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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, neglect and exploitation.

As a volunteer it is important that you understand how to spot the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation 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, this includes witnessing (experiencing) domestic abuse and child exploitation.  
**The different types of abuse for adults are:** psychological, physical, sexual, financial or material, neglect or acts of omission, discriminatory, organisational modern slavery, domestic abuse, self neglect.

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Abuse, exploitation, 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, **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 in Shropshire to be at immediate risk of harm or in need of emergency medical attention call **999**.

If you are worried about a child or young person phone **03456789021**.

If you are worried about an adult phone **03456789044**.

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## Questions to consider

### Further useful information:

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

There is more information on these websites:

[Keeping Adults safe in Shropshire](#)

[Shropshire Safeguarding Children](#)

[Children and Young people Early Help in Shropshire](#)



Shropshire Safeguarding  
Community Partnership