



Child Sexual Abuse Information Check

Sexual abuse - what is sexual abuse?

A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities.

This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online.

Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse.

They may not even understand that it's wrong.

How do you define child sexual abuse?

There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them
- online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images
- showing pornography to a child
- sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

1 in 20 children in the UK have been sexually abused

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:

send or post sexually explicit images of themselves

take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone

have sexual conversations by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity.

Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Signs, indicators and effects

Children who are sexually abused may:

Stay away from certain people

they might avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends

they could seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them.

Show sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age

a child might become sexually active at a young age

they might be promiscuous

they could use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to.

Have physical symptoms

anal or vaginal soreness

an unusual discharge

sexually transmitted infection (STI)

pregnancy.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD OR YOUGH PERSON CONTACT THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARD LEAD.