



## Incest

*This term appears to have a generally agreed meaning and/or can be used without stigmatising and/or otherwise harming the child.*

“Incest” refers to the sexual activity between two people who are very closely related in a family, for example siblings, or parent and child. Incest involving a child constitutes sexual abuse. While some domestic legal systems require blood ties for a sexual activity to constitute incest, others have broadened the notion to include family members who are not blood-related but who are still considered too close to engage in sexual activities (e.g. step-parents). Others still recognise only “vertical” incest, meaning the law does not cover sexual relations between siblings. In accordance with major dictionaries, “incest” refers to *“sexual relations between people classed as being too closely related to marry each other”*.<sup>90</sup> It is sometimes also defined as *“the crime of having sexual intercourse with a parent, child, sibling, or grandchild”*.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> See for instance Oxford British and World English Dictionary.