

Support for families following TV/radio coverage of restrictive interventions (for children with learning disabilities)

Many people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health conditions receive good quality care and support, however poor care can take place anywhere. Any inappropriate use of 'restraint' (physical intervention), seclusion and other restrictive practices could be regarded as either abuse or poor care. These interventions tend to be used in response to behaviour that challenges. They are not always wrong - they may be part of a wider approach to behaviour support that focusses on proactive strategies.

To judge whether an intervention is appropriate or not, ask:

- Is this the least restrictive way of responding to behaviour safely? (Have all alternatives been tried?)
- Is the person getting injured?
- Is this intervention fully discussed, agreed, recorded and reviewed?

If at any point you believe your family member is at risk of harm, you can discuss your concerns with the local authority in which the person is living. Each local authority has a child protection and an adult safeguarding team who you should contact if you have any suspicion that someone is at risk of abuse.

If your child has sustained injuries through restraint you should contact;

- their GP for a medical check and advice
- the service where the injuries happened to register your concerns and ask for an incident report
- your child's social worker to report the injuries and for advice and support

You may also find it helpful to seek independent support and information from one of the organisations listed below.

Poor care, including use of restrictive interventions, can be challenged using advocacy, complaints processes and sometimes by legal challenges. Support and information is available for families and individuals from a range of charities and organisations; some are listed below.

Ann Craft Trust

Advice for anyone concerned with the protection of vulnerable children and adults.

Website: www.anncrafttrust.org

Contact No: 0115 951 5400 (Office hours Monday – Thursday 9am – 5pm and 9am – 4pm on Friday)

Email: ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk

Challenging Behaviour Foundation

Support for families of children and adults with severe learning disabilities who display challenging behaviour.

Website: www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk

Family Support Service: 0300 666 0126 (available 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 3pm Fridays)

Email: support@theCBF.org.uk

Contact

Helpline for parents and carers in any part of the UK with a disabled child aged from 0 to 25.

Website: www.contact.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 808 3555 (open Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5pm)
Email: helpline@contact.org.uk

Hft

Hft support family carers of a person (aged 16+) with a learning disability, autism or both.

Website: www.hft.org.uk

Freephone: 0808 801 0448 (lines open Monday -Thursday 9am – 4pm)

Email: familycarersupport@hft.org.uk

Mencap

Advice and information on issues relevant to people with learning disabilities and their families.

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 808 1111 (lines open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm).

Email: helpline@mencap.org.uk

National Autistic Society (NAS)

Support people with autism and their families.

Website: www.autism.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 800 4104 (lines are open Monday – Thursday 10am – 4pm and 9am -3pm on Friday).

Whistleblowing Helpline

If you are a member of staff working in the NHS or social care sector and you have concerns about abuse in your workplace, you can contact the Whistleblowing Helpline.

Website: www.wbhelpline.org.uk

Helpline: 08000 724725

Email: enquiries@wbhelpline.org.uk

For further information about concerns about the quality of care or safety of someone with a learning disability, see the Challenging Behaviour Foundation website [here](#)

There is also a Challenging Behaviour Foundation information sheet about [The Use of Physical Interventions](#) and a [Medication Pathway](#) online resource.

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