



Listen



Believe



Do

Looking into Abuse Research project

EasyRead Report 1

What we found out about abuse and people
with learning disabilities



Looking into abuse: research by people with learning disabilities.

Part 1 - what we found out about abuse and people with learning disabilities



This research was the idea of people with learning disabilities and their supporters.

We wanted to find out:



- What do people with learning disabilities understand by abuse?



- What are their views about abuse?



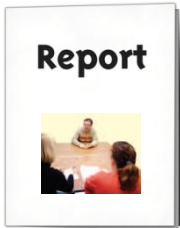
- What help and support do they need to keep safe?



- When someone has been abused what are the best ways to help?



We employed 3 people with learning disabilities as co researchers.



This report tells you how we did it and what we found out.

We had a 3 day residential at the Hilton Hotel in Newport.



We invited 50 people with learning disabilities and their supporters.



There were a lot of fun things to do at the hotel.





At the hotel we interviewed people about abuse



- In groups



- By themselves



We had counsellors in case people got upset talking about abuse. The counsellors were busy all the time.



We asked people questions about abuse. This is what they told us



What do people with learning disabilities understand by abuse?

The people knew a lot about different sorts of abuse. They told us about:



- Physical abuse



- Sexual abuse



- Financial abuse



- Child abuse



- Racial abuse



- Domestic abuse and many other kinds of abuse



What are their views about abuse?

Abuse made them feel:



'Well not very nice. It makes you feel - sometimes it makes you feel, it's like is life worth living for'



'it hurts'



'You can get nightmares when people abuse you. Nightmares about it. I always have that when people abuse me and take advantage'



'Like a headache, you just can't get it out of your head'



'I feel cross, really angry about it'



'All that suffering, it's not fair'



They thought that people who abuse:



- Should go to prison



- Lose their job



- Be stopped



But some people worried that nothing happens to people who abuse:



'They get off free don't they? They get away with it



*'I want them to understand how we feel about it.
And why do you want to do it cos it's not fair*

We did not ask people if they had been abused. But some people told us



*'I been abused, from my father ... He was wrong
for touching me'*



I went through domestic violence and it was my own fault...



'I didn't realise, the people who done financial abuse to me it were done in a sneaky way.



When people told someone about the abuse, often nothing was done about it



'I did, and no-one did nothing about it'



The people who came to the hotel were shown pictures. They were asked if the pictures showed abuse.

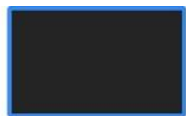


In only 1 picture everyone agreed it was abuse. It is hard to know when something is abuse.

People said they learnt about abuse:



- At People First



- On courses



- Because it happened to them or to their friends





'I just feel it shouldn't happen, but it does. And there's nothing you can actually do about it, it just happens...makes me feel angry, it's such against, it's actually abusing your human rights basically, and we all have human rights'



Questionnaires

Everyone who came to the hotel filled in a questionnaire.



We also sent the questionnaire to all People First groups in Wales. We got 107 replies.



What help and support do people with learning disabilities need to keep safe?



The questionnaires showed that the top 4 things people with learning disabilities do to keep safe are:



1. Learn to speak up - we all agreed this is very important



2. Let someone know where you are at all times - we think this can stop people being independent



3. Stay away from nasty people - can be hard to know who is nasty. We worry this stops people going out. And you may not be able to get away from nasty people - you may live with them.



4. Have someone to talk to who can sort things out



We asked what other people need to do to help keep people with learning disabilities safe. Other people need to tell people with learning disabilities:



1. What the law says



2. How it is ok and not ok for others to treat you



3. What is ok and not ok for others to do to you



4. Tell us about sex and relationships



We agree this is very important. It is wrong that people with learning disabilities have not been told these things.



When someone has been abused what are the best ways to help?

People who answered the questionnaire said the most important things are:



1. To be there for them



2. To believe them



3. Support to carry on with their lives



4. To be told what is happening

From all the things people told us, we decided that the most important of all are:



Listen to what we say. Do not ignore us.



Believe us. Believe what we say.



Do something. Help change things.

Thanks to our RAG:

