



INDEPENDENT
DISABILITY SERVICES



**FREEDOM FROM
ABUSE & NEGLECT**

Changing lives, empowering people

Freedom from Abuse and Neglect

IDS staff and contractors are required to treat our clients' and their families with respect and consideration at all times.

Anyone who suspects that an IDS client is, or is at risk of, being neglected or physically, sexually emotionally or financially abused, should report it to IDS.

If an IDS team member thinks a client is being abused or neglected, they will ask the client some questions about their circumstances and whether they want to make a report. If we believe they are in danger, we may decide to make a report on their behalf without permission.

As part of the service agreements between IDS and the agencies engaged by us, agency staff are required report any actual or suspected abuse and neglect to the IDS Service Manager.

What happens once a report has been lodged, depends on the information received. We will meet with the client to establish the facts surrounding the incident. We may need to talk to other people to find out about the circumstances.

IDS acknowledges the right of our clients to seek the support and guidance of family, friends, carers and independent advocates to uphold their rights.

The client's best interests and well-being are central to any actions we undertake, and all actions will take into account the personal circumstances of the client.

What is abuse?

Physical abuse: Any intentional and unwanted contact with a person or something close to their body. Examples of physical abuse are:

- Scratching, punching, biting, strangling or kicking;

- Throwing something at a person such as a phone, book, shoe or plate;
- Pulling hair;
- Pushing or pulling;
- Using a knife, bat or other weapons;
- Physically preventing them a person leaving or forcing them to go somewhere.

Emotional abuse: The aim of emotional abuse is to chip away at a person's feelings of self-worth and independence. It is common for physically abusive relationships to include aspects of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can include:

- Verbal – yelling, insulting or swearing at someone;
- Rejection – pretending not to notice someone's presence, conversation or value;
- Put downs – name calling, public embarrassment, calling someone stupid, blaming them for everything;
- Isolation – limiting freedom of movement, stopping someone from contacting people (like friends or family);
- Bullying – purposely and repeatedly saying or doing hurtful things to someone.

Financial abuse: Can be very subtle – telling someone what they can or cannot buy or pressuring a person to share control of their bank accounts. Here are some examples of financially abusive behaviour:

- Keeping a person from seeing shared bank accounts or financial statements;
- Using someone's personal details to obtain credit without your permission;
- Using a person's credit cards without their permission.

Sexual abuse: includes any action that pressures or coerces someone to do something sexually they do not want to do. It can also refer to behaviour that impacts

a person's ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs. Some examples of sexual assault and abuse are:

- Unwanted kissing or touching;
- Unwanted rough or violent sexual activity;
- Rape or attempted rape;
- Keeping someone from protecting themselves from sexually transmitted infections;
- Sexual contact with someone who unable to give a clear and informed "yes" or "no";
- Threatening someone into unwanted sexual activity;
- Pressuring someone to have sex or perform sexual acts;
- Repeatedly using sexual insults toward someone.

What is neglect?

Neglect is a form of mistreatment resulting from inadequate attention through carelessness or disregard for the needs of others.

Physical neglect: includes failing to attend to a person's medical, hygienic, nutrition and dietary needs, such as dispensing medications, changing bandages, bathing, grooming, dressing, or failure to provide ample food to maintain health;

Emotional neglect: includes causing emotional pain, distress or anguish by ignoring or belittling. This includes neglecting or discounting the emotional well being of others, as well as actions to isolate adults from visits or contact from family and friends;

Abandonment: involves deserting the care giving needs of an individual while neglecting to arrange sufficient care and support for the duration of the absence;

Financial neglect: includes disregarding a person's financial obligations such as failing to pay rent or mortgage, medical insurance or invoices, utility and garbage bills, property taxes and assessments;

Self-neglect: involves a person who fails to meet their essential physical, psychological or social needs, which threatens their health, safety and well-being. This includes failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter and health care for one's own needs. You can learn more about self-neglect [here](#).

What to do if you or someone you know is being mistreated

- Tell the person to stop;
- If the abuse or neglect involves a carer, other support workers, friend or family, a complaint should be made to the Service Manager at IDS;
- If the abuse or neglect involves an IDS Service Manager, a complaint should be made directly to the CEO at IDS;
- The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline offer a free, independent and confidential service for reporting abuse and neglect experienced by people with a disability;
- If the complaint requires immediate attention, call the emergency services;
- Provide as much information as possible to enable a thorough investigation, including:
 - Your name and address;
 - Some information about the situation in which the abuse is occurring;
 - The name of the person or persons responsible for the abuse;
 - The name, age and address of the person being abused;
- You will also need to permit IDS to pass information onto other organisations who can investigate your report.

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IDS is committed to accessibility
of our services and information



IDS provides access to
interpreting services



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