – it doesn't mean it's your fault or that anyone will blame you for it happening.

Above are only some examples of abuse. **If something is worrying you or making you scared and you're not sure if it is abuse, it's important to talk to someone you trust. Or, get in touch with one of the services listed in this booklet, and tell them what has happened.**

Remember that abuse is never your choice and is never your fault

YOU ARE NOT

ALONE

Whatever your worries, you don't have to keep it to yourself. You might feel that there's no way out of your problems when you are unhappy or scared. If you're being abused, you might be pressured not to tell anyone. But there are people you can turn to who can help you.



Talking to someone about what's happening in your life can help you understand the choices you have and help you find a solution. If you or someone you know is being abused, telling someone and getting help can stop the abuse happening. **This is the first and most difficult step.**

It can be hard to find the words to talk about your problems. Writing down your feelings can help you see a solution. It can help you feel more confident about telling someone you know and trust, or about contacting one of the groups and services listed in this booklet.

THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE AND SERVICES WHO WANT TO HELP YOU.

A large, rounded rectangular area with a light green background and horizontal blue lines, intended for writing notes or reflections.



WHO CAN

HELP?



There is someone to turn to...

You might want to talk to someone you know and trust. This could be:

- a close friend
- a parent, carer or someone else in your family
- a teacher or school counsellor – some schools also have peer-support schemes
- a doctor
- a school nurse
- a youth worker
- a social worker
- a neighbour
- a best friend's older brother or sister, or their mum or dad.

If you are worried that you or someone you know is being abused, it is usually best to talk to an adult because you will probably need help from professionals to stop the abuse happening.

If your friend tells you they are worried they are being abused, listen to them and encourage them to talk to an adult they trust or to contact one of the services in this booklet.

You may not want to talk to someone you know and may prefer to speak to or email someone at one of the services in this booklet. These services have advisers who are trained to help and support you, and they won't be shocked or surprised by what you say. They will listen to you and help you decide what to do – they won't tell you what to do. If you can't get through to one of the phone lines at first, don't give up – try again.

MAKE YOURSELF HEARD

If you tell someone your worries and they don't hear you the first time or will not listen, tell them again or talk to somebody else you trust. Or, you can get in touch with any of the services in this booklet.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TALK TO SOMEONE?

The idea of talking about what's happening in your life can be scary. If you or someone you know is being abused or harmed in some way, you might be worried about what will happen if you tell someone.

Don't be afraid to ask questions

You are in control of how much information you want to share. You don't have to give your name and address if you don't want to.

If you contact one of the services in this booklet, ask the adviser to explain their '**confidentiality policy**'. This means what they have to do with the information you tell them, particularly if you – or another young person – are being harmed. They should also tell you whether they have to share this information with other professionals, like social services or the police.

Take control

If you are not sure if you want a service to take action to help you be safe, you should still talk to the service adviser about your worries so you can discuss your choices together. Remember to ask the adviser to explain their confidentiality policy first.



Different services have different rules about whether they keep what you tell them private and confidential. Every service wants to help you, and prefers to act with your agreement. However, social services, the police and the NSPCC can take action to protect you with or without your agreement if they know:

- that you, or another young person, are being abused or are in danger; **and**
- who you are or where you live, or who is abusing you.

The adviser should tell you if they are worried about your safety, or that of another young person. They should also tell you what they might want to do about this. If they don't tell you, ask them to.

This can sound confusing, but don't let it put you off. The services in this booklet want to help you.

What happens next?

If you tell someone about abuse and the information is shared with social services or the police, their job is to find out more about what has happened. They will want to

work out how to make things safe for you. While they are doing this, you might be asked to tell several people, like a social worker, police officer or doctor, about your situation. They may also want to talk to your family or other people who know you, like your teacher or doctor. There may be a meeting to talk about the best way to help you. You should be given the opportunity to go to this meeting if you want to, or someone else can represent you. Tell someone if you want to go to this meeting or if you want someone to represent you.

You might be worried that if you tell someone about abuse, your family will be split up or you will be taken into care (be looked after). Most young people stay at home unless it is dangerous for them. **Remember, abuse is never your choice and is never your fault.**

Speak up

If you don't know what is happening, ask the people helping you to explain. They should also tell you about your right to complain if you think they are not listening to you.

Don't be afraid to ask questions

Abuse is never your choice and is never your fault

What the NSPCC can do for you

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is a charity that was set up more than 100 years ago to protect children and young people from cruelty. We believe in a society where all children and young people are safe, valued and happy. In other words, a society where abuse is not acceptable - whether sexual, physical, emotional or neglect. **Our mission is to end cruelty to children and young people, FULL STOP.**

We work with children, young people and their families to prevent abuse happening, and we help children and young people who have been abused. We also campaign for children's rights, and put children's and young people's interests first. We have a range of services that can help you when you are facing difficulties in your life. We will listen to you carefully and with respect, and give you advice, help and support.

You can contact the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline** at any time of the day or night if you are worried about abuse. It's **free** to call and the number won't appear on phone bills, unless you call from a mobile phone. You don't have to give your name if you don't want to.

We may have to contact social services or the police if you or another young person are being harmed or are in danger. **The adviser will discuss this with you if it needs to happen.**



NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE

Phone: 0808 800 5000 **free**
(Open 24 hours)
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
Textphone for people who are deaf
or hard of hearing: 0800 056 0566 **free**

NSPCC ASIAN CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE

(Open 11am to 7pm, Monday to Friday)
Bengali-speaking adviser: 0800 096 7714 **free**
Gujarati-speaking adviser: 0800 096 7715 **free**
Hindi-speaking adviser: 0800 096 7716 **free**
Punjabi-speaking adviser: 0800 096 7717 **free**
Urdu-speaking adviser: 0800 096 7718 **free**
English-speaking Asian adviser: 0800 096 7719 **free**

NSPCC CYMRU/WALES CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE

Phone (bilingual Welsh/English service): 0808 100 2524 **free**
(Open 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday)
Email: helpinecymru@nspcc.org.uk
Textphone for people who are deaf or
hard of hearing: 0808 100 1033 **free**

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk
Write to: NSPCC Child
Protection Helpline
PO Box 18222
London EC2A 3RU.

How the NSPCC works with you

We are developing a network of **Young People's Centres** offering a range of services like IT facilities, after-school clubs, peer support, information, advice and counselling. They are safe and friendly places where you can share your worries.

We have **Schools Teams** across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland providing students with an opportunity to talk to trusted adults and get independent advice, support and counselling. In some cases, we have set up peer-support schemes with young people helping other young people.

Our **Children's Rights and Advocacy Projects** give independent advice, information and support to young people who:

- are receiving services from their local authority

- are looked after or have been looked after (in local-authority care), or
- have disabilities.

These services speak up for young people and help them to speak for themselves.

We have 180 **Teams and Projects** across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. These services vary from area to area and include abuse-prevention and safety projects, counselling and therapy to help children and young people overcome the effects of abuse, and young witness projects to support young people through the court process. Working with other agencies, we can also investigate cases of abuse.

For information about our services, please contact the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Why not become an NSPCC **Partner in Campaigning**? You can help us promote the rights, safety and interests of young people. We will write to you regularly and invite you to join our campaigns. Recently, Partners in Campaigning have written to the Prime Minister and MPs, done surveys, and distributed leaflets and posters. See www.nspcc.org.uk/campaigning

Find out more about us and how you can get involved by visiting www.nspcc.org.uk

There4me.com is a new online service that makes it easier for you to get help and support. It's a highly interactive, specially designed website offering information, advice and support, including some real-time, online advice on all sorts of issues that 12- to 16-year-olds face. You can email questions to our agony aunt Sam, have a private inbox, speak in real-time to an adviser and play games. We have developed There4me with the help of young people. It aims to help you find **your own** solutions to **your** problems, and you are in control. Visit www.There4me.com



confidential online advice for teenagers

The directory other people who can help

If you can't talk to anyone you know, or you have talked to someone but nothing seems to be happening, you can contact one of the following services. Where phone numbers are not shown to be free, charges may vary. You may have to pay for some of the freephone numbers if you call from a mobile phone.

In an emergency, call the police on 999 or textphone 18000. If you are worried about abuse, you can also call your local police station and ask to speak to a 'child protection police officer'. Look in your local phone book under 'police'.

ChildLine gives comfort, advice and protection to children and young people who are worried about any problem.

Phone: 0800 1111 free

(Open 24 hours)

Textphone: 0800 400 222

(Open 9.30am to 9.30pm, Monday to Friday, and 9.30am to 8pm at weekends)

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Write to: ChildLine, Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR.

Social services departments are part of the local authority (in England and Wales) or local trust (in Northern Ireland). They are responsible for keeping children and young people safe and protecting them from harm. They provide a wide range of care and support services to children, young people and their families. They employ social workers and have a duty to make 'enquiries' if they

think a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm'. Social workers will listen carefully to what you say and should involve you in any decisions that affect you. Look in your local phone book under 'social services'. Call the office nearest to you and ask to speak to someone about a 'child protection concern'.

Connexions Direct provides confidential information, advice and support to young people aged 13 to 19 by phone, email, web chat and text messages. The website includes information on education, careers, health and relationships. They can also put you in touch with your local Connexions service.

Phone: 080 800 13 2 19 free

(Open 8am to 2pm everyday)

Textphone: 08000 688 336

Website: www.connexions-direct.com

YOUNG CARERS

The Children's Society Young Carers Initiative is for children and young people who look after an ill or disabled relative. The website gives details of events and local support groups.

Website: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarers

The Samaritans provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Phone: 08457 90 90 90

(Open 24 hours)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

**Chris, The Samaritans,
PO Box 90 90, Stirling FK8 2SA.**

Youth Access will put you in touch with local services that offer information, advice and counselling.

Phone: 020 8772 9900

(Open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: admin@youthaccess.org.uk

Get Connected will find the best place in the UK that can help you, whatever the problem. The helpline can also provide a free connection to the most appropriate service.

Phone: 0808 808 4994 free

(Open 1pm to 11pm every day)

Website: www.getconnected.org.uk

ANOREXIA AND BULIMIA

Eating Disorders Association has a Youthline for young people who are affected by eating problems.

Phone: 0845 634 7650

(Open 4pm to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. Calls are charged at the local rate, but the helpline can call you back.)

Email: info@edauk.com

Website: www.edauk.com

BEREAVEMENT

Cruse Bereavement Care has a free helpline and email service for young people giving support, information and advice to young people who have been affected by a death.

Phone: 0808 808 1677 free

(Open 9.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: private@rd4u.org.uk

Website: www.rd4u.org.uk

BULLYING

Kidscape, a children's charity, has a website for young people that gives practical advice on bullying and keeping safe.

Website: www.kidscape.org.uk

Bullying Online gives advice and information on bullying.

Email: help@bullying.co.uk

Website: www.bullying.co.uk

The NSPCC is not responsible for the content of any of the websites listed in the directory.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Frank provides free and confidential advice and help to anyone affected by drugs.

Phone: 0800 77 66 00 **free**
(Open 24 hours)
Website: www.talktofrank.com

Alateen is for young people aged 12 to 20 who have been affected by someone else's problem drinking, usually that of a parent. For details of meetings in your area, call the confidential helpline.

Phone: 020 7403 0888
(Open 10am to 10pm every day)
Email: alanonuk@aol.com
Website: www.al-anonuk.org.uk

HEALTH

Young Minds has a website for young people on mental health.

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk/young_people/index.html

National AIDS Helpline provides free and confidential advice and information to anyone concerned about HIV and AIDS.

Phone: 0800 567 123 **free**
(Open 24 hours)

Saneline provides listening, crisis support and useful information to anyone coping with mental-health

difficulties, including those of friends or relatives.

Phone: 0845 767 8000
(Open 12 noon to 2am every day)
Website: www.sane.org.uk

Brook provides free and confidential sexual health advice, contraception, pregnancy testing and counselling for young people through a national network of centres. The helpline and email service give support, information and details of local Brook services.

Phone: 0800 0185 023 **free**
(Open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4pm on Fridays)
Email: information@brookcentres.org.uk
Website: www.brook.org.uk

RELATIONSHIPS

NCH, a children's charity, has a website to support and inform children and young people whose parents are splitting up.

Website: www.itsnotyourfault.org

LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Who Cares? Trust Linkline offers free and confidential support and information to children and young people who are in or have left the care system.

Phone: **FreeCall 0500 564570**
(Open 3.30pm to 6pm, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays)
Website: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

Most local authorities in England and Wales, and local trusts in Northern Ireland, have an independent advocacy service or children's rights officer, which are separate from social services. If you are in England or Wales, contact Voice for the Child in Care (VCC) or the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) for details of your local service. If you are in Northern Ireland, you can contact Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC).

NYAS - The Young Person's Safety Net gives free, independent advice and information to all children and young people. They can arrange for an advocate to help young people get their wishes and feelings listened to and to help them get their own views across.

Phone: 0800 616 101 **free**
(Open 9.30am to 9.30pm, Monday to Friday, and 2pm to 8pm at weekends)
Email: help@nyas.net
Website: www.nyas.net

Voice for the Child in Care (VCC) will give advice and put young people in contact with local advocates. VCC is for young people who are in the care of local authorities and those who have left care.

Phone: 0808 800 5792 **free**
(Open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. You can leave a message at any other time.)
Email: help@vcc-uk.org
Website: www.dotch.demon.co.uk/vcc

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) offers advice and information to children and young people who are in care and who have left care in Northern Ireland, and promotes their best interests.

Phone: 028 90 244888
(Open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
Email: voypic@btconnect.com

LEFT HOME OR RUN AWAY

Message Home Helpline is free and confidential for anyone who has left home or run away to send a message to their family or carer, and get confidential help and advice.

Phone: 0800 700 740 **free**
(Open 24 hours)
Website: www.missingpersons.org/messagehome.html

We would like to thank the following people for their help in producing this booklet. NSPCC Young People's Advisory Groups: Cam Nesaf, Bangor, Wales; C-Mag, Stafford CARS; Croydon RESPECT; Hastings and St Leonards; Solihull Young People's Centre. Members of Article 12. Students at St Columbanus College, Bangor, Northern Ireland. NSPCC practitioners. The National Deaf Children's Society.

© NSPCC. Revised and reprinted September 2003
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