

Policing and Vulnerability: who is **vulnerable**?

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A key part of the policing role is protecting vulnerable people in our community.

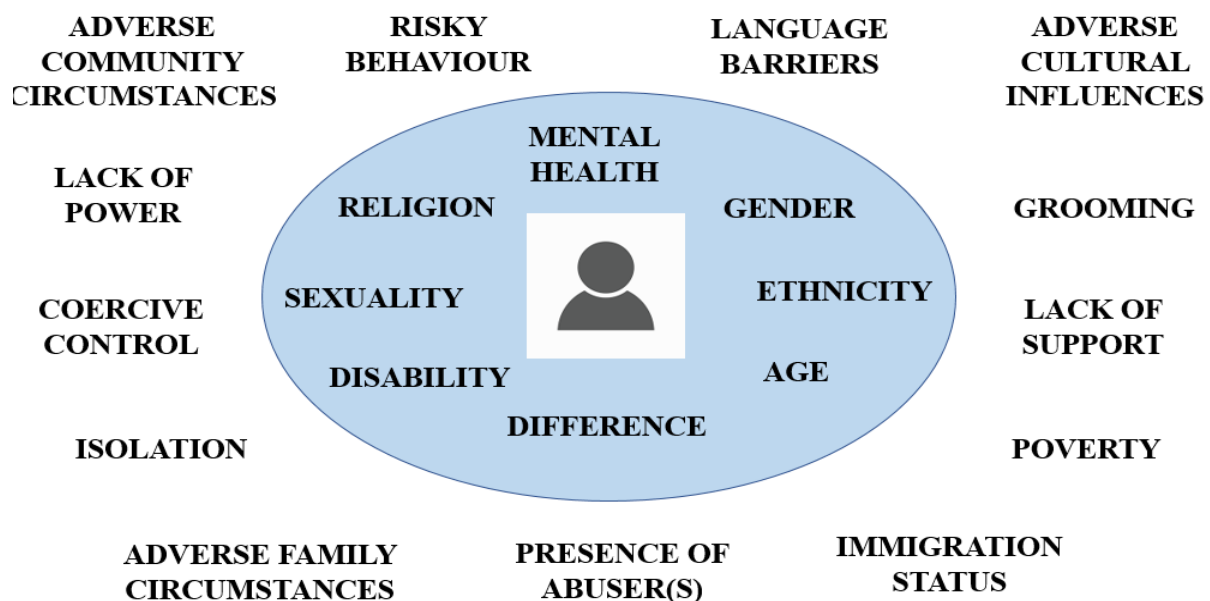
But what does the word “vulnerable” mean?

The College of Policing defines a vulnerable person as *“if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.”*

What do you think of this definition?

Below is an image similar to one used by the College of Policing that demonstrates how an individual’s vulnerability is identified by police officers and staff when responding to incidents.

The inner circle concerns the *personal traits* - that we all have!
But none of these traits alone makes someone vulnerable.



Surrounding the personal factors are the *situational factors* - and it is these factors that represent how an individual may be vulnerable, and so need the help of the police.

The calculation of a person’s vulnerability to harm is:

***Personal Factors* + *Situational Factors* = Harm/Risk of Harm**

Anyone can be vulnerable depending on the situation.

Understanding this can aid the police in ensuring that the help you receive is truly what you need – both in the immediate moment, and in the long term.