



Spotting the signs of abuse

Social distancing, self-isolating and quarantine can cause stress and changes in everyone's behaviour. Families are under new pressures and you may worry a child is withdrawn, anxious or depressed. Spotting the signs of abuse might be more difficult and it can be difficult to know for certain if something is wrong.

But if you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, you can contact Solihull Children's Services on 0121 788 4300 (Emergency out of hours 0121 605 6060) or contact the NSPCC helpline on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000), email help@nspcc.org.uk or fill in an [online form](#). Abuse is always wrong and should always be reported.

Some of the signs you may spot include:

- aggressive or repeated shouting
- hearing hitting or things being broken
- children crying for long periods of time
- very young children left alone or are outdoors by themselves
- children looking dirty or not changing their clothes
- children being withdrawn or anxious.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour, but contacting someone can help assess the situation.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and keeping children safe from abuse

Children and young people are normally seen by lots of different adults every day, like neighbours, grandparents and teachers. But due to coronavirus (COVID-19) we're self-isolating, social distancing and spending much more time at home. This means some families might need extra support with parenting. And if a child is experiencing abuse, there aren't as many opportunities for adults to spot the signs and help.

We know isolation can put some children at a greater risk of domestic abuse, neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Efforts are being made to keep school places open for vulnerable children. But it's everyone's responsibility to keep children safe, spot the signs of abuse and report concerns. We all need to play our part by checking in with families and reaching out for support and advice if we have any concerns.

Worried about a child?

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