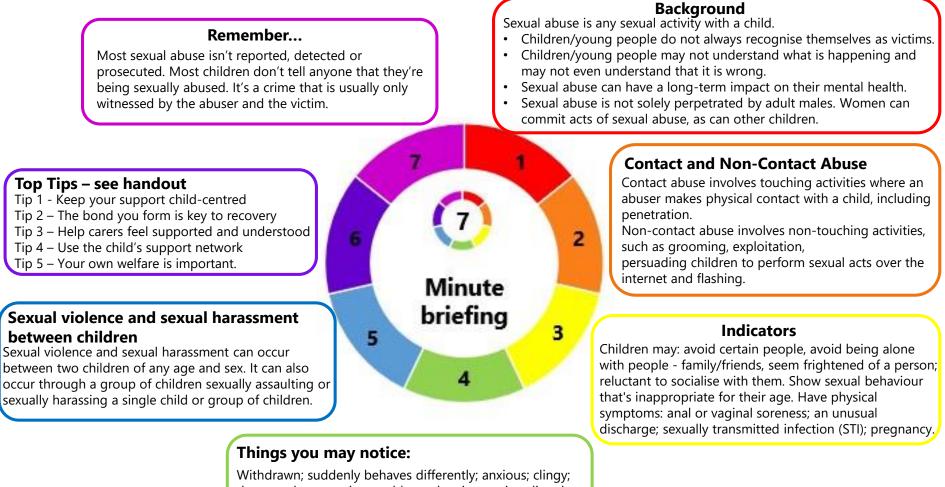
Safeguarding 7-minute briefing: Sexual abuse

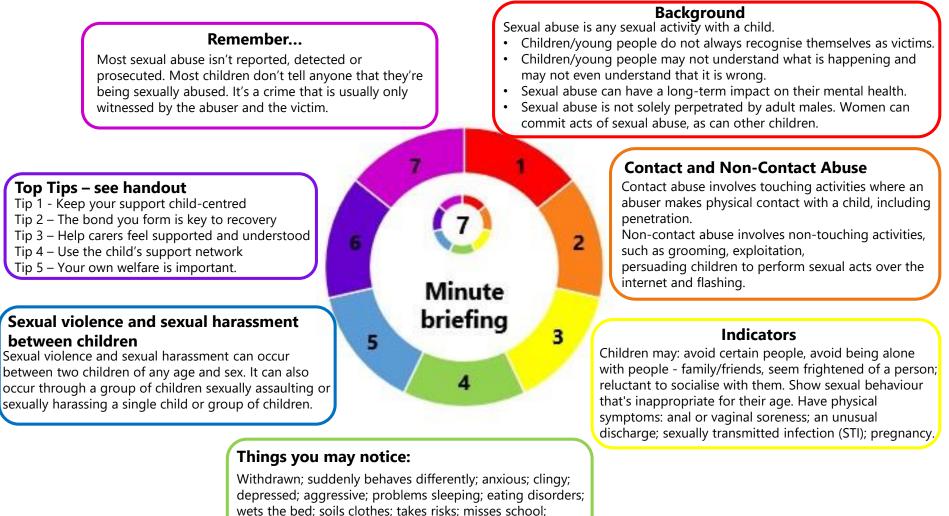




Withdrawn; suddenly behaves differently; anxious; clingy; depressed; aggressive; problems sleeping; eating disorders; wets the bed; soils clothes; takes risks; misses school; changes in eating habits; obsessive behaviour; nightmares; drugs; alcohol; self-harm; thoughts about suicide

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changes in eating habits; obsessive behaviour; nightmares;

drugs; alcohol; self-harm; thoughts about suicide

Click to complete the quiz

Top Tips Explained

Tip 1 - Keep your support child-centred

- Be prepared to listen. Don't assume all experiences are the same. You haven't heard it all before.
- Include children in making the decisions that affect them and be open.
- Confidence and trust need to be built first. Don't expect children and young people to want to talk about their abuse.
- Children don't always respond to direct questions and may not have the words to describe what was done to them or the impact it had.

Tip 2 - The bond you form with each child is key to their recovery

- Don't promise what you can't deliver. But, you can instil a sense of hope and optimism. You want them to feel she or he "can help me with this".
- Ensure the child knows they are believed and that you've followed up on what they've told you. They need assurance they will be protected.

Tip 3 - Help carers feel supported and understood

- Parents react in different ways to the abuse of their child, be it denial, anger, guilt or depression. This can affect their ability to support those who need them most.
- Be positive about the potential for children to recover and their essential role now and in the future when therapy ends.

Tip 4 - Understand and use the child's support network

- Identify roles and responsibilities of all professionals. Child protection concerns need to be shared and addressed in a timely manner.
- Quickly implement home safety plans and school safety plans if you don't know how to do these, then ask for advice and support.

Tip 5 - Your own welfare as a practitioner is important

- Professionals need to look after themselves when working with sexual abuse. Even if you're a qualified social worker, you'll come across things you haven't seen before. Good supervision and peer support is vital.
- Don't be afraid to say you feel stuck and to ask for advice from peers or others in a position to advise