

# COVID-19 and Safeguarding: What to do if you or someone you know is being harmed or neglected

See page two for 'What to do'

## How might COVID-19 increase the risk to you or others?

- In the current circumstances, families will be under increased amounts of **stress**
- **Things may be even worse for children, young people (under 18-year olds) and vulnerable adults (often called people with care and support needs)** who are at risk, and are isolated at home with the person/ people who might harm them
- **Adults who are vulnerable and isolated** may be taken advantage of e.g. someone pretending to help by offering to do their shopping or manage their money
- **There is also an increased risk of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA)** for those isolated at home with the person who abuses them i.e. a partner, ex-partner or family member. As well as being hit or physically harmed, domestic abuse includes being verbally abused, being threatened and made to do things against your will, sexually-harmed, being controlled and even more isolated from others (e.g. stopping contact with loved ones via phone or social media). See page 4 for the NHS website on spotting the signs of domestic violence and abuse, and also what to do.

## What is abuse or neglect?

It includes physically hurting someone, making them feel frightened or worthless, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect (not meeting basic needs e.g. food, safety), financial abuse (misusing someone's money or property) and exploiting someone for other means e.g. forced work. Someone might also seriously neglect themselves.

## What is safeguarding?

Everyone has the right to feel safe. Safeguarding relies on professionals and members of the public letting police or social services know when someone is at risk so that they can act to prevent harm or protect them.

## Who abuses?

It could be anyone. Often, but not always, it is someone who knows the person already e.g. a parent or another adult, spouse/partner, sibling, carers, care workers, family member/relative, friend, neighbour, volunteer/helper or someone not known to the person.

## Things to look out for:

- Possible changes in the child or adult's behaviour or mood/personality
- Unexplained injury or a series of injuries
- Signs of fear or distress
- Signs of neglect
- Theft, fraud or unexplained financial worries

## Who is being abused?

- **You** might be being abused or neglected  
or
- You might be worried about **someone who you know**

## It is important to act to keep yourself or someone else safe. What to do if you are worried about someone else:

- Ask them if they feel okay, do they feel safe, are they frightened of someone, is someone harming them in any way? (Only do this if it doesn't place you at greater risk).
- If you can and if it is safe (doesn't make them or you more at risk) tell them what you are going to do to help.
- If you can't ask these questions but are worried about someone, you can still act (see following section)

## What to do if you are worried about your safety:

It is important to remember that if you are being abused, it is not your fault. Don't worry about telling others if you think you are being abused - it is important that you get help.

If you are being harmed or not being looked after and you have a keyworker (GMMH or another organisation) then speak to them and they will help refer you for support. If your keyworker is off work then ask to speak to another member of the team.

If you want, you can ask someone else to contact the police or social services on your behalf. Your call can remain anonymous.

## Contacting the Police

- Is it an emergency? Does it feel like the situation could get heated or violent very soon? Are you/ is someone in immediate danger? Do you or they need support right away? If the answer is YES, **call 999**
- **If you're deaf or hard of hearing**, use **textphone service 18000** or **text on 999** if you've pre-registered with [www.relayuk.bt.com/how-to-use-relay-uk/contact-999-using-relay-uk](http://www.relayuk.bt.com/how-to-use-relay-uk/contact-999-using-relay-uk)
- There is a non-urgent police telephone line 101, but this is often very busy and if you can it is easier and quicker to use an online link to report a crime in Greater Manchester: [www.gmp.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/](http://www.gmp.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/)

If you are worried or know that a child, or an adult who can't protect themselves is being harmed or neglected then call Social Services:

	Child	Adult	Out of Hours
<b>Bolton</b>	01204 331500	01204 337 000	01204 337777
<b>Bury</b>	0161253 5678	0161253 5678	0161 253 6606
<b>Cumbria</b>	0333 240 1727 (24 hours)	Ring the local office: <a href="http://www.cumbriasab.org.uk/AdultSafeguarding">www.cumbriasab.org.uk/ AdultSafeguarding</a>	01228 526690 (Adults)
<b>Manchester</b>	0161 234 5001 (24 hours)		
<b>Oldham</b>	0161 770 7777		0161 770 6936
<b>Rochdale</b>	0300 303 0440	0300 303 8886	0300 303 8875
<b>Salford</b>	0161 603 4500	0161 631 4777	0161 794 888
<b>Stockport</b>	0161 217 6028	0161 217 6029	0161 342 2222
<b>Tameside</b>	0161 342 4101	0161 342 2400	0161 342 2222
<b>Trafford</b>	0161 912 5125	0161 912 5135	0161 912 2020
<b>Wigan and Leigh</b>	01942 828300 (24 hours)	01942 828777 (24 hour)	

## Other support services:

<b>NSPCC helpline</b> If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure	0808 800 5000
<b>Childline</b> Offers free, confidential advice and support for any child under 18	0800 1111
<b>Age UK</b> Confidential advice in relation to scams, 8am to 7pm	0800 678 1602

## For those affect by Domestice Abuse and Violence

<b>National Domestic Violence Helpline</b> (for women)	0808 2000 247 nationaldahelpline.org.uk
<b>Mankind Helpline</b> (for men)	01823 334244 www.mankind.org.uk
<b>LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline</b>	0800 999 5428
<b>Safelives</b> <a href="https://www.safelives.org.uk/staying-safe-during-covid-19-a-guide-for-victims-and-survivors-of-domestic-abuse">Staying safe during COVID-19 A guide for victims and survivors of domestic abuse</a>	www.safelives.org.uk
<b>Karma Nirvana</b> for those concerned that they could be pressured into marrying someone they do not want to; are told that they bring shame or dishonour on their family. They may also be at risk of, or already being emotionally or physically abused within the family.	0800 5999 247 karmanirvana.org.uk
<b>Respect</b> is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are harming their partners and families. The helpline also takes calls from partners or ex-partners, friends and relatives who are concerned about perpetrators.	0808 8024040 respectphoneline.org.uk
<b>The NHS website</b> has advice online for the public on spotting the signs for domestic abuse and domestic violence and where to go for help.  The <b>NHS</b> also has a help page for those ho have been raped and sexually assaulted.	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/">www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/</a>  <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/">www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/</a>