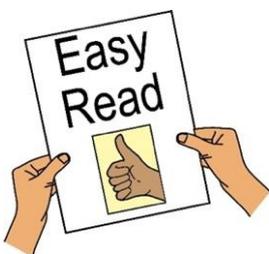




RESOURCE  
& SUPPORT  
**HUB**



# Illnesses that spread and how that can cause sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment



**Easy read booklet of  
RSH Evidence Digest  
Issue 1**

# What is in this report?



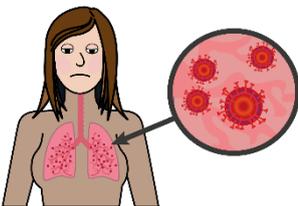
1. Who we are?



2. What is safeguarding?



3. Spreading illnesses and safeguarding



4. How to do safeguarding in COVID 19

# What is in this report?



We are the Resource and Support Hub.



We give help to the **aid sector** to protect people better.



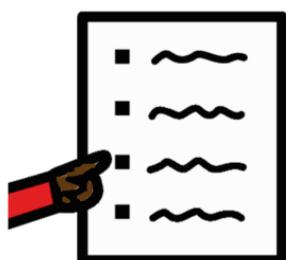
The **aid sector** has people who work around the world helping poorer communities.



The Resource and Support Hub gives free information online.

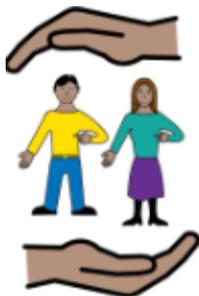


We have offices in countries in Europe and Africa.

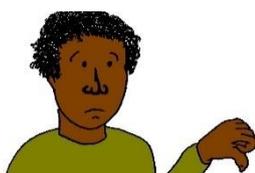


This booklet is part of the **1<sup>st</sup> Resource and Support Hub Evidence Digest**, please look at the full report for links to documents or for more information.

# What is safeguarding?



**Safeguarding** means doing our best to make sure that people are not sexually abused and are kept safe from harm.



Sometimes people might use other people for sex. This could be by:



- Using a position of power to have sex with someone, like offering money or favours – this is **sexual exploitation**



- Forcing people to have sex – this is **sexual abuse**



- Touching or making sexual comments when this is not wanted – this is **sexual harassment**

# Spreading illnesses and safeguarding



When an illness starts to spread to lots of people this can also make **safeguarding** harder.

Some rules and messages, such as telling people “stay at home”, can make things worse.



There is not much evidence on how big illnesses can affect sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.



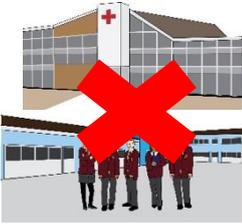
But some evidence shows that when there is a spreading illness, this can lead to:



- Groups and networks that help people operate less well



- There are less resources, like money food and water, to go around



- It is harder for people to access health, education, jobs, shops



- People have less money if they can't do their normal work



- People need more help to survive



All of these can make people more likely to be sexually exploited, abused or harassed.



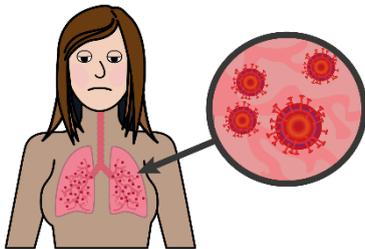
There is evidence that in other illness outbreaks people have demanded sex for food or healthcare.



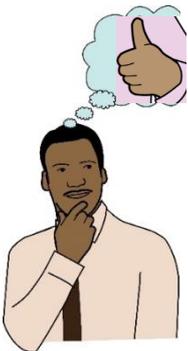
In some places police and army have sexually exploited people when they are made to stay at home.



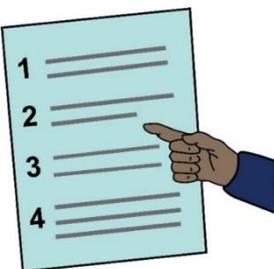
Girls that would normally go to school are more likely to be abused and there are more pregnancies among young women.



Currently there is a virus being spread called **COVID-19**.



Learning lessons from previous illness outbreaks is important to do better with COVID-19.

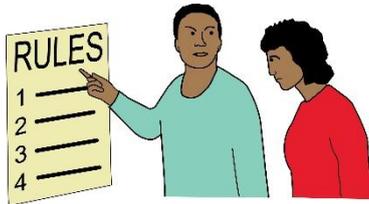


Please see the full evidence digest for details of specific evidence.

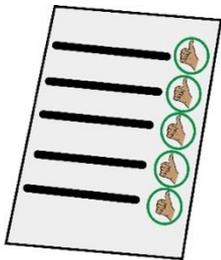
# How to do safeguarding in COVID 19



We have learned from the past that dangerous illnesses can spread quickly to lots of people.



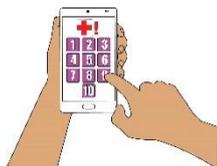
There are things that people who work in the aid sector should do.



An international group called the Inter-Agency Standing Committee have instructions to follow:



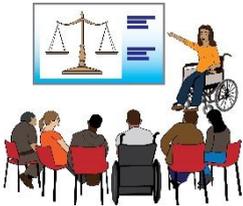
- If people do commit wrong acts, do not let them get away with it



- Make sure people know where and how to report wrong acts



- Make sure that victims of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation can speak to people who can give the right care



- Give training to all workers so they understand how people may abuse positions of power



- Make sure women are included in the groups who help in the first response



- See if there are ways to respond to emergencies online



- Make sure women and girls are involved when responding to a crisis such as an illness outbreak

# Contact us



If you want to talk to us send an email to [info@safeguardingsupporthub.org](mailto:info@safeguardingsupporthub.org) or call us on **+44 (0)1355 843 747**



Images/Resources copyright © LYPFT

Images used in this document come from the People First (Self Advocacy) Picture Bank

The full version of this document is called

**Evidence Digest**  
**Issue 1, May 2020, RSH**  
**[Available here](#)**