



# Signs of discriminatory abuse



Discriminatory abuse occurs when an someone is treated unequally because they possess one of the protected characteristics outlined by the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics are age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, and religion or belief.

This type of abuse includes derogatory comments, jokes or slurs, denying access to services, hate crime, ignoring someone's views, unfair treatment, and denying somebody's rights to healthcare, education or employment because of a protected characteristic.

## Signs of discriminatory abuse may include:

- A report by an adult of being treated unfairly
- Observing mistreatment of an adult
- Behavioural changes, including an individual becoming withdrawn, isolated, angry, frustrated, afraid and anxious
- An individual beginning to reject their own cultural background, personal beliefs, sexual preferences or lifestyle choices
- Lack of personal belongings
- Lack of privacy and dignity
- Use of punishments such as withholding food and drink
- A lack of support for an individual's needs

If you recognise any of these signs and are concerned an adult is the victim of abuse, then it's essential you act on your concerns. 'Speaking out' about abuse could save somebody's life. If you are worried that an adult may be at risk of abuse or harm, please contact:



**023 8083 3003**  
**[southampton.gov.uk/speakout](https://southampton.gov.uk/speakout)**

If there is an immediate threat to their safety, contact the police by calling 999.