Safeguarding adults at risk in the Diocese of Gloucester

A vulnerable adult (adult at risk) is a person aged 18 years or over who has needs for care and support and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. Commonly recognised forms of abuse are physical, psychological, financial, sexual, neglect and acts of omission, self-neglect, organisational, human slavery, domestic abuse and discrimination.

Adults at risk

“It is the Christian duty of everyone to recognise and support those who are identified as being more vulnerable. In supporting a vulnerable person we must do so with compassion and in ways that maintain dignity.”

‘Promoting a Safe Church, 2006.’

Supporting survivors

Listen, and keep listening.
Survivors need time and support to work on their feelings and be able to accept that it was not their fault and that they have no need to feel shame.

They may take some time to make decisions regarding their abuse, they need to set their own pace and they may need to talk things over many times.

Remember that survivors will have significant potential strengths but that they will often have various complex needs.

Always be aware of professional boundaries, do not make judgements and do not try to counsel survivors, who may need professional help.
Always be on hand with gentle, sensitive, pastoral care and compassion.
Never use touch without seeking permission.

Domestic abuse

... is about power and control.
There is never any excuse for violence or abuse.
In immediate danger call 999.

Safer recruitment

...always follow safe recruitment policies and practices and ensure that employees and volunteers have clear roles and responsibilities and are recruited safely by application, interview, references, Disclosure where appropriate (DBS) and careful induction.
Supervision, training and support on Safeguarding Awareness should always be given.

Useful contacts

Glouceshershire Adult Social Care Helpdesk 01452 426868
Out of Hours Emergency Team 01452 614194
Information about domestic abuse and sexual violence www.glostakeastand.com
Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service 0845 602 9035 www.gdass.org.uk
MIND 0300 123 3393 www.mind.org.uk
Mencap 08088 081111 www.mencap.org.uk
Age UK 0800 169 6565 www.ageuk.org.uk
Samaritans 08457 909090 www.samaritans.org
“Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God’s own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God’s re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.” ‘Protecting All God’s Children, 2010.’

Key points

‘Abuse’ is the violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse is harmful and often has longer term consequences for children. We all have a duty to protect children and young people from harm. Abuse continues because of the secrecy that surrounds it… don’t wait until you are certain.

Be aware

The internet and digital and social media offer huge opportunities for bullying and abuse. Keep children and young people safe on the internet.

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.safenetwork.org.uk
(Choose the ‘Help & advice’ tab and select ‘Safety online’.)

Responding to a child or young person

- Listen, and keep listening
- Don’t ask leading questions
- Avoid passing judgement
- Never promise confidentiality
- Explain what you are going to do and don’t delay in taking action
- Contact the appropriate people to report or seek advice
- Make a note of all that has happened in as much detail as possible with names. Date and sign and keep safely.

Abuse can be

- Emotional (spiritual abuse can be reported under this category)
- Physical
- Neglect
- Sexual

Remember that you are an alerter, not an investigator

Useful contacts

Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
NSPCC 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
On Your Mind Glos (Children’s Mental Health) www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk
Gloucestershire County Council Children’s Helpdesk 01452 426565
Out of hours emergency duty team 01452 614194
Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) 01322 517817 www.ccpas.co.uk