



Positively Safe:

a guide to developing safeguarding practices

Compiled by Rebecca Edwards



local network fund
for children and young people

NCVCCO Statement of Values

NCVCCO believes:

Primary emphasis should be placed on the needs and development of children and families and not on organisational or professional requirements

The quality of services to children depends on the skill and commitment of those who deliver them, whether paid or unpaid

Children and young people have a right to be listened to and heard. Their views should always be respected and taken seriously

Children have a right to develop a personal identity, self respect, and awareness of their own worth and a sense of responsibility

Children need both a committed adult to stand alongside them and procedures through which they can challenge decisions or actions with which they are unhappy

Children and young people have a right to protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation

Children, young people and their families should have access to a full range of high quality services, which offer choice and diversity

Disadvantages such as poverty, racism and discrimination hinder children's development

Services provided must be determined by the needs of the children and families and not by the availability of resources to the voluntary sector

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When asked about the outcomes which were most important to them in their lives children and young people agreed that staying safe was one of these. The voluntary sector is renowned for its dedication and commitment to providing preventative services for children and young people to keep them safe. Indeed, it has drawn from this experience and produced a wealth of resources on safeguarding. This publication pulls together some of this information, offering small projects within the voluntary and community sector a helpful tool to support the development of meaningful safeguarding policies and procedures.

This publication has been developed on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, which was set up to support local community projects that enable the development and creation of opportunities for children and young people up to the age of 19 who are at risk of social exclusion. For this reason, you will be pleased to find in this publication, examples of safe practice developed by community projects who themselves have benefited from such funding.

As Chair of the Advisory Group for the NCVCCO Safeguarding Children Project, I am sure that you will find this publication a useful starter resource.



Mary Marsh Director and Chief Executive, NSPCC

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Introduction: Safeguarding or stifling? Getting the balance right

All children want to explore limits, try out new experiences and develop their skills and capabilities, from a very young age. They want to be able to enjoy themselves – and in doing so – will take risks in testing themselves. But children also need to stay safe and secure. Organisations that work with children and families are familiar with the need to balance risk and safety, the need to provide a dynamic and challenging environment for children with the responsibility for their safekeeping.

All organisations working with children have a duty of care to both their service users and their workers, particularly so when they are working with children and young people. Because of children and young people's dependency upon adults, higher standards must apply to organisations working with them to ensure that the relationship of trust is not broken. Safeguarding is about ensuring that a relationship of trust is not compromised, preventing things from going wrong at an organisational level and having the right protocols and procedures in place to deal with the consequences of difficulties if and when they might arise.

However, no organisation is the same. One size does not fit all. Policies and procedures need to be relevant to the organisations applying them. They should be clear and accessible to everybody involved in the organisation – both workers and users. Policies and procedures work best when they are understood by the children and young people they are designed to serve.

By following some key principles your organisation should be able to strike a balance and help children achieve their goals. A good way to create a safe but not stifling organisation that

provides the enjoyment and achievement that children value is to base organisational practices on child centred principles. Valuing children also means valuing the workers (paid staff and volunteers) who are responsible for their well-being.

NCVCCO members are required to support a set of principles in their own practices. This booklet looks at how those child centred principles can be translated into practical action. Each of the following chapters will focus on one of the principles and will provide an example to help explain how these principles can be applied in different contexts. Some of these examples are taken from community projects that have developed their own safe practices. We hope these examples will inspire you to come up with your own ideas that will meet the needs of the children and young people in your projects.



Extra Information

Creating Magic: a celebration of innovative projects developed by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, tackling child poverty from the ground up, compiled and published by Community Links





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Pitstop 2000 Halifax provides an example of a project where young people are involved in assessing and managing risk. The project runs go-karting sessions and a small number of young people have the responsibilities of running the event on site and ensuring the safety of participants and spectators.

In any activity there is an element of risk. However, the task for any project or organisation is to assess any hazards (anything that can cause harm) and decide the level of risk (the chance, high or low, that somebody will be harmed). This is called a risk assessment and it will help you to think carefully about how safe your organisation is and enable you to discuss whether more needs to be done to promote the well-being of children, young people and workers within your organisation. A risk assessment involves making judgements about the balance between risks and benefits. Social and psychological factors are also important.



How to assess and manage risk

We cannot completely remove all possibility of risk from children's and young people's lives, but we can make sure that we have done as much as possible to minimise or manage the risk of anyone coming to harm without jeopardising or undermining the service or project itself.

It is likely that your organisation will already be engaged in good practice. But to make sure that the safeguarding needs of the children and young people in your organisation are formally recognised we would encourage you to have a thorough look at your organisation. This will give you a real understanding of situations where children, young people and workers are potentially vulnerable and will highlight where potential harm or injury is most likely to happen. This will make safe practice more real to your organisation and will enable you to understand which policies and practices you really need to safeguard.

We suggest that you look at the child centred principles advocated here in this booklet. Think about the safeguarding suggestions outlined in each chapter. What would help your organisation implement these suggestions, and what is stopping you doing so? What could be done to improve your organisation's strengths and reduce weaknesses? How do these suggestions and recommendations apply to your organisation's values and principles?



Carrying out a risk assessment

The people best placed to assess risks involved in a role or activity are the people who carry it out on a regular basis. It makes sense to involve a wide range of people in the process: children and young people; the workers and the users of your service.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides a very helpful, free guide called *Five Steps to Risk Assessment*. These five steps focus on:

- Looking for the hazards
- Deciding who might be harmed
- Deciding the risks (high, low or medium) to see whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more needs to be done
- Recording your findings and what action might need to be taken
- Review and revise your assessment

As a starting point:

People

- Children and young people are not normally left unattended
- An adequate number of workers of both sexes are needed to supervise activities; which varies according to the age of the child, for example, there needs to be one worker for every eight children between five and eight years old
- Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment needs constant adult supervision, training and protective clothing, where necessary
- All methods of transport need to be risk assessed
- Parental consent is necessary for activities of the organisation as is information about child allergies, medical problems and any special needs
- Respect for privacy of children and young people is essential and you will need to think about this in terms of areas such as changing rooms, showers and toilets and give thought to activities such as overnight stays

Places

- Buildings being used need to be safe and should meet required standards
- Toilets, shower areas and washing facilities are up to standard
- There should be sufficient heating and ventilation
- Fire precautions need to be in place
- First aid facilities must be readily available and adequate
- Equipment must be adequate and checked regularly
- There needs to be access to a phone
- Insurance cover should be adequate and cover all necessary activities, transport used and public liability

Make sure you don't discriminate against disabled workers, children or young people and consider what reasonable adjustments you should make to your workplace keeping in mind that a workplace that is accessible to disabled people is safe and more accessible for everyone.



Extra Information

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

The Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999

The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005

Health and Safety Commission (HSC) provides health and safety information, and access to advice and guidance.
www.hse.gov.uk or 08701 545500

***The Dignity of Risk: a practical handbook for professionals working with disabled children and their families.* Council for Disabled Children, 8 Wakley Street London, EC1V 7QE, 2004.**
Tel: 020 7843 6061

***Risk Management:* by Kathryn Dickie, Volunteering England, 2003.**
Tel: 0845 305 6979

***Keeping it Safe: a young person-centred approach to safety and child protection,* a NCVYS publication which includes a risk assessment model. Tel: 020 7235 1010**

***Our Duty to Care: the principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people,* Department of Health and Children, the Republic of Ireland, 2002.**
www.dohc.ie/publications/our_duty_to_care.html



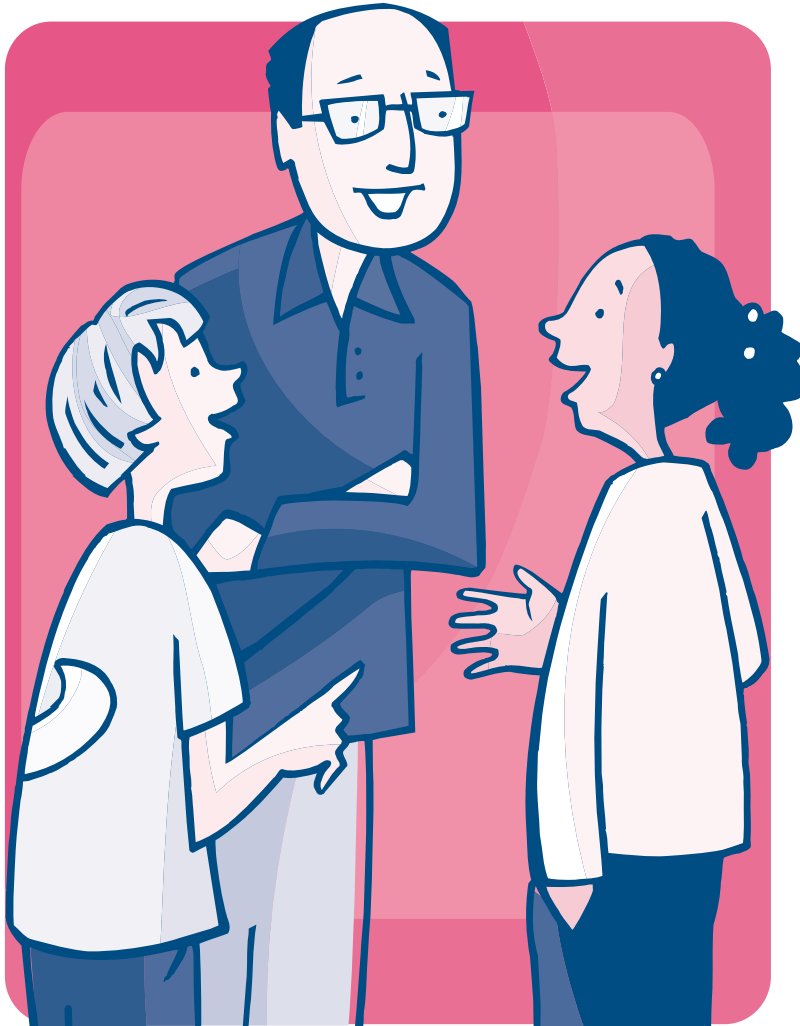
Safeguarding Checklist:

Write down a key hazard and the risk (high, medium & low) that comes to mind within your organisation **in the absence of:**

	Hazard (anything that can cause harm)	Risk (High, medium or low)	Action Required
Including children & young people in the safeguarding process			
Recruitment, supervision & training of staff & volunteers			
A Code of conduct for workers, parents & children			
A Whistleblowing & complaints policy			
Child Protection			
Equal opportunities			

Chapter 2: Including children and young people in the safeguarding process

Children have a right to be listened to and heard. Their views, however communicated, should always be respected and taken seriously.



The Involving Young Citizens Equally Partnership (IYCE) Kirklees was established in 1997 to develop ways in which children and young people could influence the practice, provision and policy development of local public services. The initiative aims to change services from within, creating long-term cultural change that values involvement of children and young people as a routine way of working. A young persons' panel was set up by the Project to make joint decisions with adults about the allocation of Local Network Fund grants in Yorkshire and Humberside.

You should be placing the views of children and young people at the centre of the safeguarding process. Using this approach will help to ensure that your organisation has a culture of honesty and openness, and that key safety issues are identified by children and young people. Think about how you can involve children and young people in the different activities of your organisation as you work to make it safe. For this to be successful:

- Make it interesting and fun!
- Make it rewarding
- Think about involving a wide range of children and young people on an on-going basis, so that their participation is really meaningful to the organisation

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- Think about how they will be elected or selected and their potential roles or responsibilities
- Use plain language which is jargon free
- Provide clear and helpful information so that children and young people can decide whether or not they want to be involved
- Give time and provide support so that the child or young person can talk about and think through options in an honest, non judgemental environment which is comfortable, accessible, private and appropriate to their culture
- Take into account any additional needs that a young person might have
- Provide access to a supporter to help them represent their views
- Allow children and young people to pull out at any time
- Think about the individual roles and responsibilities of adults involved in the process



Extra Information

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm

Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE)
 Tel: 020 7278 8222 or e-mail: info@crae.org.uk
 or visit www.crae.org.uk

Taking Part Toolkit: promoting the 'real' participation of children and young people, Northwest Children's Taskforce
<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/researchpublications/participation.html>



Safeguarding Checklist:

What progress has been made and how and where in:

	Much progress	Some progress	Little progress	Action required
Listening to children				
Supporting children to express their views				
Taking children's views into account				
Involving children in decision making processes				
Enabling children to share power & responsibility for decision making				

Chapter 3: Recruitment, supervision and training for staff and volunteers

The quality of services to children depends on the support to, and the skill and commitment of those who deliver them, whether paid or unpaid



Community Link-Up London runs an integrated club where users with learning disabilities can meet and socialise with people from the wider community. Here, an induction programme is required for all the new volunteers recruited to take part in the club's activities. This includes interviews with volunteers (and their parents or carers for those under 18) and taking up references and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.



Eight steps to recruiting safely

Rigorous procedures will help send out a message that your organisation is a safe place for children and families. When recruiting, make sure that the person responsible for recruitment has had appropriate training.

Do all your paid and unpaid staff:

1. Complete an application form?
2. Provide at least two references?
3. Produce two pieces of identification?
4. Attend an interview?
5. Have an induction and receive training?
6. Have a trial period?
7. Receive regular supervision and appraisal?
8. Have a CRB check if they are in regular contact with children?

Step 1: Application form

An application form can help answer the following questions:

- What experience does the applicant have of working with children and young people?
- What is the job history of the applicant?
- Are there any gaps that are not explained?

When designing an application form make sure that it is not too complex as you will not want to lose potentially good people who found the form too complicated to complete.

The form should include:

1. Name and address of applicant
2. Ask whether the applicant has previously worked as a volunteer or paid worker with children, families or young people. If the applicant provides an incorrect or misleading answer, you would be entitled to ask for more information and choose to end the recruitment process, if necessary.
3. Applicants will need to declare any past criminal convictions or cases pending against them. They will need to sign a statement that they believe there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with children or young people. The statement could read *"Because the work involves contact with children and young people you*

are required by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 to declare all convictions, including spent convictions".

4. Include a statement that any information declared about convictions will be treated in confidence and will not be used to unfairly prejudice the applicant's possible recruitment. A statement expressing an organisation's willingness to consider ex-offenders should be included with all job information sent to applicants, for example, *"Having a conviction will not necessarily prevent you from working for this organisation"*. Your organisation must have a clear policy which says which applicants are unsuitable.

The form should be supported by a:

1. Job/role description
Draw up a clear and concise description of the job and role. Check with people who have done the job, other agencies working with children, young people and families about the content. It should include a summary of the main purpose of the job, and a list of tasks
2. Person specification
Draw up a short list of "essential" and "desirable" qualities, experience and skills

Step 2: References

Applicants should provide references from

- An organisation that has knowledge of the person's work with children and young people and
- The last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work

There may be applicants who have not worked with children before. You can have some simple guidelines to help you assess their suitability and ensure that they are not excluded from consideration:

- A referee should not be a family member
- The referee should know the applicant in a professional capacity or from within the local community
- Ask how long the applicant has known the referee
- Make it clear that the referee can call to discuss the reference further
- Include a contact number so that referees can call to discuss any worries or queries that they might have
- Always follow up references to make sure that referees are genuine and give them the opportunity to say something which they might not have included in the reference

Step 3: Identification

These confirm the identity and address of the applicant. One of these should include a photo, for example, a driving licence or passport. Other acceptable forms of identification are bank statements or utility bills.

Step 4: The interview

- At least two people should interview; they should reflect the nature of the organisation, the community and the background of the person applying for the post
- If you include parents or children and young people on the interview panel you will need to think carefully about how they are included, how you prepare them and their influence in the decision making process
- Everyone on the panel should be properly prepared and have appropriate training
- Agree a format for the interview and questions in advance
- Questions should be relevant to the job/role description, fair, open and asked of all candidates
- Probe attitudes towards children and young people and values around protecting children and young people
- Ask the candidate if they have a criminal record. If the answer is yes, ask if the conviction affects their suitability to work with children and young people? Details about convictions should only be requested from people invited to interview

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- Candidates should be told in writing that relevant convictions will be discussed at the interview in order to assess job related risks
- Explain references about police checks, agree what will happen next and when you expect to be in touch again, check that you have the correct contact details

Interviews are not the only way of finding out whether a candidate is suitable. Role plays or group exercises, for example can assess how people interact with others.

Be aware of the following common mistakes made in interviews:

Be aware of your own reactions to the candidate's age, sex, accent, appearance or personality

Make sure you do not make a personal decision about a candidate's suitability too early on in the interview

Step 5: Screening for criminal convictions

There are two ways of finding out if a potential worker has ever been convicted of a criminal offence

- Ask the applicant – in the application form and in the interview
- Ask the Criminal Records Bureau to check for a criminal record

Potentially good people are being turned down because they declared minor or irrelevant offences that took place a long time ago. Keep in mind that a third of males has a conviction by the age of 30.

- Is the conviction relevant to the job?
- How serious is the offence?
- Does the candidate have a pattern of offending behaviours?
- Have the applicant's circumstances changed?
- What are the circumstances surrounding the offence?
- Where did this offence take place, in the UK?

You can always say "no" to an unsuitable candidate. It is best if you can lead applicants to come to this conclusion on their own. If this does not work, it is important to tell applicants exactly why you think they are not suitable for the work.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

The Criminal Records Bureau provides information on criminal records. Checks should not be done on all applicants, only on the person who has been selected after interview and found most suitable and only with their written consent. For those already working for your organisation, and who have not been checked, you would need to think about whether they too need to be checked. Checks should be obtained on all paid and unpaid staff who will be working with children and young people before they begin any unsupervised work with children and young people.

At present, there are two levels of vetting (checks): the 'Standard' disclosure and 'Enhanced' disclosure.

Standard disclosure – for positions that involve working with children. It contains details of all convictions on record and details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings.

Enhanced disclosure – for posts involving greater contact with children, which might include regularly caring for, training or supervising or being in sole charge of children.

Given current problems with the subtle and unclear distinction between Standard and Enhanced disclosures it has been recommended that all posts that involve working with children should be subject to the Enhanced Disclosure regime.

To obtain a check an organisation needs to register with the CRB or apply through a registered umbrella body. An application for a check can be done via a local umbrella body registered

with the CRB, and these are listed on the CRB website www.crb.gov.uk.

If you do register, you will need to comply with the CRB/SCRO Code of Practice. The purpose of this Code of practice is to ensure that sensitive, personal information is handled and stored appropriately and is kept only for as long as is necessary.

It is important to keep in mind that carrying out a CRB check is the **minimum** safeguard used to prevent unsuitable people obtaining positions with children. Potential abusers will often not have been previously convicted of a related offence. Screening is only a small part of good practice in this area. It is a minimum requirement because a check cannot predict the future.

Step 6: Induction and trial period:

*The Children at Risk Project (CARP) **Wolverhampton** recruits, trains and develops skills of volunteers locally. A series of induction days welcomes new volunteers to the project and each is given a training manual. Regular training events are held for volunteers, both by CARP themselves and through partnerships with outside agencies.*

Induction is initial training giving to someone who starts a new post. It will give workers:

- A better understanding of the organisation: its purpose, values and services

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- A better understanding of how their work fits into the aims of the organisation

What to include in induction

- The role, responsibilities and expectations of the job and its limitations
- The structure, history and values of the organisation and the services it provides
- The organisation's policies and procedures, including its safeguarding and child protection policies
- Meeting other staff and volunteers
- The skills needed for the work and resources available to support the worker

A trial period (or probationary period) is a length of time given to a person in a new post to see if they are suitable. If the trial period doesn't work out, the organisation can release them. Trial periods also allow the staff member or volunteer to decide if the job comes up to expectation. Paid and voluntary appointments usually have a trial period, often three months, that can be extended if there are concerns on either side. Only confirm an appointment if you are satisfied that the person is suitable.

Step 7: Supervision

This is a time for workers to reflect on their own development and issues which affect their work, including concerns in the workplace. It will enable problems to be shared and dealt with at an early stage. Paid workers should have supervision once a

month. Because the people who volunteer usually have little extra time on their hands, it is sometimes more difficult to arrange formal supervision. However, this is not an excuse for supervision not taking place at all.

Volunteers should know who their supervisor or support person is. If working with a large number of volunteers, it may be appropriate to run group supervision as well as individual supervision. Individual supervision should be held at least once every three months. Supervision of volunteers could be a debrief after a session where any particular needs can be followed up. The relevant supervisor could drop in on a session to see how it is going and get a feel for any difficulties, problems or achievements that are happening.

Step 8: Appraisal and training

This should take place once or twice a year. It provides an opportunity to look in more detail at how workers feel, and allows for discussion on career development. It allows the supervisor and worker to raise any concerns that may have built up over a period of time. It also provides an opportunity to review any changes in the personal circumstances of workers for example, any family or health problems.

Appraisals can provide an opportunity to check that workers feel confident about using policies and procedures and to identify training gaps and a programme or courses that will meet the worker's training needs. Workers undertaking specialist roles, for example, interviewing, need to be provided with appropriate training.



Extra information

Criminal Justice & Court Services Act 2000

Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

Police Act 1997

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Safeguarding Children: safer recruitment in education settings, DfES, 2005. <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Safer%20recruitment.pdf>

Safer Recruitment, an online training package developed in response to recommendation 16 of the Richard Inquiry report <http://www.ncsl.org.uk>

Criminal Records Bureau www.crb.gov.uk or www.disclosure.gov.uk

CRB Overseas Enquiry Line: 08700 100 450

Selecting Volunteers, Recruitment and Retention of Disabled People, Kate Bowgett, Volunteering England

Recruitment and Retention of Disabled People: A good practice guide for early years, childcare and playwork providers, 2003. <http://www.surestart.gov.uk>

Safe from Harm, 1993 (Home Office)

The Warner Report, *Choosing with Care*, 1992.



Safeguarding Checklist:

Have a look at the 8 steps to recruiting safely. Do all your paid and unpaid staff:

	Paid Yes	Paid Action required	Unpaid Yes	Unpaid Action required
Complete an application form				
Provide at least 2 references				
Produce 2 pieces of identification				
Attend an interview				
Have an induction and receive training				
Receive regular supervision and appraisal				
Have a criminal records check if they are in regular contact with children?				

Chapter 4: Code of conduct for workers, parents and children and young people

Children and young people have the right to the means to develop a personal identity, self respect, and awareness of their own worth and a sense of responsibility,

Two key pillars of a safeguarding culture are a rigorous risk assessment, and a Code of Conduct. It is essential that everyone involved in your organisation knows what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. Creating a safeguarding culture within an organisation is much easier if everyone is fully aware of the behaviour and conduct that is expected from all.

A Code of Conduct should help workers avoid getting into situations where they may make themselves vulnerable and open to false accusations and will encourage paid staff and volunteers and children and young people to become alert to potential situations of abuse and danger, and to report concerns and unacceptable behaviour.

A Code of Conduct should:

- Be simple and straightforward and not include too many rules!
- Involve children and young people, parents, carers, and workers in its development
- Take into account safeguarding concerns including bullying, discrimination, violence, aggression, abusive behaviour and language
- Include a statement on your organisation's policy on smoking, alcohol and drugs

Continued Overleaf...



- Include rules on appropriate physical behaviour and social relationships with children and young people
- Give people the confidence to carry out their roles and develop positive relationships with children and young people
- Avoid being a negative list of rules and include positive statements about how your organisation expects workers to act towards children
- Include details of what will happen if a child, young person or paid or unpaid staff breaks any aspect of the Code: everybody should be given the opportunity to decide and agree on what should happen if aspects of the Code are broken
- Be supported by an incident book which records whether a child or young person or worker is affected by a breach of the Code of Conduct. This will enable you to keep a check on repeated patterns of behaviour
- Be made known to all paid staff and volunteers, children and young people using the organisations as well as their parents or carers
- Be displayed or shown to everyone associated with the organisation
- Regularly be updated

EXAMPLES OF STATEMENTS ABOUT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

- No shouting
- No smacking
- No discriminative or bad language/abusive comments
- Nobody should be disrespectful to anybody else
- Avoid any physical contact when alone with a child

EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE STATEMENTS

- Be good role models for children and young people
- Listen to children and young people
- Praise children and young people for good behaviour



Notes:

If you have a Code of Conduct does it:

	Yes	In Progress	No
Remain simple, straightforward and not too long			
Include the ideas of the children and young people in your organisation			
Include concerns around bullying, discrimination, violence, aggression, abusive behaviour and language			
Include a statement on your organisation's policy on smoking, alcohol and drugs?			
Include rules on appropriate physical behaviour & social relationships with children & young people			

Chapter 5: Child protection

Children and young people have a right to protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation

East Cleveland Youth Housing Project Saltburn aims to provide a network of affordable accommodation for young people in housing need. The Project drafted a Child Protection policy and circulated this to at least a dozen people by email and amendments and updates were incorporated into a final policy that had input from project users. For this project the process of establishing a child protection policy was important in focussing attention on the ethos and values underpinning their work.

An important aspect of safeguarding children and young people is to protect them from abuse and neglect – this is known as child protection. By having an open environment and the correct policies and procedures in place you will help give people the confidence to speak out if they are concerned about or are the victim of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse including bullying or racial abuse.

To help children, young people and workers raise concerns about abuse you will need:

- Written procedures dealing with child protection issues
- A named person within or acting on behalf of your organisation
- Training for all workers on child protection





Written procedures

These will need to be clear, practical and user friendly, easily available and familiar to all workers.

They will need to include:

- The ways in which possible or actual abuse may become evident to staff or volunteers
- Who the named person is with responsibility for safeguarding and/or child protection within your organisation and how they can be contacted. A named person is recommended in guidance from Government
- The details of an independent person available for a child or young person to speak to

Clear guidelines on:

- How you might recognise abuse, to include brief examples of physical, sexual, emotional and racial abuse, neglect and bullying
- How you should respond to any anxieties about a child or young person suffering abuse and how concerns will be dealt with by the organisation, to include recording, storing or sharing information
- What to do and say if a child tells of being abused
- How to respond to allegations of abuse against someone not working in the organisation

- What action to take if a child or young person shows signs of being abused but is not making an allegation
- What you must do if a child or young person shows evidence of unexplained physical injuries
- Information on how paid staff and volunteers will be treated if an allegation is made against them
- Barriers and reactions to child abuse

Any procedures must make it clear that we all have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people and to protect them from child abuse. All workers should be made aware that abusers are not just strangers. They can include parents, carers, family members, friends, people in positions of trust and authority, other children or young people.



Confidentiality

Confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.



The named person

All organisations need to choose a named person. The role of the named person is to:

- Ensure that the child protection policy and procedures in the organisation are working well by making sure that everyone in the organisation knows what these are
- Receive information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns
- Record the information
- Consult with a statutory child protection agency such as the local Children's Services department or health board or the NSPCC helpline to discuss any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns
- Be aware of the role of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (formerly Area Child Protection Committees) and the existence of local child protection procedures
- Know the relevant contact numbers and addresses of the local statutory agencies: Children's Services, the Police, Health Authorities, Schools, if appropriate in order to discuss any anxieties or concerns or, if necessary, make a formal referral
- Provide information about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people

It is not the role of the named person to decide whether or not a child has been abused. This is the task of the Children's Social Services department who have the legal responsibility, or of the NSPCC who also have powers to investigate child protection concerns.



Training

Basic training in child protection will be needed by all of those working with children and young people appropriate to their role. This will reinforce workers understanding of your child protection policy. An organisation's child protection policy and issues relating to it should be explored further in supervision.



Extra Information

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

Sex Offenders Act 1997

Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000

Sexual Offences Act 2003

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: children's services guidance, DH et al 2003

Firstcheck: a step by step guide for organisations to safeguard children, NSPCC Tel: 0116 234 7200 or e-mail consultancy@nspcc.org.uk. Further NSPCC child protection training resources can be obtained from NSPCC Publications 020 7825 7422 or email publications@nspcc.org.uk

A Working Manual for Child Protection and Safe Practice: Children's Child Protection Advisory Service www.childprotectionuk.net Tel: 0845 120 4550

Safe Children Sound Learning, Guidance for Madressahs: Kirklees Metropolitan Council, Community Education and Regeneration 2003

Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Asian Child Protection helpline:

Bengali: 0800-096-7714;

Gujerati: 0800-096-7715;

Hindi: 0800-096-7716;

Punjabi: 0800-096-7717;

Urdu: 0800-096-7718;

To speak to an Asian adviser in English: 0800-096-7719

ChildLine offers a free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in the UK on 0800 1111

Parentline Plus free helpline: 0808 800 2222

This helpline offers confidential 24-hour service for anyone looking after a child – parent, stepparent, grandparent, stepgrandparent, or foster carer.



Useful information

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service has produced a free pocket guide, 'Stay Safe on the Net', which gives tips to children & young people on what and what not to do when online. Contact: CCPAS 0845 120 45 50

WhoCares?Trust have developed a computer game for children and young people on Internet safety called Internet security game. www.thewhocarestrust.org/carezone.htm

NCH Net Smart rules for children, young people and their parents or carers: www.nch.org.uk



Safe use of new technology

Child protection concerns have been raised about the use of new technology. There has been a lot of publicity about the dangers of the internet and chat rooms, but there is also a new generation of mobile phone technology that could expose children and young people to potentially dangerous situations.



Internet Safety

A number of organisations provide useful advice on safe use of the Internet. Action in Rural Sussex makes the following suggestions in its booklet *How to Develop Child Protection Policies and Procedures – A step-by Step Guide for Community Groups*

- Place the computer where everyone can use it and where everyone can see it, whether at home or in your own organisation
- Supervise use of the Internet
- Talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit and discuss why some sites are dangerous
- Inform children that chat sites are open to misuse and they should apply the same "street wise" rules on the Internet as when they are out and about
- Advise children and young people never to give out personal details over the Internet e.g. surname, address, phone number or e-mail address

- Advise children never to arrange a face to face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the Internet
- Encourage children to report anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive or makes them feel uncomfortable
- Limit the amount of time children spend online
- Explore the use of filters which block access to certain sites (although remember that these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace proper supervision)

Your organisation will need to think about and address safe use of the Internet by workers. An appropriate time to discuss this might be during the induction period of a worker and during supervision. You could also think about discussing this when drawing up or reviewing your Code of Conduct, and think about do's and don'ts and possible sanctions.



New mobile phone technology

Mobile phone technology is developing fast. Mobiles are now packed with all sorts of products and services, including picture messaging, video clips, games and Internet access. Children and young people can now use their phone to look things up or obtain information in much the same way as they can on a personal computer. That means that they can be exposed to unsuitable sites, for example, gambling or pornographic sites through their phones. In addition, there has been a growth of mobile phone bullying through texting and picture messaging that can be very distressing.

The use of mobile phones may be part of your organisation's Code of Conduct; you may feel it would be appropriate to set down similar guidelines to internet use. For example:

- Discuss with the young person what they wish to use their mobile for
- Find out whether they download ringtones or games directly from their mobile whilst at your project or on your premises
- Discuss with the children and young people any content you would be unhappy for them to download, receive or share with others whilst at your project
- If a child or young person is persistently contacted by a stranger via messages or any other form of content such as pictures, you should report it to the young person's parents, and discuss with them reporting it to the police, taking a note of the number and saving the message(s) or picture(s)
- Make sure any phones which have had the content control bar lifted are kept away from children, for example, there may be work phones accessible to children and young people



Safeguarding Checklist:

Does it contain clear guidelines on how to:

	Yes	No	Action required
Recognise abuse – including examples			
Respond to any concerns about a child or young person suffering abuse and how concerns will be dealt with by the organisation			
Provide information on how paid and unpaid staff will be treated if an allegation is made against them			
Be aware of barriers and reactions to child abuse			
Store information on child protection			
Raise awareness of and disseminate the Child Protection policy			
Contact the relevant individual(s) regarding concerns			

If children and young people have access to the internet or use mobile phones:

	Yes	No	Action required
Are computers placed where everyone can see it/them?			
Is use of the internet supervised when used by children and young people or paid staff and volunteers?			
Do children and young people have the opportunity to learn about potential mis-use of the internet/mobile either via children and young people or by those who they come across when using surfing the net or phoning/texting?			

Chapter 6: Whistleblowing and complaints



Children need both a committed adult to stand alongside them and procedures through which they can challenge decisions or actions with which they are unhappy

“The essence of a whistleblowing system is that staff should be able to by-pass the direct management line, because that may well be the area about which their concerns arise, and that they should be able to go outside the organisation, if they feel the overall management is engaged in improper course” Lord Nolan, The Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Are children, young people and workers involved in your organisation aware of what to do if they have worries and supported if they do? There are different ways in which your organisation can help give people the confidence and opportunity to speak or act if they are unhappy about something within the organisation. By setting up systems where people are able to speak openly or in confidence, you have already gone a long way to making your organisation a safe one where bad practice is discouraged.

Supervision and appraisal is one way which allows workers to raise concerns. The following are other ways to create an atmosphere of openness and trust within your organisation and allow people to raise concerns.

Whistleblowing and complaining are very different

- Whistleblowing occurs when a worker or volunteer raises a concern about potential danger or illegality that they have witnessed through work
- A complaint is lodged by a worker, volunteer, member of the public, service user or service user's relative when they feel that they have personally been wronged and are seeking a resolution

Making a distinction between whistleblowing and complaints is important to ensure your organisation understands how to respond and that people are not confused about the best way to take forward an issue.

Whistleblowing

A whistleblowing policy makes it clear that reports of malpractice are taken seriously by an organisation, therefore encouraging paid and unpaid staff to come forward should they wish to raise a concern, even if that eventually means having to by-pass senior management. An effective policy should protect both the whistleblower and the organisation by outlining a simple process for raising concerns.

- Unlawful misconduct – some examples might be accepting bribes or assaulting children and young people
- Financial malpractice – it could be anything from stealing from the petty cash to full-blown fraud
- Dangers to the public or
- Dangers to the environment or to the safety of people in your project

Training will be needed so that everyone knows what is meant by whistleblowing and the procedures to be followed if a worker decides to blow the whistle. You will need to ensure that any whistleblower's concerns are taken seriously, and properly and objectively investigated, with appropriate action taken.

Your whistleblowing policy could include:

- A definition of whistleblowing: what it is and why it is important to your organisation
- Those who are covered by the policy (i.e. paid and unpaid staff)
- How to know if someone is blowing the whistle – how to sort out what is gossip, informal concerns or a genuine approach
- A statement encouraging people to blow the whistle, saying that victimisation or harassment by others will not be tolerated. It is important to emphasise that whistleblowers' jobs will not be threatened by raising a concern in good faith, without personal gain, even if their concerns are shown to be unfounded at a later date
- How concerns can be raised and who they can be raised with in the organisation and why the organisation would prefer the matter to be raised internally. How to raise the matter in writing, via email, telephone hotline.
- What to do next and how to raise the matter at a more senior level if necessary
- Other ways of raising concerns such as a telephone 'hotline' to an independent body agreed by the organisation
- A confidentiality policy is vital – both for the whistle-blower and any staff or others involved in the allegation

- How the organisation will approach a situation where a whistleblower's identity must be made public
- How the organisation will deal with being approached anonymously
- How the organisation will report back or inform the whistleblower about the outcome or any action which has or will take place
- How staff or others involved in the allegation will be treated
- How the organisation views false complaints and what disciplinary procedures will be taken against someone who deliberately raises a malicious concern

Complaints and concerns

In addition to a whistleblowing policy it is important to have a general complaints policy that everyone knows about. People, users and workers of the service, have the right to raise concerns or complaints, not just about those major issues, but covering day to day or service-related concerns. You will need to think about:

- What exactly is a complaint?
- What can children, parents or workers do if they have a complaint?
- How will you reassure those who have made the complaint? How will you keep them informed of what you will do about it? How will you tell them when you will act upon it?
- Will you provide a timetable for dealing with a complaint? What procedure will you have in place if a complaint is not dealt with straight away?
- What if the person who has made the complaint is not happy about the outcome?

- Who should complaints go to? Is this the same person as the named person who has overall responsibility for child protection?
- What complaints systems will your organisation put in place so that those who might have a complaint feel able to do so, for example, a complaints form or an anonymous complaints box?
- How will you make children, parents and workers aware that you have a system in place for reporting complaints and concerns?
- How will your organisation gather the information and keep an eye on whether a pattern is occurring?
- What support will you provide for those wanting to make a complaint?
- How will you address any impact a complaint has had on workers, children and young people?
- How will records of complaints be kept?

It is good practice to circulate a complaints policy to parents and carers of the children and young people who use the organisation and to all workers.



Extra Information

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Public Concern at Work (PCaW) provides free help to prospective whistleblowers, advises on whistleblowing laws and helps organisations create a culture where it is safe and accepted for workers to blow the whistle. www.pcaw.co.uk

Policy Pot – Whistleblowing: guidelines to setting up a policy on whistleblowing, People in Aid, 2002. www.peopleinaid.org



Safeguarding Checklist:

Do you have a whistleblowing policy?

Yes

No

Action Required

Do you have a complaints policy?

Yes

No

Action Required

Chapter 7: Equal opportunities

Disadvantages such as poverty, racism and discrimination hinder children's development



Play Care Company, Croydon recognises that certain groups and individuals are at risk of being unfairly discriminated against for many reasons, including: age, appearance, class, colour, criminal conviction, culture, disability, employment status, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, health (mental or physical), nationality, political belief, race, religious belief, sexuality or size. It will not employ staff or volunteers who openly condone and/or implement such discrimination and service users who behave in a discriminatory way risk having their places withdrawn. Every aspect of the Playcare Company's work and services is informed and enhanced by equality issues. Thus, its various policies each incorporate equality issues. Staff and committee members are enabled and supported in challenging any behaviour or ways of doing things which go against the policy or the spirit of the policy.

Children and young people have the right to be protected from discrimination. This right should be running through all the activities run and decisions made within your organisation. In the same way, both staff and volunteers, parents and carers or potential workers involved in your organisation should not be discriminated against in anyway. For this reason, your organisation will need to have a statement which fits in with the purpose and values of your organisation. This statement will be of little value if it is not applied to **all** the safeguarding policies and procedures of your organisation.



Extra Information

Equality Direct provides advice on a range of equality issues.
Tel: 0845 600 3444

Making Equality Simple: a plain English guide to the 2003 Employment Equality Regulations on religion, belief and sexual orientation for voluntary and community organisations, Anne Hayfield and Mohammed Abdul Aziz, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), 2005. www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/625/making%20equal%20simp.pdf

Writing an Equal Opportunities Policy: Resource Centre, Brighton www.resourcecentre.org.uk



Safeguarding Checklist:

Identify 3 ways in which your organisation promotes equal opportunity.
Identify 2 other ways you think your organisation could promote equal opportunity, taking into account the titles of the previous chapters on safeguarding.

Chapter 8: Working towards a safeguarding policy statement

Services provided must be determined by the needs of the children and families and not by the availability of resources to the voluntary sector

You will now be in a position to draw up a safeguarding policy statement. This policy statement summarises your commitment to safeguarding children, young people and your workers and how you go about doing so. It should be published widely and brought to the attention of:

- Children and young people
- Parents and carers
- Funders or insurers, if necessary

This statement is only worthwhile if the commitment it makes to safeguarding is being put into practice.

It will need to include:

- The name of the organisation and its objectives or activities
- The principles/values, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy
- A sentence explaining that it is the duty of all paid workers and volunteers to safeguard children and young people

Continued Overleaf...



NCVCCO Safeguarding Children Project is jointly funded by Lloyds TSB Foundation and Department for Education and Skills. It has been set up in response to child care and family organisations' concern at the number of new regulatory bodies, disclosure checks and training requirements needed to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people. This project works with NCVCCO members, the ten NCVCCO regional groups, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) and the NSPCC to raise awareness of key issues around safeguarding children.

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