



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Department on Disability Services  
Developmental Disabilities Administration

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**DDS Fact Sheet on Abuse and Neglect**

**I. Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation:**

Everyone has a right to live a safe, happy life, free from harm. Unfortunately, many people do not understand or respect individuals with disabilities and will either harm or take advantage of them.

**II. What is Abuse?**

**A. Definition:**

- When someone tries to hurt you, cause you pain by hitting, kicking, or slapping you
- When someone does not stop someone else from causing you physical pain

**B. Types of Abuse:**

- 1. Physical:** Someone hitting, kicking, slapping you or using more force than is reasonably necessary for the safety of the individual.

*Signs that someone is being physically abused:*

- Too much medicine
- Broken bones, sprains
- Unexplained injuries
- Missing hair or teeth

- 2. Sexual Abuse:** Any sexual activity or attempted sexual activity (touching, hugging, intercourse) between an individual and an employee or family member regardless of the individual's consent.

*Signs that an individual is being sexually abused:*

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Clothes with blood stains, tear marks
- Bruises or soreness around your private parts
- Difficulty walking or sitting





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- 3. Verbal/ Psychological Abuse:** Someone yelling at you, calling you names, using words to make fun of you, talking down to you, keeping you away from things you like to do or people you like to see.

*Signs that someone is being verbally or psychologically abused:*

- Severe weight loss
- Sleeping problems
- Upset, withdrawn

**III. What is Neglect?**

When someone who is supposed to care for you does not by:

- Not giving you enough food, clothing, not taking care of your home.
- Not taking you to the doctor
- Not helping you move around
- Not cleaning you

*Signs that someone is being neglected:*

- Loss of weight
- Bed sores
- Dirty living conditions
- Begging for food

**IV. What is Exploitation?**

Exploitation is using an individual's money or taking their stuff for one's own use.

- Asking you for gifts
- Taking your stuff without permission.
- Someone asking you to spend your money on things you do not want.



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**Abuse, Neglect**



**Exploitation?**

**Call for Help!**



1. Call your service coordinator or anyone at DDS for help.
  - (202) 730-1700
2. Ask a service provider for help. If you live in an ICF-DD or a licensed group home in the District, you may contact the Department of Health Regulations at:
  - (202) 442-5833.
3. File a police report.
  - (202) 727-1010
  - Call 911 if an emergency
  - Answers Please at INFO 211 or (202) 463-6211
4. Call Adult Protective Services (APS) for harm to someone over the age of 18.
  - (202) 541-3950
5. Call Child Protective Services (CPS) for harm to someone under 18 years of age
  - (202) 673-7233
6. Call The Long-Term Care  
nursing homes.



Ombudsman (LTCO) for problems with



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- (202) 434-2140



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