



## Safeguarding

### Introduction

ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC believes that all children have the right to enjoy activities of the group in a happy, secure and safe environment.

The abuse of children and young people (physically, emotionally, sexually and neglect) is a reality that every body should be aware of. Children and young people may be abused regardless of their age, gender, religious beliefs, race, sexual orientation, culture or ability. They are usually abused by people they know and trust.

All those working with children and young people in community groups may be able to provide an important link in identifying individuals who have been or are at risk of being harmed in this way. The procedures produced here are by no means comprehensive and do not attempt to provide answers to all the questions which abuse raises but does attempt to offer a practical outline of fundamental principles and good practice.

In 1993 the government produced “Safe from Harm”, a code of practice for adults working with children and young people, as a framework to base their activities to minimise the chances of abuse taking place. This policy is based on this code of practice.

All volunteers, parents and staff of ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC must become familiar with and rigorously implement the following policy.

*ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC is committed to the protection of children and the safeguarding of their welfare, we are totally committed to the right of all children to grow, develop and thrive in a safe, caring environment.*

Protecting children from abuse is an integral part of the policy and practice of the entire organisation’s work.



### **Acknowledging Youths CIC**

Registered Community Interest Company No. 7912772 | ASDAN Centre Number 34218

UK Registrar of Learning Providers (UKPRN) 10036705

Pimlico Resource Centre, Walston House, Aylesford Street, London SW1V 3RL

ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC recognises that good management requires everyone to be clear about what the organisation is trying to achieve, and agree aims and policy statements for that purpose.

- All our policy statements will be brought to the attention of all new paid staff and volunteers, who should also be informed of any guidelines or training which will enable them to implement the policy statement.
- *Work in partnership with parents / carers of children wherever possible and encourage an open, honest and non-judgemental channel of communication by providing information that will help parents and children exercise their choice.*

*Ensure that all our service is provided in a manner that respects as far as possible the dignity, pride and identity of the children.*

*Ensure that all children are treated equally and will not be discriminated on the basis of their culture, race, religion, language, gender or disability.*

*Ensure that all members are aware of the procedures through which they may raise concerns and express their concerns about the welfare of children.*

*Ensure that an effective, open and accountable complaints procedure is made available to the children/parents/carers and that any dissatisfaction of services is responded to and acted on in a speedy, effective and open manner.*

*Monitor the appropriateness and quality of services and, where necessary, seek the use and operation of the Local Authority Child Protection Register.*

We will where possible work in co-operation with other agencies to ensure that the safety and welfare of the children comes first and is paramount to our aims and objectives. All organisations who work with Spanish Portuguese Speakers Parents Group must abide by this Child Protection Policy.

**Definition of Child Abuse** *As defined by the Children's Act 1998:*

*NEGLECT as the persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non organic failure to thrive.*

*PHYSICAL INJURY is the actual or likely physical injury to a child or young person or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child.*



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*SEXUAL ABUSE is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or young person.*

*EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection.*

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any non-accidental physical injury to a child. Even if the parent or caretaker who inflicts the injury might not have intended to hurt the child, the injury is not considered an accident if the caretaker's actions were intentional. This injury may be the result of any assault on a child's body, such as:

- Beating, whipping, paddling, punching, slapping, or hitting
- Pushing, shoving, shaking, kicking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking, or hair-pulling
- Burning with cigarettes, scalding water, or other hot objects.
- Severe physical punishment that is inappropriate to child's age

Corporal (physical) punishment is distinguished from physical abuse in that physical punishment is the use of physical force with the intent of inflicting bodily pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control. Physical abuse is an injury that results from physical aggression. However, physical punishment easily gets out of control and can become physical abuse. Corporal punishment is against the law in schools in some states, but not in others. In many families, physical punishment is the norm.

Hundreds of thousands of children are physically abused each year by someone close to them, and thousands of children die from the injuries. For those who survive, the emotional scars are deeper than the physical scars.

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Sexual abuse of a child is any sexual act between an adult and a child. This includes:
- Fondling, touching, or kissing a child's genitals
- Making the child fondle the adult's genitals
- Penetration, intercourse, incest, rape, oral sex or sodomy



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- Exposing the child to adult sexuality in other forms (showing sex organs to a child, forced observation of sexual acts, showing pornographic material, telling "dirty" stories, group sex including a child)
- Other privacy violations (forcing the child to undress, spying on a child in the bathroom or bedroom)
- Sexual exploitation
- Enticing children to pornographic sites or material on the Internet
- Luring children through the Internet to meet for sexual liaisons
- Exposing children to pornographic movies or magazines
- Child prostitution
- Using a child in the production of pornography, such as a film or magazine

The above acts are considered child abuse when they are committed by a relative or by a caretaker, such as a parent, babysitter, or day care provider, whether inside the home or apart from the home. (If a stranger commits the act, it is called sexual assault.) Sexual abuse is especially complicated because of the power differential between the adult and child, because of the negotiations that must occur between adult and child, and because the child has no way to assimilate the experience into a mature understanding of intimacy. Regardless of the child's behaviour or reactions, it is the responsibility of the adult not to engage in sexual acts with children. Sexual abuse is never the child's fault.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is any attitude, behaviour, or failure to act on the part of the caregiver that interferes with a child's mental health or social development. Other names for emotional abuse are:

- Verbal abuse
- Mental abuse
- Psychological maltreatment or abuse
- Emotional abuse can range from a simple verbal insult to an extreme form of punishment. The following are examples of emotional abuse:
- Ignoring, withdrawal of attention, or rejection



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- Lack of physical affection such as hugs
- Lack of praise, positive reinforcement, or saying "I love you"
- Yelling or screaming
- Threatening or frightening
- Negative comparisons to others
- Belittling; telling the child he or she is "no good," "worthless," "bad," or "a mistake"
- Using derogatory terms to describe the child, name-calling
- Shaming or humiliating
- Habitual scape goating or blaming
- Using extreme or bizarre forms of punishment, such as confinement to a closet or dark room, tying to a chair for long periods of time, or terrorizing a child
- Parental child abduction

Emotional abuse is almost always present when another form of abuse is found. Some overlap exists between the definitions of emotional abuse and emotional neglect; regardless, they are both child abuse.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is a failure to provide for the child's basic needs. The types of neglect are:

- Physical
- Educational
- Emotional

### **Physical neglect**

Physical neglect is not providing for a child's physical needs, including:

- Inadequate provision of food, housing, or clothing appropriate for season or weather
- Lack of supervision
- Expulsion from the home or refusal to allow a runaway to return home



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- Abandonment
- Denial or delay of medical care
- Inadequate hygiene

### **Educational neglect**

Educational neglect is the failure to enrol a child of mandatory school age in school or to provide necessary special education. This includes allowing excessive truancies from school.

### **Emotional (psychological) neglect**

Emotional neglect is a lack of emotional support and love, such as:

- Not attending to the child's needs, including need for affection
- Failure to provide necessary psychological care
- Domestic violence in the child's presence, such as spousal or partner abuse
- Drug and alcohol abuse in the presence of the child, or allowing the child to participate in drug and alcohol use

When authorities examine emotional neglect, they take into consideration cultural values and standards of care, as well as the level of family income, which may interfere with proper care.

Some overlap exists between the definitions of emotional abuse and emotional neglect; regardless, they are both child abuse.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse**

#### **Some signs of physical abuse**

- Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- Bite marks
- Anti-social behaviour
- Problems in school
- Fear of adults
- Drug or alcohol abuse



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- Self-destructive or suicidal behaviour
- Depression or poor self-image

#### **Some signs of emotional abuse**

- Apathy
- Depression
- Hostility
- Lack of concentration
- Eating disorders

#### **Some signs of sexual abuse**

- Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts
- Seductiveness
- Avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or bodies
- Nightmares and bed wetting
- Drastic changes in appetite
- Over compliance or excessive aggression
- Fear of a particular person or family member
- Withdrawal, secretiveness, or depression
- Suicidal behaviour
- Eating disorders
- Self-injury

Sometimes there are no obvious physical signs of sexual abuse, and a physician must examine the child to confirm the abuse.

#### **Some signs of neglect**



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- Unsuitable clothing for weather
- Being dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Apparent lack of supervision

### **Who Can Abuse?**

- You can't tell by looking at a person whether they are an abuser – they don't appear different from the rest of the society.
- Abusers come from all classes of society, all professions and all races.
- Abuse of children may sometimes be carried by strangers but it is much more common that the abuser is known to the child and is in a position of trust and /or authority.
- It is not only adults who abuse children; children may suffer abuse from other children and young people.

Staff & volunteers should be aware that colleagues might include:

- Adults who are unable to provide consistent care
- Some adults, including professionals, who manipulate themselves into positions of trust where they can exploit children and young people, emotionally and sexually.
- Some adults, including professionals, who by behaving inappropriately towards children and young people can cause them to suffer physical or emotional harm.

It is very important to draw the distinction between sexual abuse and the other ways in which children may suffer harm – the reasons for the sexual abuse of children and young people are very different from the reasons why people physically abuse or neglect them.

### **Disclosure and Confidentiality**

If a child comes to the organisation with an abuse situation: the member of staff should:

Stay calm and be reassuring. Find a quiet place to talk and write down the exact words that the child uses, and not your interpretation of them. Assure the child of your support.

Confidentiality is crucial to all our relationships- but the welfare of the child is paramount. The law allows you within limits to disclose the information to the appropriate body whether it is the management, social services or the police.



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Confidentiality must not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the child.

The child cannot be promised confidentiality as the Designated Officer may have a duty to report any incidents. Any documents relating to the disclosure need to be kept in a safe, secure place.

### **Procedures**

The designated person ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC should be advised of any such concerns even if the worker is of the view that the victim will report the matter.

1. In all cases where a referral (e.g. to social services) is made, the telephone conversation must be followed up with an appropriate confirmatory letter.
2. The designated person ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC should be contacted within one working day of the suspicion/disclosure being made. If the member of staff is unable to contact ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC and therefore contacts Social & Community Services first, the member of staff must contact ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC as soon as possible after.
3. A note of the discussion with ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC must be placed on file along with details of event/s within 24 hours.
4. The worker or volunteer with ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC should note the following on a standard form:
  - Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
  - Names of people who were involved
  - What was said or done by whom
  - Any action taken by the group
  - Any further action e.g. suspension of worker/volunteer
  - Names of person reporting and to whom reporting



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1. The decision about whom and when to contact parents or carers should only be taken after consultation as in 3 above. The timing of these contacts will also be decided at this point.
2. The decision about who and when to contact other agencies including Local Authority Social Services Department, Police and School should only be taken after consultation. The timing of these contacts will also be decided at this point.
3. At their initial discussion of the case, the worker and ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC should arrange a specific review date that should take place within three working days of the initial discussion.
4. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC.

### **Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers taking part in the activities organised by the ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC, are vetted as part of our responsibility to our members and children. The vetting includes:

- Criminal Record Bureau checks will be undertaken for all staff working with children.
- Criminal Record Bureau checks will be undertaken for all volunteers with unsupervised access to children
- Interview
- Two references
- Probation period
- All staff and volunteers to be registered on the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

This is a standard practice for any organisation working with children and young people and is a recommendation in the Government Code of Practice

### **Induction and Training for Staff & Volunteers**

- Staff and volunteers must read and sign this policy before working with children
- Staff and volunteers working with children will attend a child protection training course as part of their induction
- Staff and volunteers should have health and safety procedures explained to them as part of their induction



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From this induction, staff and volunteers should be able to recognise all four types of abuse and know the appropriate reporting systems as outlined in this policy.

### **Codes of Behaviour**

Where residential event are organised, males should never enter all female rooms or toilets and vice versa.

Parents and carers should always be immediately informed if staff or volunteers have had to do things of a personal nature for a child such as changing clothes.

A designated person must update and inform others in the group of any changes regarding child protection laws of best practice.

A worker of volunteer should not be left alone with a child in any circumstance

### **General Supervision**

- Keep a check on visitors and guests to ensure safety of children
- Ensure there are at least two adults per ten children
- Ensure health and safety procedures are adhered to
- Written consent is given from parents and carers of any children taken off site

### **Whistle blowing**

Staff and volunteers should speak to ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTHS CIC if they have any concern about members of staff or volunteers' contact with children.

### **Insurance**

Public Liability insurance will be taken out for all activities.



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