

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

BUCKSTONE YOUTH CLUB PROJECT

The above youth group is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. Volunteers and staff should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights of young people, and their safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects our principles.

No activity should be entered into that is potentially harmful to young people. Nationally recognised procedures regarding qualified instructors, safety equipment and good practice should be adhered to at all times.

Principles

You can reduce likely situations for the abuse of participants and help protect yourself from false accusations by making sure that everyone is aware that, as a general rule, you should not:

- Spend time alone with young people away from others.
- Contact young people out with the activity or the project.
- Take young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Take a young person to your home.
- Have leaders and young people sharing sleeping accommodation.

When occasions arise where it is unavoidable that these things happen, then they should only occur with the full knowledge of your line manager, senior worker or the young person's parents.

Code of Practice

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Engage in rough, physical and sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching or verbal contact of any form.
- Allow young people or other staff and volunteers to use inappropriate language.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in fun or make suggestive gestures'.
- Deter young people from making allegations through a fear of not being believed.
- Do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do themselves.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Show favouritism to any individuals.
- Rely on just your own good name to protect you.
- Believe it could never happen to you.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes.
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying).

Staff and volunteers should always:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy '.
- Take seriously any allegations a young person makes, ensuring that the appropriate people are alerted (see below) and that the incident is recorded.
- Provide access for young people to talk about any concerns they may have.
- Remember that someone might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Plan activities so that at least one other member of staff or volunteer is present, or is at least within sight or hearing of the activity.
- Recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
- Ensure parents are informed of all activities involving their children including taking of photographs and videos. Parental consent should be sought.
- Provide an example you wish others to follow.
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they like.
- Maintain a healthy adult lifestyle.

What should you do if you suspect a young person is being or has been abused:

- Tell the designated person for Child Protection.
- Record any FACTS which support your suspicions.
- Sign and date your notes, storing them in a safe and secure place.

If a young person discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- Allow the participant to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- Never question the young person or attempt to investigate.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise the young person involved that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information.
- Record any FACTS.
- Sign and date your notes, storing them in a safe and secure place
- Tell the designated person for Child Protection

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

- Immediately inform your line manager, senior youth worker or chairperson of the management committee.
- If it's not possible to discuss this with the person in charge then contact the designated person for Child Protection.
- Record the facts, as you know them.
- Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position that could cause further compromise.