



## What is abuse?

There are many different kinds of abuse. This leaflet briefly explains about the kind of abuse where something is said or done that hurts another person. The hurt can be physical, emotional or sexual. The person can be a child, a young person or an adult. The abuse might happen once or many times. **The abuse is never the fault of the person who is hurt.** It is important to tell someone about the abuse and not to deal with it alone.

## The different types of abuse

**Physical abuse** is probably the easiest hurt to see. It is any kind of hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, pinching, biting, choking or throwing. It is any action that causes physical injury or pain or leaves marks.

**Domestic violence** is abuse that can be both physical and non-physical. It can happen often or infrequently. It can happen in any kind of family and it affects everyone in the home where it is happening.

**Sexual abuse** is any type of sexual contact between an adult and anyone younger than 18. It can also be sexual contact between

a significantly older child and a younger child. Sexual abuse can happen between adults where one person overpowers another, regardless of age.

**Emotional abuse** can be difficult to recognise because there may not be physical signs. Emotional abuse can happen when yelling and anger go too far. It can be constant criticism, put downs or threats. It can be ignoring the needs of children, young people or vulnerable adults until their self confidence is damaged. Emotional abuse hurts and causes damage just as physical abuse does.



## The different types of abuse

**Bullying** is a form of abuse. Bullying can happen in schools, in the work place or within the family home. Bullying someone through intimidation, threats, or humiliation can be just as abusive as beating someone up. This can include isolating someone, sending abusive texts or through cyber bullying on the internet.

**Hate crimes** are any incidents which are perceived to have been committed against another

person because of their race, religion, political opinion, disability or sexual orientation.

**Neglect** is probably the hardest type of abuse to define. Neglect occurs when a child, young person or vulnerable adult doesn't have adequate food, shelter, clothes or medical care. They may be left alone or in dangerous situations. Emotional neglect happens when a parent or carer doesn't show kindness, love or care.

## Where can abuse happen?

Abuse can take place anywhere. This can range from your home, workplace, school, in a public place, residential / care home, hospital and many other places.

## What are the effects of abuse?

These can vary from individual to individual as we are all different and no two people react the same way. However the following can be some common reactions/consequences to abuse:

- Shock/denial
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of suicide
- Alcohol/drug problems
- Low self-esteem/low confidence
- Anger
- Guilt/shame
- Disbelief
- Isolation
- Difficulty in trusting others
- Behavioural problems
- Relationship/sexual problems

### Where can I get help?

If you feel that you or someone else is not being treated in the way they should be – tell someone about it. That might be:

- A parent
- A nurse
- A social worker
- A school counsellor
- A youth worker
- A health visitor
- A teacher
- A GP

If you are in immediate danger or want urgent help call 999 and ask for the police

### How could counselling help me?

If you are affected by abuse counselling can provide you with the opportunity to talk on a one to one basis with a professionally trained counsellor about this and give you some support.

### What can I expect?

- What I talk about will be respected and treated in confidence.
- I won't be judged
- I can be myself
- I will be listened to
- My side of the story will be heard
- To learn new ways of dealing with difficult thoughts or feelings

### How do I get Counselling?

You can either contact us yourself and we will arrange to meet with you or someone else can contact us on your behalf. This may be your GP, social worker or another person who is concerned about you.

If you are interested in finding out about us you can contact us at the office or visit [www.newlifecounselling.net](http://www.newlifecounselling.net) for more information and where you can fill in our online form. We will then be in touch to set up an initial appointment.

### Please Note

The advice given in this leaflet is intended to be helpful to most people. It does not replace the direct advice of a healthcare professional or counsellor. It is only a general guide and cannot deal with all possible situations nor can it be specific to any one individual. If you or someone you know needs help please contact your GP as soon as possible to obtain further help.

## “we're listening”

### Contact Details

For further information or to make a referral, please contact:

25 Ardoyne Road Belfast BT14 7HX  
**Tel: 028 9039 1630**

Unit 20 North City Business Centre  
2 Duncairn Gardens Belfast BT15 2GG  
**Tel: 028 9074 6184**

# Hello.

We're New Life Counselling,  
we're here to help you.

**Are you suffering abuse?**