

What is abuse?



- Abuse is when someone does or says something to you that makes you upset or hurts you or when someone takes something from you.
- You could experience abuse from a friend, family member, a loved one, someone in a professional position or a stranger.
- Abuse is not your fault and is always wrong. It can be difficult to talk about, and you may not know who to tell or how to get help.
- You are never alone and staff at St Mungo's are here to listen to you, support you, and offer advice and guidance.

How do I read the signs?

There are different types of abuse which can include physical, domestic, sexual, financial, emotional and neglect. There are many signs and indicators, and here are some examples:

Has someone taken your bank card and pin number and you don't know how to get it back?

Is someone making you feel bad about yourself, humiliating you in public or mocking you?

Has someone offered you paid work and is not giving you money in exchange for the work you are doing?

Is someone physically hurting you in places that can be hidden?

Are you being made to do things you don't want to do?

Is someone taking money from you without your permission?

Is someone staying in your home and you want them to leave, but they won't listen?

Is someone controlling who you can and cannot be friends with?

What happens next?

It is important to remember during this time that if you feel you are at immediate risk of abuse or neglect, you should call 999. Your safety remains of great importance and so do not hesitate to contact emergency services if you are feeling unsafe.

Speak to your lead worker, any other member of staff or a manager at your service.

Staff will:

Listen to you and take your concerns seriously

Help you to stay safe

Understand that you may be afraid to talk about the abuse

Explain the safeguarding process, provide you with information and discuss what you would like to happen next

Discuss what additional support may be available

Answer any questions you may have

There may be occasions where staff need to report concerns and share information without your consent. They will inform you of their duty to report in these instances and will explain the reasons why they are making this decision.

You have the right to:

- Be Listened to
- Be Safe
- Be Respected
- Be Treated fairly
- Be Heard
- Be In control
- Be Understood
- Be Supported
- Be Yourself
- Be Free from abuse and neglect

For more information about your local safeguarding arrangements, speak to staff at your service.