



Healthy Active Lifestyles Ltd.

Safeguarding Children Policy

A resource pack for Healthy Active Lifestyles casual workers and employees, providers of educational services to children, young people and families in the North West.

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OVERVIEW

NOTE: The term child/children is used throughout this document and is to be read as meaning children and young people aged 0-19.

At Healthy Active Lifestyles, we work with and liaise with people of all ages including children, families and young people. We are committed to providing our services in a safe and vigilant manner. However, we recognise that harm can happen to children in a variety of ways and it is important that areas of risk are identified and as much as is possible is done to minimise them. As a result, we adopt a whole agency 'safeguarding' approach whereby safe practices are built into the structure of the organisation.

Harm can happen to children in a variety of ways and it is documented that some public and private service providers have in the past, seen children come to harm:

- Through an accident
- Through bullying by other users
- Through misguided actions by staff and volunteers
- Very rarely, through the deliberate actions of staff, volunteers or service users...who are using the group to make contact with children in order to abuse them.

By adopting a 'safe organisation' approach it is possible for our organisation to demonstrate that it has considered the provision of safe services carefully and to minimise the possibility of harm coming to children when services are provided.

DEFINITIONS AND UNDERSTANDINGS

1: What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

(Source: Paragraph 1.18, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006)

2: Why have a Safeguarding Children Policy?

It shows our commitment to protecting children, giving clear signals that we take safeguarding children seriously in all aspects of its activities. It also shows shared responsibility for safeguarding children. The development and implementation of clear and concise safeguarding children policies and procedures are not only a key requirement for us, but any organisation working with children.

3: What needs to be in place?

As a company, Healthy Active Lifestyles needs to ensure that the following are in place:

- A safeguarding children policy and a procedure for what to do if there are concerns about a child's welfare.
- A named person for dealing with concerns or allegations of abuse and step by step guidance on what action to take.
- A rigorous recruitment and selection process for staff and volunteers who work with children.
- A written code of behaviour which outlines good practice when working with children.
- A training plan and regular opportunities for all those in contact with children to learn about safeguarding children and about health and safety.
- Information for children and for parents or carers about the safeguarding children policy and where to go for help
- A protective culture that puts children's interests first - children must feel confident that if they have concerns someone will listen and take them seriously.
- Guidance on specific areas relevant to your group and these may for example include; taking children away on trips, internet use, and guidance on use of photographs, video, digital equipment and websites
- Policies on bullying and on health and safety. You will need processes for dealing with complaints by children as well as adults and for taking disciplinary action where necessary.

HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFESTYLES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

We aim to safeguard the welfare of children participating in Healthy Active Lifestyles activities. In order to give children protection from potential and actual abuse it is important that all concerned have a basic understanding of the issues involved and that procedures are in place that are understandable and easy to implement by anyone providing a service to children at any of the schools or youth organisations we deal with.

Healthy Active Lifestyles is committed to creating an environment that enables children to learn, develop and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. Parents trust us to look after their children, to care for them, to give encouragement and to keep them safe.

We need to ensure that we honour their trust.

Healthy Active Lifestyles' Safeguarding Children's policy arises from the following principles:

- The child's welfare is first consideration.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender or ethnic origin have a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2. BACKGROUND

Child abuse is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all that provide services for children, many people feel uncomfortable with the subject. It is not easily recognisable and individuals often fear reading too much into a situation. Many children experience minor accidents causing injuries, but there may be occasions where you are concerned over the nature and frequency of injury.

This document contains information on some of the signs that may give cause for concern. This document is based on the principle that:

“It is not our responsibility as casual workers or employees of Healthy Active Lifestyles to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is our responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.”

3. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

Do not ever think that you could never be placed in the position of reporting child abuse. The generic term 'child abuse' is used to describe various ways in which children are harmed or mistreated. There are many different ways in which children can be harmed, all with a common factor that the child feels under-valued and worthless. Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child.

4. TYPES OF ABUSE

• PHYSICAL ABUSE

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

• SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

• EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Telling a child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- A child seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another
- Serious bullying
- Causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption of a child

• NEGLECT

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur:

- During pregnancy as a result of substance abuse
- Failure to provide adequate food and clothing
- Failing to provide shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers)
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

• DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

Discriminatory Abuse includes racist, religious and sexist abuse, plus abuse based on a person's disability.

5. EFFECTS AND INDICATIONS OF ABUSE

The effects of child abuse can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not have the support to cope with that abuse.

Indications that a child may be being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.

- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexual explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk inappropriate to the child's age.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts.
- The child may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

6. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE IS TAKING PLACE?

If you are concerned that abuse may or has occurred they must refer the matter immediately to the safeguarding children champion (Matt Ward) who will decide whether or not to report the matter further. If it is felt that further investigation is necessary in order to protect the child, the matter must be referred to Social Services.

In the event of referral to Social Services, copies of all relevant correspondence, notes of dialogue, diagrams of any injury witnessed must be passed to the co-ordinator for filing.

It is very important that any concerns on a child's safety are logged. A sample of Healthy Active Lifestyles' logging concerns form about a child's safety or welfare is included on page 8, which can be used if any doubt over a child's welfare exists.

(NB All reports relating to Safeguarding Children should be completed in black ink)

LOGGING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S SAFETY AND WELFARE



Health Active Lifestyles Ltd.

Child Safeguarding Incident Report Form

<i>Please complete this form to the best of your ability. Speak to Matt Ward with any questions on completing this form.</i>			
Name of Child		Date of Birth	
Date Form Completed		Time Form Completed	
Your Name		Signature	
Organisation		Position	
Reasons for recording incident (Please record the following as factually as possible)			
Who?			
What?			
Where?			
When?			
Offer an opinion where relevant (how and why this may have happened)			
Please note the action taken, including the names of anyone to whom information was passed.			

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURE

1. There will be a named person for safeguarding children who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of children. This person is currently Matthew Ward.

2. All staff and volunteers will be carefully selected and vetted to try and ensure they do not pose a risk to children. Those staff and volunteers having contact with children will be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service at the appropriate level.

3. All staff and volunteers will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about a child. This will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a child, where to get advice and what to do if no one seems to have taken their concerns seriously.

4. We will endeavour to make this organisation a safe and caring place for children to be by having a code of conduct for all staff, volunteers and users. This will be given to all staff, volunteers and users and they will be expected to comply with it.

5. Report child safeguarding and welfare issues to the most appropriate agencies in the local area:

Local Authority: <http://liverpool.gov.uk/contact-us/>

Local Police: Immediate 999, otherwise 101.

NSPCC Help line: 0808 800 5000

6. Any information given to users about activities of the organisation will include information about the safeguarding children policy and procedure. Parents and carers of any children using supervised activities for children will be given specific information about the safeguarding policy and procedure.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN CHAMPION

1. This organisation will have a dedicated person to take responsibility for safeguarding children matters. This person is Matthew Ward, Managing Director of Healthy Active Lifestyles.

2. Their role is to;

- Ensure the organisation's safeguarding children policy and procedures are followed.
- Ensure they know how to make contact with social services and police staff responsible for dealing with safeguarding children concerns both during and after office hours.
- Report any concerns to social services or the police. (N.B. Urgent concerns should be reported immediately by those aware of them even if the designated person is not available, and it is the role of the Safeguarding Champion to ensure all staff and volunteers know how to do this.)
- Act as a source of advice on all safeguarding children matters and seek further advice and guidance from Liverpool LSCB as needed.

- Ensure that a record is kept of any concerns about a child or adult and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies. (See page 8)
- Ensure that any such record is kept safely and securely.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

DO NOT:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Smoke in front of any child.
- Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child.
- Use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Rely upon good nature to protect you or believe "it could never happen to me".
- Give children presents or personal items. *

*(Exceptions to this could be a custom such as: buying children a small birthday token or leaving present, help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity. Both types of gift should come from the organisation and from a professional capacity and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding children and the child's parent/carer. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the activity leader.)

DO:

- Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.

- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from children and be consistent in enforcing it.
- Remember if you have to speak to a child about their behaviour you are challenging 'what they did', not 'who they are'.
- Make sure you have read the Safeguarding Children Procedure and Policy and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Seek advice and support from your colleagues and your designated champion for safeguarding children.
- Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well-being of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.
- Seek opportunities for training.
- Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children.
- Make sure all issues are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SELECTION AND TRAINING

THE PROCESS

Children see all adults as safe and trustworthy and will not differentiate between paid staff and volunteers; therefore Healthy Active Lifestyles will apply the same vetting procedures to recruiting volunteers as they would any other member of staff. Volunteers carry out a wide range of roles involving children, and a common sense approach should be adopted. It would not be practical to go through stringent interview and selection procedures for a volunteer who may be attending as a one off visit but would be appropriate for a volunteer who would have regular contact or be working in an area with children and young people.

Minimum requirements for our freelance instructors/ regular volunteers:

- Asking them to complete an application form
- Checking their identity and work history
- Taking up two references

- An interview
- Appropriate level DBS check and update service

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE FOR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

1. It is important that the whole interview and selection process is completed BEFORE any staff and/or volunteers take up their duties.
2. Job descriptions and person specifications will be prepared for all paid roles and volunteers. These should make clear what personal qualities are required specific to the role. These should be given to anyone interested so they can see what will be required. It should be stated that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
3. All staff and volunteers will be required to fill in an application form. They will be required to provide, at least, two referees who can vouch for their character and suitability to be in a position of responsibility for children. They will also be required to complete a declaration of any criminal offences or matters of concern.
4. The interview panel will check the application and if the applicant is to be invited for interview references will be taken up.
5. The applicant will then be interviewed.
6. If the person is thought to be suitable for the role they will be asked to complete a CRB application form and their identity checked.
7. Once DBS clearance is obtained, if there are no adverse reports the person can start their duties. As an integral part of their induction they will be given a copy of the safeguarding children procedure, policy and the code of conduct and asked to sign for them.
8. If a DBS check reveals a criminal record that would not automatically ban the person from working with children but causes concern, an organisation should discuss the offence with the applicant and take into consideration the circumstances of the offence, type of offence, when committed, pattern etc and assess fairly thus ensuring fair appointment and selection.
9. The manager and/or safeguarding champion will meet with the person to explain their duties and any key points from the code of conduct specific to their role.
10. All staff and volunteers will serve a probationary period, there will be a two way meeting half way through this period. This meeting should be a positive experience with a chance to discuss areas for development.

Remember: Many current and potential perpetrators will not possess criminal records thus a DBS check in isolation is not enough. The best way to prevent the abuse of children is through good management practice and the continuous provision of support, guidance and supervision of staff and volunteers.

THE CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU/ DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE PROCESS

WHAT IS IT?

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

A DBS check may be needed for: certain jobs or voluntary work, eg working with children or in healthcare applying to foster or adopt a child

There are different rules for getting a criminal record check in Scotland and Northern Ireland. For further information look at: <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHECK?

There are 3 types of check. The employer or organisation running the check should provide the applicant with more information about the level of check required. Criminal record check applicants must be 16 or over.

Standard (£26)

This checks for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and will take about 2 weeks.

Enhanced (£44)

This includes the same as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that's reasonably considered relevant to the workforce being applied for (adult, child or 'other' workforce). It takes about 4 weeks.

'Other' workforce means those who don't work with children or adults specifically, but potentially both, eg taxi drivers. In this case, the police will only release information that's relevant to the post being applied for.

Enhanced with list checks (£44)

This is like the enhanced check, but includes a check of the DBS barred lists, and takes about 4 weeks.

WHO SHOULD BE CHECKED?

Anyone who is coming into contact with children must be DBS checked; anyone working unsupervised must have an enhanced disclosure.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

Only registered organisations can apply for DBS checks. Organisations that are not registered will need to use the services of an 'umbrella organisation'.

CONTACTS AND USEFUL INFORMATION

CONTACTS:

Local Authority: <http://liverpool.gov.uk/contact-us/>

Local Police: Immediate 999, otherwise 101.

NSPCC Help line: 0808 800 5000

Liverpool LSCB: <http://www.liverpoolscb.org/>

Disclosure and Barring Service: <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

PUBLICATIONS:

- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

Download full guidance or summary at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

- Working Together:

Download at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281368/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf

- Liverpool Council Safeguarding Children procedures

Download at: <http://liverpool.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/children-and-families/safeguarding-childrens-procedure/>

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