Safeguarding Vulnerable People
The Makaton Approach

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Disabled children and abuse

Deaf and disabled children are more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. They are particularly vulnerable because they are:

- Not offered the same protection as non-disabled children
- Often treated as different, and less likely to receive adequate sex education or information about their own bodies
- Generally more isolated, both physically and socially and also from mainstream facilities and services
- **Less likely to have people who they can communicate with**
- Dependent on others for their most important needs, such as feeding, taking medication or their intimate care needs.

Miller, D,(2002) Disabled Children and Abuse. NSPCC

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Disabled children and abuse

Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children.

Particular attention should be paid to promoting a high level of awareness of the risks of harm and high standards of practice, and strengthening the capacity of children and families to help themselves

DfE (2013) Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

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What is Makaton?

- Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order.
- This helps provide extra clues about what someone is saying.
- Using symbols can help people who have limited speech and those who cannot, or prefer not to sign.
- The signs used in Makaton are the same across the UK. Today over 100,000 people use Makaton.

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Developing environments for safeguarding

- Professionals need to work together between agencies to share information and ways of working

- If individuals accessing a provision use Makaton to help them understand and communicate, this needs to be shared

- Professionals of all agencies working with the client group need to receive appropriate training

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Developing environments for Safeguarding (continued)

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People with communication difficulties should be supported by the services they access, to:

- know their rights
- be involved in decision making
- know how to access help
- have opportunities to learn and experience

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Principle	Practice
Learning needs to be experiential	Reinforce understanding of signs and symbols by using them in real contexts
Part of daily routines	Develop known signs and symbols that are used regularly
Repetitive	Practice using the chosen vocabularies every time
Generalised	Different people use the same signs and symbols with the person, in different contexts
Multi modal	Use speech, signs, symbols, photographs, objects, switches, Voice Output Communication Aids

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Being able to tell

- When someone with a communication disability is being interviewed by the police or social services there are some basic skills and props that help the process

- The first one is being able to and having experience of responding to the open question “tell me…..”

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Being able to tell

- We can help Makaton users to expand on what they are trying to tell us.
- They need experience of responding to open questions, especially
  - Who?
  - Where?
  - What?
  - When?

We can enable users to give personalised information that will help other to understand.

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Learning more

Foundation Workshop

(for professionals)

If you are involved in the teaching or education of a child or adult, we recommend the Makaton for Professionals training.

It has a mix of practical and theory.

Signs and symbols taught are the same for both workshops

Beginners' Workshop

(for parents and carers)

If your role is primarily the care of a child or adult, we recommend the Makaton for Parents and Carers training.

Less background information & theory than Makaton for Professionals.

Lots of practical activities.

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The Makaton and safeguarding course

- Skills to develop environments that maximise communication for safeguarding
- Topic vocabulary for
  - People
  - Rooms and places
  - Body and clothing
  - Feelings, thoughts and behaviours
  - Bullying and abuse
  - Intimate vocabulary

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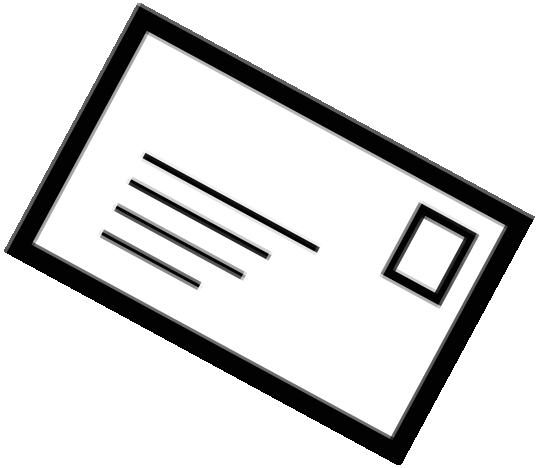

www.makaton.org

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