

Abuse Hurts!

**Have you or anyone you know
been harmed or hurt?**

If yes, don't ignore it!

If you have difficulty reading this leaflet, we can help by providing an interpreter, a translation or information on audio tape, in large print, in Braille or on computer disc.

Customer Services

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Produced by Kingston Community Care Services

March 2006

What is abuse?

Abuse is harming, mistreating, or hurting someone.

It can happen in different ways such as:

- Hitting, slapping, shaking, pushing, or making someone eat, drink or take medication when they don't want to.
- Shouting, swearing, ignoring, insulting, humiliating, or embarrassing someone.
- Not caring for someone properly or denying someone choice, information or privacy.
- Unwanted touching, kissing, sex or sexual teasing.
- Insulting or being disrespectful to a person because of their race, religion, disability, sex, age or sexual orientation (being gay or straight).
- Using someone's money, property or personal things without their permission or under pressure.

How can you tell if someone is being abused?

It may not always be obvious that someone is being abused but there are some tell-tale signs which may be suspicious if not seen before. These are:

- Unexplained marks, bruises, injuries or sudden weight loss.
- Not enough money to cover bills, food and other living expenses.
- A neglected appearance and little or no food or heating in the person's home.
- Feelings of anxiety, anger, fear or tearfulness.
- Not talking or communicating.

Who gets abused?

Anyone of us can get harmed or hurt by others! We know about children and young people being harmed or hurt, but adults, both men and women get abused too.

Some of the people who may get abused include older people, disabled people, people with learning disabilities or mental health needs, people who are ill or with sight or hearing loss, and those who look after others (carers).

Who could abuse people?

Anyone, working with or close to someone could be in a position to abuse them. For example, it could be:

- A partner, friend, relative or neighbour.
- A social worker, doctor, policeman or nurse.
- A care worker in a nursing or residential care home.
- A care worker or personal assistant supporting someone at home.
- A volunteer worker.
- A solicitor.

Even though most people are abused by someone they know, people can still be abused by a complete stranger!

What should you do if you are being abused or are worried about someone?

Don't ignore it!

Please contact Kingston Community Care Services or any of the other agencies listed on the back page. We know that raising concerns about abuse is not easy and we will handle your call with care. Once you have contacted us, and with your permission, we will carry out careful and sensitive enquires.

What happens then will depend on the seriousness of the situation. If you are the person being abused, we will offer you information and advice so that you can make an informed choice about any help you need or action you might want to take.

If you are contacting us about someone else and they are unable to make an informed choice, we will make sure they are properly cared for and protected.

If you are being abused and feel unable to call us or one of the other agencies listed on the back page yourself, tell someone you trust and ask them to do it for you.

It's easy to let the situation continue, especially if you think you are doing something to cause it, or you think it's all your fault. It's not your fault!

Do something about it now!

You will feel a lot better once you've told someone who will listen and support you. Contact one of the organisations listed on the back page.

This publication is supported by our partner organisations:



In an Emergency call 999

Community Care Services

(for concerns about adults)

Telephone: 020 8547 6008

Email: cust.serv@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Children and Family Services

(for concerns about children)

Telephone: 020 8547 5888

Emergency Duty Social Work Team

(For urgent help outside office hours)

Telephone: 020 8770 5000

Kingston Police

Telephone: 020 8541 1212

Victim Support Kingston

Telephone: 020 8547 3202

Samaritans

Telephone: 020 8399 6676

Age Concern, Kingston upon Thames

Telephone: 020 8942 8256

Action on Elder Abuse

Telephone: 0808 808 8141

Commission for Social Care Inspection

(Regulates and inspects all care services in England)

Telephone: 0845 015 0120