



Keeping You and Your Loved Ones Safe from
SEXUAL ABUSE

Call our FREE 24/7 Helpline

0808 808 8121



**We are
Hourglass
the only UK-
wide charity
that's calling
time on the
harm, abuse and
exploitation of
older people**



Keeping You and Your Loved Ones Safe from Sexual Abuse



Sexual abuse can take many forms and can be hard to spot due to the nature of the abuse and the secrecy and manipulation that can be involved. If you or an older person you know are experiencing this you are not alone, this type of abuse can affect anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity.

Hourglass is here to help. This guide provides you with information about what sexual abuse is, how to identify it when it is happening and some tips on how to protect yourself and others.

What is Sexual Abuse?



Sexual abuse is any unwanted sexual activity involving the use of force, manipulation, threats or taking advantage of older people not able to give consent. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere and can happen in person or online. Sexual abuse may involve partners, family members, friends, carers or a stranger.

If sexual activity is happening in exchange for something – food, affection, drugs, alcohol, housing, protection or money – it's considered sexual exploitation and is abuse.

Sexual abuse is against the law and it is important you speak out if you or someone you know is experiencing this.

Examples of Sexual Abuse:

- Non-consensual sex or sex acts.
- Any sexual activity that the person lacks the capacity to consent to.
- Sexual assault, any inappropriate touching.
- Forced viewing of sexual imagery, pornography or being made to witness sexual acts.
- Indecent exposure.
- Sexual harassment.
- Non-consensual masturbation.
- Innuendo, sexual teasing or any behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse:

- Bruising to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck breasts or genital area.
- Pain, itching or injury in the genital or abdominal area.
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, sexually transmitted diseases, unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding.
- Difficult in sitting and walking due to discomfort in genital area, difficulty in walking or standing.
- Incontinence not related to any medical diagnosis.
- Self-harming.
- Changes in behaviour, poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance, changes in eating habits.
- Excessive fear/anxiety, reluctance to be alone with a particular person.
- Fear of receiving help with personal care.
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing.

You may be feeling:

- Ashamed, guilty, confused, or angry.
- Vulnerable, afraid, isolated, or distressed.
- Embarrassed, tearful, withdrawn, or numb.
- Scared it may happen again.
- Physically unwell: headaches, nausea, stomach ache, fatigue.
- Depressed, have low self-esteem, exhausted, unable to concentrate, suicidal.
- Not sure how or who to turn to.
- As though it is your fault or it was a misunderstanding.
- Worried that you don't want the person hurting you to get into trouble, you just want the abuse to stop.
- Hopeless, if you have experienced a negative response from agencies before when reporting the abuse.

Tips and advice for you:

- Abuse is never your fault and it is not okay for someone to hurt you.
- Unfortunately abuse can escalate and worsen over time so do not delay in getting help.
- It's important to seek out the help and support you or a loved one need, talk to someone you can trust.
- Contact Hourglass for further advice and support.
- Sexual abuse is against the law – call 999 if you are in immediate danger or 101 to report the abuse experienced.



Tips and advice if you are concerned about someone else:

- Know how to spot the signs of sexual abuse, not all are obvious.
- If you're worried about someone experiencing sexual abuse, and if it is safe and appropriate to do so, have an open conversation about this with them.
- It can help to let them know you're there to help, just listening to them can make a huge difference.
- Stay calm if an older person tells you they are being abused and be sensitive to the emotional impact of disclosing abuse.
- Support them to seek out the support that is needed.
- Provide Hourglass' contact details to the person you are worried about, if it is safe to do so.

How we can support you:

At Hourglass we are dedicated to stopping the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people. Our helpline and online services are available across the UK and our expert team provide information, advice and support and can put you in touch with appropriate local agencies that may provide additional services.

We are here for you Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, offering:

- Support for any older person experiencing or at risk of abuse or exploitation.
- Support if you are unsure if abuse or exploitation is happening to you or someone else.
- Support for anyone with concerns about an older person, e.g. family, friends, neighbours, paid carers or professionals, etc.
- Information and advice relating to safer ageing and prevention of abuse.



All our contact details can be found on the back of this brochure.



Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse

You can contact us in many ways:

24/7 Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Our helpline is entirely confidential and free to call from a landline or mobile, and the number will not appear on your phone bill.

Text message: 07860 052906

Texts from outside the UK will be charged at their standard international rate which will differ depending on location and service charges of your phone provider. The number will appear on your bill and in your phone records but will not be identified as Hourglass.

INSTANT MESSAGING service: www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our CHATBOT - www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our KNOWLEDGE BANK - knowledgebank.wearehourglass.org

Email: helpline@wearehourglass.org

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