

NO

**EXCUSE FOR
ABUSE**



Abuse is **NOT** okay

Abuse is when someone purposely hurts or injures another person.

There are many kinds of abuse.



Here are important things you should know if you ever think you are being hurt by someone who provides supports for you.

Hopefully, you will never experience this. But if you do, this brochure will tell you what you need to know and what to do.

YOU have the right to be free from abuse or neglect.

Speak Up and Speak Out!

Neglect is:

When someone is not getting the support or supervision they need to live safely.

Neglect can happen:

◆ When you are not provided the things you need such as nutritional needs, proper clothing, medical care and shelter.

◆ When you are not given the services necessary for you to be healthy and safe.



Neglect can be an act of carelessness or done on purpose.



Discrimination is:

When someone treats you unfairly because you are different.

Examples of Discrimination:

- ◆ Your gender identity or sexual orientation.
- ◆ Your age, weight, skin color, race or religion.
- ◆ Your disability.
- ◆ Your history.

Elderly Abuse is:

Any form of mistreatment that harms an older person.

- ☀ Self neglect: When a persons behavior threatens his/her own health.
- ☀ Acts of intimidation, insults, isolation from friends or family being ignored and any kind of non-consensual sexual contact .
- ☀ Caregivers not meeting dietary needs.



Financial Abuse is:

When someone steals or misuses your money, property or finances.

- 💰 When staff reports that they have worked hours that they have not.
- 💰 When you are told to buy something for someone else that you do not want to.
- 💰 When you are not allowed to spend your money on the things you want.



Emotional Abuse is:

When someone uses offensive or intimidating language to upset an individual and/or causes you to be fearful.

Emotional Abuse is when:

- ☀ Someone makes fun of you.
- ☀ Someone screams and yells at you.
- ☀ Someone calls you hurtful names or demeans, degrades or humiliates you.
- ☀ Someone neglects you.



Sexual Abuse is:

When a person is forced or encouraged to take part in sexual activities.

- ◆ Sexual abuse can happen between an individual and a family member, volunteer or paid staff regardless of consent.

Sexual Abuse can happen when:

- ◆ Someone touches you in private areas when you do not want to be touched.
- ◆ Someone makes you touch them or yourself in a sexual way.
- ◆ When someone makes you watch pornography or others performing sexual acts.



Physical Abuse is:

When someone hurts your body.

Physical Abuse includes:

- ◆ Punching
- ◆ Slapping
- ◆ Shaking
- ◆ Hitting
- ◆ Kicking
- ◆ Grabbing
- ◆ Pinching
- ◆ Hair Pulling
- ◆ Burning
- ◆ Choking

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE

Have safe relationships and feel safe at home and at work

- ◆ We all need SAFE PEOPLE and SAFE PLACES in our lives
- ◆ A safe person is someone who is trustworthy, supportive and will listen to you.
- ◆ People in safe relationships don't hurt each other on purpose they respect each others bodies, properties and respect you as a person
- ◆ In a safe relationship you feel comfortable, relaxed, you can say what you want and you know that the other person will not use their power/position against you.

WHO CAN BE AN ABUSER?

Anyone could abuse you including:

- ✦ A person you don't know
- ✦ A person you know
- ✦ A person paid to help you
- ✦ A family member
- ✦ A professional: Doctor, Lawyer, Healthcare worker . . . etc.

WHERE CAN YOU BE ABUSED?

Abuse could happen anywhere including:

- ✦ Home
- ✦ Day program
- ✦ School
- ✦ Work
- ✦ Public or private place



**ABUSE CAN HAPPEN ANYTIME, ANYWHERE
BY ANYONE TO ANYONE.**

DON'T IGNORE IT! SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT!

What Should I Do If I Think I Am A Victim Of Abuse Or Neglect?



Your first concern is your own personal safety. If you think someone is abusing you, **you need to get away from that person as soon as you can.** Get help from a neighbor, a friend, your case manager or broker, or the police, if necessary. Once you are safe, then you can report the suspected abuse.

How Do I Report Abuse Or Neglect?

- **If you are a young person aged 17 or younger, CALL:** The Department of Children and Families (DCF) 1-800-842-2288
- **If you are an adult aged 18 to 59, CALL:** The DDS Abuse Investigation Division (AID) 1-844-878-8923
- **If you are 60 years or older, Call:** The Department of Social Services (DSS) 1-888-385-4225 or Info Line 211



Do I Need To Report Suspected Abuse Or Neglect To DDS?

Yes, you also need to report suspected abuse or neglect to your case manager or broker who will help you report it to the appropriate people in the region. The police will be notified by the agency you report it to.

You have the right to press charges against the suspected person who abused or neglected you.



Get the facts in writing!

What Happens When I Report Abuse Or Neglect?

An investigation begins and the staff suspected of abuse or neglect cannot work with you until the investigation is completed. If the person suspected of abuse or neglect is not a staff person, your case manager or broker will help you plan how to keep safe until the investigation is completed.



What If I Am Hurt And Need To See A Doctor?

If you want to see a doctor for treatment and follow-up care, do not hesitate to do so. It can be helpful to have someone take photos of any bruises, cuts, or other injuries as evidence that could help with the investigation. Place a ruler next to the injury if possible to show size (scale) before taking photos.



Realize YOU have rights

Who Conducts The Investigation?

Investigations are done by one of the protective service agencies (DCF, DDS AID, or DSS), DDS or your private provider agency, depending on your age and where you live or receive services.

It is important for you to share it with the investigator as soon as possible.



Use the chain of command

What Happens During The Investigation?

When an investigator is assigned, he or she will conduct a thorough investigation to determine the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident. Investigators will also interview and take written statements from you, any potential witnesses and the suspected person who abused or neglected you. The investigator reviews the evidence gathered, determines whether or not the abuse or neglect happened.



Be assertive and persistent

What Happens When The Investigation Is Complete?

You should receive information about the outcome of the investigation and whether or not abuse or neglect was found to be true. If the investigation finds there was no abuse or neglect then the employee can return to work. If abuse or neglect was found to be true, the employee will face disciplinary action and could be referred to the police if it's a criminal act, which may result in criminal charges.



Follow-up

CHECK OUT THESE
GREAT RESOURCES!!!

Best Buddies

www.bestbuddies.org

E-buddies

www.ebuddies.org

THE RIOT

www.theriotrocks.org

Your Human Rights

www.hpod.org



To learn more about Self Advocacy
and find groups in your area, go to
www.ct.gov.dds and see our
“Advocates’ Corner!”

10 SELF ADVOCATE STEPS

1. Believe in Yourself
2. Realize YOU have RIGHTS
3. Discuss YOUR concerns
4. Get the FACTS in writing
5. Use the Chain of Command
6. Know your appeal rights
7. Be ASSERTIVE and PERSISTENT
8. Use COMMUNICATION skills
9. Ask for help
10. FOLLOW - UP

SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT!

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