

North West Residential Support Services Inc.
Policies & Procedures
DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Number: <1>
Effective From: <January> <2015>
Replaces: <#>
Review: NWRSS Board
Contact: Neal Rodwell, General Manager
Review Date: <January> <2017>

The Tasmanian Criminal Code Act defines assault as:

"...the act of intentionally applying force to the person of another, directly or indirectly, or attempting or threatening by any gesture to apply such force to the person of another if the person making the attempt or threat has, or caused the other to believe on reasonable grounds that he has, present ability to effect this purpose, or the act of depriving another of his liberty".

Physical abuse:

The infliction of physical pain, injury or physical coercion. Examples include hitting, shoving, pushing, pulling, slapping, wetting, burning and physical restraint.

Psychological/Emotional abuse:

The infliction of mental anguish, including actions that lead to fear of violence, to isolation, or deprivation, feelings of shame, loss of dignity or powerlessness. Examples include treating the person as a child, humiliation, emotional blackmail, blaming, swearing, shouting, intimidation, name calling, sending people to their rooms, saying things about people that create bad reputations, invading people's privacy, withholding information and deliberately isolating them from friends and relatives.

Financial abuse:

The illegal or improper use of the person's property or finances. Examples include misappropriation of money, valuables or property; forced changes to wills or other legal documents; the denial of rights of access to, or control over, personal finances.

Neglect:

The failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical and dental care. This may involve the refusal to permit other people to provide appropriate care. Examples include abandonment; failure to provide nourishing food, adequate clothing or shelter; inappropriate use of medication (including over-medication); and poor assistance in matters of hygiene and personal care.

Sexual Assault and Abuse:

Sexually abusive or exploitative behaviour ranging from violent rape to indecent assault and sexual harassment.

Developmental Abuse:

Doing for people what they can do for themselves. Treating adults like children.

Abuse must be reported immediately to a Supervisor, the Manager or a Board Member. These people will adhere to strict guidelines for handling reports of abuse. Failing to report abuse will be viewed as a very serious breach of responsibility.

Other avenues for dealing with abuse include: Advocacy Services, Child & Family Services, Disability Services, Guardianship Board, Public Guardian, Tasmania Police, Sexual Assault Support Services and Gateway Services.

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