



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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This policy must be read in conjunction with the following NWCSG Policies:-

Intimate Care policy. Health and Safety Policy, Moving and Handling Policy, Volunteer Code of Conduct, Whistle blowing Policy

Approved October 2011

Reviewed August 2013, October 2014, May 2017, May 2022

Review Date May 2023

POLICY STATEMENT

The North West Children's Support Group recognises the vulnerability of children and supports the principle that the welfare of the child is paramount. The NWCSG further recognises that disabled children are at increased risk of abuse. The charity has both a legal and moral responsibility to safeguard the children in our care and to ensure that all volunteers are aware of what to do if they suspect that a child is being abused.

"Children" are persons under the age of 18 years. However, the information and advice in this Policy also applies, in spirit, to vulnerable young adults over the age of 18 years whilst they have contact with NWCSG. For those young adults, this Policy should be read in conjunction with the NWCSG Guidelines for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse (Safeguarding Adults).

All people who work directly or indirectly for NWCSG, including Trustees, Holiday leaders and helpers are required to adhere to this Policy.

This Policy applies to all children using NWCSG services regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion.

All necessary steps will be taken to ensure that the rights of children are respected and that opportunities for abuse to occur are minimised.

NWCSG will endeavour to safeguard children by :-

- Ensuring that all volunteers read and understand this Policy.
- Providing regular child protection training to volunteers.
- Adopting safe volunteer recruitment and vetting procedures
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with volunteers, parents, and relevant agencies.
- Requiring all helpers to follow the reporting and recording procedures in every case of suspected or disclosed abuse.
- Providing an effective support system for all volunteers.
- Working within the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) guidelines

References

Working together to Safeguard Children 2010 (HM Government DCSF)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2006 (DCSF)

Safeguarding Disabled Children 2009 (DCSF)

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board www.lancashiregov.uk

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

PROCEDURES

The NWCSG designated Safeguarding Officers are

Name Deborah McCann

Contact Details 01995 601354 /07849883602 mccanndebbie1@gmail.com

Name Neil Worsley

Contact Details

The role of the designated Safeguarding Officer is to:

- Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information when they need to
- If necessary consult with a statutory child protection agency, such as the local children's social care teams or the NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000, to talk about any doubts
- If necessary make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police.

It is, however, everybody's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared with the appropriate persons and appropriate action is taken.

Child Abuse

The term *child abuse and neglect* describes a range of ways in which people, often known and trusted by children, harm them knowingly or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Categories of Child Abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Recognising Child Abuse

The indicators of abuse in disabled or learning disabled children, or those on the autistic continuum, may be confused, open to misinterpretation, or masked by the disability. For example, self-harm, or some neurotic behaviours, would be strong indicators of abuse in most children, but they can be non-abuse related facets of behaviour in a child with autism. It is important, however, that helpers do not use the child's disability to "explain away" possible indicators of abuse.

The information contained within the Child Protection Guidelines will assist helpers to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse

If helpers suspect a child in their care is being or has been abused they must

Report their concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG Safeguarding Officer

When asked to do so write down what they observed or were told.

Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks

No one will be blamed if it turns out abuse has not taken place

It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

How helpers should respond if a child confides in them.

DO remain calm

DO listen carefully

DO be aware of non verbal messages including facial expressions

DO make it clear you are taking them seriously

DO acknowledge their courage and reassure them they are right to tell

DO tell them they have no reason to feel guilty

DO tell them you are going to do all you can to help them and what may happen as a result

DO record what was said using the child's actual words and who was present

How not to respond

DO NOT show shock or distaste
DO NOT probe for more information than is offered
DO NOT speculate or make assumptions
DO NOT make negative comments about the abuser
DO NOT make promises you cannot keep eg “everything will be alright”
DO NOT agree not to tell anyone

What to do next.

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Safeguarding Officer
- Write down what you observed or were told, using the child’s words
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will be blamed if it turns out abuse has not taken place
- It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

The holiday leaders and NWCSG Safeguarding Officer will

- Decide whether it is appropriate to discuss the concerns with the child’s parents
- If it is not appropriate to talk to the parents or if, after doing so, we are still concerned we will contact social services or the NSPCC
- Social services will then take responsibility for further action

What should you do if an allegation is made against yourself or another helper?

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Safeguarding Officer
- Write down what you were told
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will blame you if it turns out abuse has not taken place
- It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

How information will be recorded

A Safeguarding Incident Report form (Appendix IV) will be completed by the Holiday Leader and /or the NWCSG Safeguarding Officer. If a referral is made to Social Services this must be followed up in writing within 48 hours. The Incident Report form will be kept with the child’s medical form for the length of time required by the insurance company

Confidentiality

The legal principle is that the “welfare of the child is paramount”. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child at risk of harm then the child’s safety has to come first

Legally, it is fine to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child.

However not everyone needs to know when a concern or worry is raised. This respects the child’s, family’s and helpers’ rights to privacy. So only people who need to know should be told about it. Otherwise there might be gossip and rumours or other people may be genuinely concerned.

It is fine to say that a concern has been raised and it is being dealt with following the group’s procedures.

Good Practice

All NWCSG Trustees, holiday leaders and volunteer helpers should:-

- Ensure that the child’s welfare is paramount
- Respect the rights of all our children whatever their age, ability, culture, gender or sexual orientation
- Respect each child as an individual and respond to their individual needs
- Be aware of the relative powerlessness of children, especially disabled children, compared to adults
- Be committed to actively preventing the exploitation and abuse of children
- Be familiar with the charity’s Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and follow the Guidelines to Safeguarding at all times

Implementation Plan

1 All new helpers irrespective of their background will receive training on Safeguarding

2 Parents will be advised of the NWCSG Safeguarding training requirements.

3 All helpers will receive a copy of the Safeguarding Guidelines for All Helpers at the start of every holiday.

4 Copies of the full Child Protection Guidelines or Protection of Vulnerable Adult Guidelines (whichever applies) will be available at all times on all the holidays

5 All helpers will receive refresher training at least every 3 years.

Appendices

I Safeguarding Guidelines for All Helpers

II Child Protection Guidelines (extended guidelines)

III Protection of Vulnerable Adults Guidelines (extended guidelines)

IV CHILD Safeguarding Incident Report Form

V YOUNG ADULT Safeguarding Incident Report Form

VI Safeguarding Guidelines for Holiday Leaders



SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES FOR HELPERS

Safeguarding means much more than protecting children from abuse, it includes providing children with a safe environment, allowing children to achieve success and satisfaction, making sure children's rights and needs are met, making sure children are treated with dignity and respect and allowing children to learn, play and develop free from harm.

- DO ensure that the child's welfare is paramount
- DO provide an example you would wish others to follow
- DO respect the rights of all children whatever their age, ability, culture, gender or sexual orientation
- DO respect each child as an individual and respond to their individual needs
- DO respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- DO be aware of the relative powerlessness of children, especially disabled children, compared to adults
- DO avoid inappropriate physical contact
- DO be aware that your actions might be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned
- DO be committed to actively preventing the exploitation and abuse of children
- Do be prepared to challenge poor practice or inappropriate behaviour, or at least alert the holiday leaders to it
- DO NOT show favouritism towards any individual
- DO NOT make suggestive remarks or gestures.
- DO NOT allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- DO NOT exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- DO NOT jump to conclusions.

What should you do if you suspect a child in your care is being or has been abused?

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Child Protection Officer
- Write down what you observed or were told, using the child's words
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will blame you if it turns out abuse has not taken place
- It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

How to respond if a child confides in you

DO remain calm

DO listen carefully

DO be aware of non verbal messages including facial expressions

DO make it clear you are taking them seriously

DO acknowledge their courage and reassure them they are right to tell

DO tell them they have no reason to feel guilty

DO tell them you are going to do all you can to help them and what may happen as a result

DO record what was said using the child's actual words and note who was present

DO NOT show shock or distaste

DO NOT probe for more information than is offered

DO NOT speculate or make assumptions

DO NOT make negative comments about the abuser

DO NOT make promises you cannot keep eg "everything will be alright"

DO NOT agree not to tell anyone

What should you do next?

Follow the steps indicated above for when abuse is suspected.

What should you do if an allegation is made against yourself or another helper?

Follow the steps indicated above for when abuse is suspected.

NORTH WEST CHILDRENS
SUPPORT GROUP



CHILD PROTECTION

(Guidelines to Safeguarding)

The North West Children's Support Group recognises the vulnerability of children and believes that the welfare of the child is paramount. The NWCSG further recognises that disabled children are at increased risk of abuse. The charity has both a legal and moral responsibility to safeguard the children in our care and to ensure that all volunteers across the organisation are aware of what to do if they suspect that a child is being abused.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means much more than protecting children from abuse, it includes providing children with a safe environment, allowing children to achieve success and satisfaction, making sure children's rights and needs are met, making sure children are treated with dignity and respect and allowing children to learn, play and develop free from harm

What is Child Abuse?

The term *child abuse and neglect* describes a range of ways in which people, often known and trusted by children, harm them knowingly or by failing to act to prevent harm.

A recent large scale survey of young adults by the NSPCC showed that 7% had suffered serious physical abuse as children at the hands of their parents or carers. It also revealed that 1% had been sexually abused by a parent and 3% by another relative

There are four main categories of Child Abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The Impact of Abuse and Neglect

The sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally or sexually can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being. Sustained abuse is likely to have a deep impact on the child's self-image and self-esteem, and on his or her future life. Difficulties may extend into adulthood: the experience of long-term abuse may lead to difficulties in forming or sustaining close relationships, establishing oneself in the workforce, and to extra difficulties in developing the attitudes and skills needed to be an effective parent. It is not only the stressful events of abuse that have an impact, but also the context in which they take place. Many survivors say the emotional consequences of abuse are far more severe than the physical effects of abuse.

For every child and family, there may be factors that aggravate the harm caused to the child, and those that protect against harm. Relevant factors include the individual child's means of coping and adapting, support from a family and social network, and the impact of any interventions. The effects on a child are also influenced by the quality of the family environment at the time of abuse, and subsequent life events.

Impact of Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, and disability or -at the extreme - death. Harm may be caused to children both by the abuse itself, and by the abuse taking place in a wider family or institutional context of conflict and aggression. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems, and educational difficulties.

Impact of Emotional Abuse

There is increasing evidence of the adverse long-term consequences for children's development where they have been subject to sustained emotional abuse. Emotional abuse has an important impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy. Underlying emotional abuse may be as important, if not more so, than other more visible forms of abuse in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

Impact of Sexual Abuse

Disturbed behaviour including self-harm, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, sadness, depression and a loss of self-esteem, have all been linked to sexual abuse. Its adverse effects may endure into adulthood. The severity of impact on a child is believed to increase the longer abuse continues, the more extensive the abuse, and the older the child. A number of features of sexual abuse have also been linked with severity of impact, including the extent of premeditation, the degree of threat and coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. A child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised or disclosed, is strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection.

A proportion of adults who sexually abuse children have themselves been sexually abused as children. They may also have been exposed as children to domestic violence and discontinuity of care. However, it would be quite wrong to suggest that most children who are abused will inevitably go on to become abusers themselves.

Impact of Neglect

Severe neglect of young children is associated with major impairment of growth and intellectual development. Persistent neglect can lead to serious impairment of health and development, and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Neglect can also result, in extreme cases, in death.

Recognising Child Abuse

Remember that it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern.

The indicators of abuse in disabled or learning disabled children, or those on the autistic continuum, may be confused, open to misinterpretation, or masked by the disability. For example, self-harm, or some neurotic behaviours, would be strong indicators of abuse in most children, but they can be non-abuse related facets of behaviour in a child with autism. It is important, however, that you do not use the child's disability to "explain away" possible indicators of abuse.

The following information is not designed to turn you into an expert but it will help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse

1. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins.

Some children, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury, or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. on the cheeks or thighs. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups you should always consult child protection professionals.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour, which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outburst
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

2. EMOTIONAL ABUSE Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour, which can also indicate emotional abuse:

- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking.
- Being unable to play.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Self-harm.
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas.
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas.
- Sexually transmitted disease. • Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares.
- Running away from home.
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level.
- Sexual drawings or language.
- Bedwetting.
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempt.
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

4. NEGLECT

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends.
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

What should you do if you suspect a child in your care is being or has been abused?

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Child Protection Officer
- When asked to do so you must write down what you observed or were told
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will blame you if it turns out abuse has not taken place
- It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

Myths about Child Abuse

Only adult males abuse children

FACT although the majority of child abusers are men, in up to 5% of cases the abuser is female. And a third of reported sexual assaults are committed by young people

Some cultures believe that child abuse is acceptable

FACT There are different understandings as to what constitutes abuse but all children have the right to protection from harm

Disabled children are less likely to be abused

FACT Disabled children are *more* likely to be abused because they are more vulnerable, dependent on others for intimate care and may be less able to communicate what has happened to them

Children often lie about abuse

FACT Children rarely lie about abuse, and their great fear is that they will not be believed. Abusers often tell their victims that no one will believe them if they report what has happened

Child abusers have deprived backgrounds and are of below average intelligence

FACT Abusers come from a very wide range of social and intellectual backgrounds and may be well liked and respected members of society

Children are always safe in groups

FACT This is not always true, young children have for example been sexually assaulted in nurseries while other adults and children were present

Children abused by their parents are always taken into care

FACT Child protection professionals recognise that there are many benefits to keeping a child with their birth family, so they try to protect the child within the home whenever possible

How to respond if a child confides in you

DO remain calm

DO listen carefully

DO be aware of non verbal messages including facial expressions

DO make it clear you are taking them seriously

DO acknowledge their courage and reassure them they are right to tell

DO tell them they have no reason to feel guilty
DO tell them you are going to do all you can to help them and what may happen as a result
DO record what was said using the child's actual words and who was present

How not to respond

DO NOT show shock or distaste
DO NOT probe for more information than is offered
DO NOT speculate or make assumptions
DO NOT make negative comments about the abuser
DO NOT make promises you cannot keep eg "everything will be alright"
DO NOT agree not to tell anyone

What should you do next?

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Child Protection Officer
- When asked to do so you must write down what you observed or were told
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will blame you if it turns out abuse has not taken place
- It is better to be alerted unnecessarily than to fail to protect a child

What will the holiday leaders or child protection officer do?

- Decide whether it is appropriate to discuss the concerns with the child's parents
- If it is not appropriate to talk to the parents or if after doing so we are still concerned we will contact social services or the NSPCC
- Social services will then take responsibility for further action

What should you do if an allegation is made against yourself or another helper?

- Report your concerns to the holiday leaders or to the NWCSG designated Child Protection Officer
- When asked to do so you must write down what you observed or were told
- Professionals trained in identifying child abuse will make many more checks
- No one will blame you if it turns out abuse has not taken place
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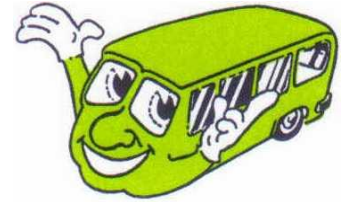
Why should we act?

One of the worst things we can do is nothing
Many child abuse inquiries have shown that failure to act has resulted in serious injury or death
The safety and wellbeing of children is of paramount importance, all concerns must be taken seriously
Child protection overrides confidentiality

Good Practice

All NWCSG Trustees, holiday leaders and volunteer helpers should:-

- Ensure that the child's welfare is paramount
- Respect the rights of all our children whatever their age, ability, culture, gender or sexual orientation
- Respect each child as an individual and respond to their individual needs
- Be aware of the relative powerlessness of children, especially disabled children, compared to adults
- Be committed to actively preventing the exploitation and abuse of children
- Be familiar with the charity's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and follow the Guidelines to Safeguarding at all times



PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

(Guidelines to
Safeguarding)

The North West Children's Support group occasionally provides services to disabled young adults; many of whom can be vulnerable and may become victims of abuse. The charity has both a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that all volunteers across the organisation are aware of what to do if they suspect that someone is being abused.

What is abuse of a vulnerable adult?

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or other people.

It includes harm that is done to someone as well as neglect of their needs

Abuse can make a person's life unbearable. All abuse is serious and should never be overlooked.

Who is vulnerable?

All adults can be vulnerable given a certain situation. A vulnerable adult is anyone, 18 years or older who needs or may need care or support services because of a mental or other disability, or because of advanced age or illness. He or she may not, or is unable to take care of him or herself. They may as a result be unable to protect themselves from others harming or exploiting them.

There are many different types of abuse which include:

Physical abuse is an act of physical violence against a person, such as hitting, slapping, pushing and kicking. Usually this type of treatment leaves marks or bruising on the person's skin, however there are other forms of physical abuse that do not appear as violent or leave

marks e.g. being given too much medication, holding someone down, the person being strapped to a chair against their will or being locked in a room etc.

Sexual abuse could mean obvious sexual violence such as rape and sexual assault. It could also mean more subtle behaviour such as someone being denied their sexual activity or being teased about their sexual characteristics etc.

Psychological abuse is any behaviour or spoken word that undermines the confidence and dignity of a person. This includes threats, isolation from social contact, humiliation, intimidation, swearing, shouting or unfair pressure to behave in a particular way etc.

Financial or material abuse includes the obvious behaviours such as stealing, fraud and exploitation. It could also mean pressure being exerted regarding wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, the misuse of a person's property or belongings or benefits etc.

Neglect or acts of omission covers everything that should be done as part of supporting someone but was not, resulting in disadvantage to the person. Examples include ignoring medical advice or physical care needs and failure to provide access to services such as education or social services. Neglect could also mean depriving the person of their basic needs; medication, nutrition and heating etc.

Discriminatory abuse refers to a person being harassed, humiliated, treated unfairly or undermined because of their disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or ethnicity

Institutional abuse occurs when routines in use mean that service users lose their independence and lifestyle to the needs of the service eg: lack of choice with meals, activities or times for getting up or going to bed.

Who might abuse a vulnerable adult?

Anyone may abuse a vulnerable adult.

- A member of staff or manager,
- A professional e.g. doctor
- A volunteer,
- Another Service User,
- A partner, relative or friend,
- A person doing an assessment e.g. social worker,
- A neighbour or stranger,
- A person who deliberately exploits vulnerable adults.

Where might the abuse take place?

In a care home or other service, the person's own home or the home of a family member, in the street, pub or other public place, on transport etc. **Abuse can take place anywhere!**

Why do people abuse?

There are a number of reasons:

- The culture in an organisation might mean that staff and volunteers follow the other people in treating the Service Users in an abusive way.
- Sometimes people who have little control over their own lives take control over other people's lives in an abusive way
- Some people may abuse for their own sexual gratification, or they might be seeking financial gain. Sometimes it could be a 'one off' event because a care worker is stressed or tired.

Why are disabled people more vulnerable to abuse?

They may rely on someone for personal/intimate care.

They might be concerned that if they make a complaint then they won't receive any care or support.

Sometimes disabled people become so used to being abused that they see it as normal.

If they have limited communication, it might be difficult to tell anyone about the abuse.

A disabled person might have contact with a limited number of people.

A disabled person might have to live in a care home or other establishment, where they could be subject to institutional abuse.

How might I recognise abuse?

You might notice:

- bruises or marks
- changes in eating habits
- being fearful
- inappropriate touching
- uncharacteristic sexual behaviour
- any change in behaviour
- constant hunger
- poor hygiene
- running out of money
- possessions disappearing
- looking depressed and withdrawn
- low self-esteem

Your responsibility is to report your concern – it is the responsibility of others to decide what to do with your information.

Why should I pass information on?

You should pass information on because:

- you have a responsibility to the young person
- People have the right to be safe
- there might be other information you may not be aware of
- abuse may have a lasting effect
- to prevent future harm
- abuse often continues because others cannot believe that the abuser would do this and are too afraid to speak out

REMEMBER – it is too easy to think that 'it's none of our business'. Adult protection often involves gathering information from a variety of sources to build up a picture of the service user's situation. You may hold a vital piece of evidence.

Remember that when you take on the responsibility to be a NWCSG volunteer you are implicitly and explicitly agreeing to act in a young person's best interest.

If you suspect that a young person is being abused or if abuse is disclosed to you:

Do: Report your concerns to the holiday leaders

Do: Write down your concerns when asked to do so

Do: Remember information is sensitive - don't gossip

Do: Avoid confronting the people involved

Do: Act quickly

Don't : Leave it for someone else to report

To prevent abuse from happening, in your behaviour with young people you should:

- Follow all NWCSG policies and procedures
- Place the safety and welfare of the young people above all other considerations
- Treat all young people with respect
- Be aware that your actions could be misinterpreted and that you are accountable
- Avoid developing more personal relationships with the young people
- Hold professional boundaries
- Report and record all suspicions or disclosures of abuse

You should not:

- Engage with inappropriate physical and social contact with young people
- Develop more intimate relationships with young people
- Either exaggerate or trivialise possible abuse issues
- Ignore the situation
- Agree to keep secrets

NWCSG Safeguarding Concern / Incident Alert Form (page 1 of 2)
Private and Confidential Complete all relevant sections

Name of Child:		
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age:	Date of Birth:
Parent's / Carer's name(s):		
Home address:		
Your Name:	Your Position:	Date and Time of incident:
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns. <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else.	If responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name and position within the group;	
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates or other relevant information(describe any injuries, state whether fact, opinion or hearsay):		
The child's account, of what has happened and how (If appropriate)		
Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused the incident / injury: (If applicable)		
Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident(s): (If applicable)		

NWCSG Safeguarding Concern / Incident Alert Form (page 2 of 2)
Private and Confidential Complete all relevant sections

<p>Have you spoken to the child's parents?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>If yes, please provide details of what was said</p>	
<p>Have you spoken to the person the allegations are being made against?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>If yes, please provide details of what was said:</p>	
<p>Any further action taken</p>		
<p>Have you informed :-</p> <p>Children's Social Care?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>NSPCC? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Police? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Please provide the name of the person and his/her contact number and details of any advice which was given.</p>	
<p>Data Protection As the person completing this form, you must notify each person whose information you include about what will happen to their information and how it may be disclosed except to the extent that doing so would prejudice either the prevention or detection of a crime or the apprehension or prosecution of an offender.</p>		
<p>Your signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>	<p>Time :</p>

NWCSG Safeguarding Concern / Incident Alert Form (page 1 of 2)
Private and Confidential Complete all relevant sections

Name of Young Adult:		
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age:	Date of Birth:
Parent's / Carer's name(s):		
Home address:		
Your Name:	Your Position:	Date and Time of incident:
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns. <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else.	If responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name and position within the group;	
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates or other relevant information (describe any injuries, state whether fact, opinion or hearsay):		
The Young Adult's account, of what has happened and how		
Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused any incident / injury (if applicable):		
Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident/s (if applicable):		



NWCSG Safeguarding Concern / Incident Alert Form (page 2 of 2)
Private and Confidential Complete all relevant sections

<p>Have you spoken to the Parents/ Carers?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>If yes, please provide details of what was said</p>	
<p>Have you spoken to the person the allegations are being made against?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>If yes, please provide details of what was said:</p>	
<p>Any further action taken</p>		
<p>Have you informed :-</p> <p>Social Care?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>NSPCC? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Police? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Please provide the name of the person and his/her contact number and details of any advice which was given.</p>	
<p>Data Protection As the person completing this form, you must notify each person whose information you include about what will happen to their information and how it may be disclosed except to the extent that doing so would prejudice either the prevention or detection of a crime or the apprehension or prosecution of an offender.</p>		
<p>Your signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>	<p>Time :</p>

SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES FOR HOLIDAY LEADERS

If a volunteer helper reports bruising or signs of other injury to a child or young adult which the parents or carers have not advised us of, then the holiday leader should

Ask the child how the injury occurred.

If not satisfied with the explanation or if there are other indicators of abuse or if the child cannot communicate then the holiday leader should contact one of the NWCSG Safeguarding Officers.

Then either the holiday leader or the Safeguarding Officer will discuss with the child's family **unless**:

- i) a family member might be responsible for abusing the child
- ii) someone may be put in danger by the family being informed
- iii) informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation.

If any of these circumstances apply, discussions with the family should only take place in agreement with the local authority children's social care department. The Safeguarding Officer (or the holiday leader if the named person is not available) can discuss with children's social care department or with the NSPCC Helpline without disclosing the identity of the child/family.

If concerns remain the NWCSG Safeguarding Officer should refer the child to the local authority children's social care department and confirm the referral in writing within 48 hours

An NWCSG Safeguarding Alert form should be completed and kept with the child's medical form in the NWCSG records

If a volunteer helper reports that a child has made a disclosure of abuse the holiday leader should

Contact one of the NWCSG Safeguarding Officers and then if the child's family does not already know about the concern, they should discuss it with them **unless**:

- i) a family member might be responsible for abusing the child
- ii) someone may be put in danger by the family being informed
- iii) informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation.

If any of these circumstances apply, discussions with the family should only take place after this has been agreed with the local authority children's social care department. The Safeguarding Officer (or the holiday leader if the named person is not available) can discuss with children's social care department or with the NSPCC Helpline without disclosing the identity of the child/family.

If concerns remain the NWCSG Safeguarding Officer should refer the child to the local authority children's social care department and confirm the referral in writing within 48 hours.

If there are no further concerns then no further Safeguarding action is needed.

An NWCSG Safeguarding Alert form should be completed and kept with the child's medical form in the NWCSG records

If an allegation is made against a volunteer helper the holiday leader should
Contact one of the NWCSG designated Safeguarding Officers

Complete a NWCSG Safeguarding Alert form.

Advice will be sought as necessary from children's social care department or the NSPCC Helpline

If an allegation is made against a holiday leader the holiday leader should
Contact one of the NWCSG designated Safeguarding Officers

Advice will be sought as necessary from children's social care department or the NSPCC Helpline

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) has replaced the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

**Concerns about a child should be reported on
0300 123 6720 or out of hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am)**

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000,. If you have any concerns or suspicions, contact our free helpline service to speak to an NSPCC counsellor 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.