**[Childhood abuse](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/childhood-abuse/)**

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Often, people abuse others because they want power and control over them. If you were abused as a child, it’s important to remember it’s not your fault or because of anything you did. Abusive behaviour towards children is always wrong and never the child’s fault.

#### [Impact of childhood abuse](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/childhood-abuse/#b3fb0798fc909e89b)

Everyone is different. It’s not easy to know exactly how you will feel as an adult living with past experiences of being abused. You may have reported the abuse as a child, lived with it in secret for years, or only recently remembered the abuse you experienced. However, it’s possible that at some time in your adult life your memories or fears will come back, which can lead to some very intense emotions.

Different life experiences can trigger these emotions, including bereavement, becoming a parent, experiencing an unrelated crime, moving to a new area, and current news stories in the media.

### Mental health

Not everybody who has experienced childhood abuse will also experience emotional or mental health difficulties. However, it’s estimated that over 50% of people may have the following symptoms that last into adulthood:

* anxiety
* depression
* post-traumatic stress
* sleep disorders
* self-harm and/or suicidal thoughts.

### Physical health

Childhood abuse is associated with poorer physical health in adulthood. You may find it more difficult to go to your local GP, hospital or dentist to get help for general medical issues or a check-up because of not wanting to be touched or asked questions.