

Spotting the Signs of abuse

Spotting the signs of abuse during lockdown



We all know that social distancing, self-isolating and quarantine can cause stress and changes in everyone's behaviour. In Dudley families are under pressures and you may worry a child or young person you are working with has become withdrawn, depressed and anxious.

Spotting the signs of abuse as a professional might be more difficult right now and it can be difficult to know for certain if something is wrong.



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- children being withdrawn or anxious.

While you most likely won't see children and families in the same way you did before, there are still ways you can keep in contact. By continuing to have a relationship with a child who may be vulnerable at home, you increase the chance of being able to spot any possible signs of abuse.



Could you use video calls to help maintain that sense of face-to-face contact.



Ask what apps they use to talk to friends so that you may be able to use those too.

Don't forget to ask open-ended questions like the ones below will help inform you of what may be going on for the children and young people you support.



tell me about your day



what are some good things that have happened today



tell me about some sad things that have happened this week



what's life at home like

It's okay to ask similar questions - it can sometimes take time for a child to open up about what's happening.

Give children and young people the opportunity to talk about what's going on for them. It may take time for them to feel comfortable talking online or over the phone so try to keep in touch regularly. Talking about things like what they're watching, reading or playing, or what they've had for dinner, may help them feel more comfortable.

It's also important to support parents and carers. Ask them about how they're coping and any worries and concerns they have. Let them know you're there to support them if they need help.

If you have any concerns, please speak to your line manager/coordinator for advice and guidance.