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Background

Covid-19 makes safeguarding more difficult due to reduced contact between professionals and vulnerable people with fewer support networks in place.

Isolation, money problems and health difficulties increase the pressure and raises the possibility of abuse and mistreatment.

There are particular risks for people isolated with abusers and those more vulnerable to being misled or mistreated.

Be curious and alert to signs of neglect or abuse when visiting or if making a phone or video call.

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Why it matters

Why is safeguarding important as a volunteer? 'Safeguarding' is what we do to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals. All professionals have a duty to safeguard, to help children, young people and adults to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

As a volunteer it is important that you understand how to spot the signs of abuse and neglect and how to report any concerns you have.

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Information

Who are we safeguarding?

A child or young person (anyone under 18 years old) who is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm.

An adult at risk might be someone with care and support needs or other vulnerability and as a result unable to protect themselves so may be at risk of, or suffering abuse or neglect. Children and adults may be abused in any setting. They may be abused by another adult/adults or another child or children or a member of staff.

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The different types of abuse for children are:

Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse

The different types of abuse for adults are: physical, domestic, sexual, neglect or acts of omission, self-neglect, psychological or emotional, financial or material, modern slavery, discrimination, organisational or institutional.

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Abuse, harassment and harm can happen to anyone. It's not always visible and often not spoken about. If you are worried about a child, young person or adult you may wish to talk to them, listen calmly and reassure them. If you can't speak to the person directly that's ok, **but it is important that you tell someone about your concerns. If you are concerned about the behaviour of a staff member at an organisation that cares for children or adults, follow your agency's procedure on reporting allegations about professionals.**

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What to do

If you believe a person to be at immediate risk of harm or need of emergency medical attention call **999**. If you are worried about a child, young person or vulnerable adult contact your local social care service on **Lancashire** - 0300 123 6720 (child), 0300 123 6721 (adult), 0300 123 6722 (out of hours)
Blackpool 01253 477299 (child 24 hrs), 01253 477592 (adult), 01253 477600 (adults out of hours)
Blackburn 01254 666400 (child), 01254 585949 (adult), 01254 587547 (out of hours).

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Questions to consider

Further useful information:

The [NSPCC](#) on spotting signs of child abuse (helpline 0808 800 5000).

The Safeguarding Board websites for [Blackpool](#), [Blackburn with Darwen Children's](#) and [Adults](#) and [Lancashire Children's](#) and [Adults](#) for **e learning** and 7 minute briefings on key safeguarding issues.

[Safer Lancashire Domestic Abuse resources](#) and [Safer Lancashire website](#)

ICON: Babies Cry You Can Cope campaign

