



Youth Work Ireland Meath

Child Protection & Safeguarding Awareness Programme

Garda Safe Mandated
Guidance & Risk
Reporting & Protection
Children's Legislation
Best Safeguarding
practice Procedures
Liaison assessment people
Designated
Training
Young

Legislation and Guidelines Supplementary Information

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

There are a number of key pieces of legislation that relate to child welfare and protection. The information here gives a brief overview of relevant legislation. It is not intended as legal opinion or advice and, if in doubt, you should consult the original legislation.

Legislation

- **Child Care Act 1991**
- **Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998**
- **Criminal Justice Act 2006**
- **Criminal Justice Act (withholding of information on offences against children and vulnerable persons) Act 2012**
- **National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 - 2016**
- **Children First Act 2015**
- **Criminal Law (sexual offences) Act 2017**

Child Care Act 1991

This is the key piece of legislation which regulates childcare policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. Tusla has a duty to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance in providing care and protection to their children. The Child Care Act also sets out the statutory framework for taking children into care, if necessary.

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act protects you if you make a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardaí as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015. This legal protection means that even if you report a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that you had not acted reasonable and in good faith in making the report. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

You can find the full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, on the website of each agency (www.tusla.ie and www.hse.ie)

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 2006

Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This offence may be committed by a person who has authority or control over a child or abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

- a) Causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being victim of serious harm or sexual abuse.
- or
- b) Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE (WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION ON OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS) 2012

Under this Act, it is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The offence arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would help arrest, prosecute or convict another person for that offence, but fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information, as soon as it is practicable to do so, to a member of An Garda Síochána. The provisions of the Withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU (CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS) ACT 2012 - 2016

Under these Acts, it is compulsory for employers to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable adults. The Acts create offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with their provision. Statutory obligations on employers in relation to Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children and vulnerable adults are set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 - 2016

CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2015

The Children First Act 2015 is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it will help to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay. The Act provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals; comprehensive risk assessment and planning for a strong organisational culture of safeguarding in all services provided to children; a provision for a register of non-compliance; and the statutory underpinning of the existing Children First Interdepartmental Implementation Group which promotes and oversees cross-sectoral implementation and compliance with Children First.

CRIMINAL LAW (SEXUAL OFFENCES) ACT 2017

This Act addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. It creates offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It also creates offences of the types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, for example, using modern technology to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit the child. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative.



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

1. **Name of Service being provided:** Youth Work Ireland Meath

2. **Nature of Services and principles to safeguard children from harm:**

Youth Work Ireland Meath is a county-wide Youth Service with youth clubs and programmes operating an Integrated Youth Service model provision with young people aged 8 - 25 and is mainly operated by qualified Youth Workers and volunteers who work on generic programmes with young people.

Youth Work Ireland Meath is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

- Youth Work Ireland Meath seeks to ensure that our members offer activities that are based on the principles of Children First. We ensure that all our staff and volunteers comply with current Safeguarding Legislation and practice.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath supports, runs and develops programmes to support the delivery of youth work. All programmes must be compliant with legislation and include the principles of Children First.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath from time to time may receive additional funding for specific youth work programmes for its members; we therefore ensure compliance with legislation and sound business practice.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath runs events engaging young people in consultations on youth issues, youth practice and youth work. All such events are run in compliance with Children First Legislation and practice.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath has a Civic Engagement Group made up of young people who work to ensure the voice of young people is heard within the regional organisation.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath organises a range of events for young people to take part in through the county such as the IYMA's, Inter-regional Youth Club activities, National Events, Pride and others. All events are planned, organised and run in compliance with Children First legislation and practice.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath supports its members on matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection by acting as Garda Vetting conduit, delivering Child Safeguarding and Protection training, organising and supporting other training (CPAP Trainers, DLP Training, Board briefing), supporting the work of Youth Work Ireland's Safeguarding Sub Group, developing a shared organisational policy, providing support for members.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath is involved in a number of bodies nationally and locally that support young people's participation.

3 **Risk assessment of potential harm to children while availing of our services:**

Youth Work Ireland Meath has carried out an assessment of any potential of risk of harm to a child availing of our services. The areas of risk and the procedures identified to address these areas have been identified and can be obtained through our office.

4 Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidelines and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard young people while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our services
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection and/or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons who are mandated persons within Youth Work Ireland Meath
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person
- Procedure for participating in designed programmes (referral forms, consent forms, medical consent/information, times, durations, venues, travel/transport, supervision ratios, additional needs, Insurance cover)
- Procedure for attending regional events (consent forms, medical consent/information times, durations, venues, travel/transport, supervision ratios, additional needs, Insurance cover)
- Procedure for Accidents/Injuries (consent forms, medical consent/information, reporting forms, Insurance cover)
- Procedure for Opening/Closing of Premises (walk through/check procedures)

5 Implementation:

Youth Work Ireland Meath recognises that the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement is an ongoing process. We are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep young people and children safe from harm while availing of our services. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 10th March 2022, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: Clare Gannon
Chairperson

Youth Work Ireland Meath
St Mary's Church Grounds,
Trimgate Street,
Navan, Co Meath

For queries please contact Geraldine Hogarty on 046-9093402, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015



Youth Work Ireland Meath

Youth Work Ireland Meath Child Protection Policy

It is the policy of Youth Work Ireland Meath to safeguard the welfare of all children by protecting them from all forms of abuse. Youth Work Ireland Meath is committed to safeguarding young people and to provide a safe space for children and young people to grow, develop, learn and have fun.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- o Ensuring that all Member Youth Clubs have a formal Child Protection Policy in place that is regularly reviewed and updated.
- o Delivering training to all staff and volunteers engaged in activities that are appropriate to their role, work and contact with young people.
- o Evidence of all Child Protection training will be provided and kept on file.
- o The welfare of the child is paramount in all decisions, activities and programmes involving children and young people.
- o Adhering to the procedures set out for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- o Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- o Adopting Child Protection guidelines and reflecting these through our Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- o Sharing information about Child Protection and good practice with children, parents / guardians, staff and volunteers.
- o Sharing information and working with relevant agencies as appropriate.
- o Taking part in multi-disciplinary teams as appropriate.
- o Manage the Garda Vetting process for all staff and volunteers on behalf of Member Youth Clubs.
- o Track and monitor the delivery of Child Protection Training by designated Child Protection trainers.
- o Carry out an annual audit of child protection compliance across all services.

In conjunction with the NYCI Child Protection Unit the Designated Person and the staff team review the Child Protection policy, procedures and practices on an annual basis and also in accordance with any changes in relevant legislation and national guidelines in relation to Child Protection and young people.

The policy applies to staff of Youth Work Ireland Meath, to volunteers, to programme participants, to visitors, to guests and to YWI Meath users and facilitators. Youth Work Ireland Meath requires all other users of the facilities of YWI Meath to abide by the working practices contained within this policy.

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk Assessment – Organisational

Risk Identified	Procedures in place to manage identified risk
<p>1</p> <p>A member of the organisation fails to report an issue or concern of harm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Safeguarding Statement has been circulated to all staff ➤ Mandated reporters have been identified and made aware of and briefed on their mandatory reporting and assisting obligations ➤ Safeguarding is a standing item for Staff Induction, Staff Meetings and Staff Supervision ➤ The Designated Liaison Person is clearly identified to all staff and volunteers ➤ Reporting and Safeguarding issues are reminded to staff and volunteers at all external events ➤ Safeguarding is a standing item at Board meetings ➤ Staff disciplinary and Volunteer Code of Behaviour have both been updated to include failure to report a concern or harm as set out in the appropriate reporting procedures ➤ All staff and volunteers undertake agreed briefing and trainings as per our procedures and guidelines including the E-Learning module
<p>2</p> <p>An allegation, complaint or report of abuse is made against a volunteer, staff member or other third party engaged</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clear procedure for raising concern and complaint against staff and/or volunteers is in place ➤ A clear procedure is in place for the reporting and management investigation of allegations against any member of staff /volunteer ➤ Staff and volunteer codes of conduct are in place and either undertaken as part of Staff induction or as part of the initial briefing and training for volunteers. ➤ All staff and volunteers are subject to our recruitment and selection process ➤ All staff/volunteers are subject to an initial and repeat Vetting through the National Vetting Bureau prior to commencement of any duties/role with organisation ➤ A procedure is in place for dealing with complaints made against third party such as contractors and or others engaged with Youth work Ireland Meath ➤ Youth Work Ireland has memorandum of Understanding in place with key partners ➤ Youth Work Ireland Meath will support investigations by An Garda Síochána and/or Tusla as requested

3	<p>Allegation, report or observation of peer abuse of peer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clear procedure is in place for the reporting all issues of harm or concern by all staff and volunteers ➤ There is a clear procedure for raising a complaint ➤ A clear policy and procedure on Anti Bullying is in place ➤ All volunteers and staff are trained in line with Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 ➤ All events are adequately planned staffed and supervised ➤ All groups will have a set of agreed ground rules, all activities have clear ground rules that have been discussed and agreed with young people ➤ Staff and Volunteer training covers dealing with bullying and discriminatory behaviour
4	<p>Activities, programmes and events may create a level of additional risk due to the nature of the event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All activities, events and programmes are planned to include a full risk assessment. ➤ All participants give informed consent to activities ➤ All staff are briefed and will have undertaken appropriate induction, briefing and training ➤ Bona Fide of third party providers are checked including qualifications and vetting ➤ All off site events are subject to a pre-visit check and are risk assessed ➤ Programmes are either in house or from a bona fide source that has an evidence base in practice and are both age and young person proofed ➤ Staff and volunteers are bound by the code of conduct and internal policies and procedures and are expected to act within their duties in Loco Parentis ➤ Controls identified through the risk assessment are put in place ➤ All planning is young person centred and considers the group and community that is taking part
5	<p>Possibility of abuse through online activity</p>	<p>All the above applies online and to instances of abuse causing harm or concern.</p> <p>In addition Youth Work Ireland Meath:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitors its own online activity and during youth programmes • Has produced and delivers online guidelines, supports and training for Young People, Volunteers and Staff • Any activity that is unacceptable or reportable that occurs in an online or other media format will be dealt with in the appropriate way and through the relevant procedure

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk Assessment – Youth Clubs & Programmes

Risk Identified	Procedures in place to manage identified risk
<p>1.</p> <p>A child or young person could be harmed if an unsuitable person was recruited as a staff member or volunteer</p>	<p>Rigorous recruitment & screening procedures <u>prior</u> to any staff member or volunteer coming into contact with children or young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed Application Form - Interviewing - Reference Checks - Garda Vetting - Induction to all policies & procedures - Personal declaration <p>Ongoing Monitoring of all staff/volunteers in situ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing supervision - Probationary period imposed - Staff & volunteer team meetings
<p>2.</p> <p>A staff member or volunteer could harm a child or young person by not maintaining boundaries, behaving inappropriately or developing an inappropriate relationship with them during or outside of activities</p> <p>A child may be harmed if a staff member or volunteer failed to report any inappropriate behaviour that may or may not be named in the organisations Code of Behaviour, by a colleague towards children or young people</p> <p>Children could be harmed if staff or volunteers failed to report a retrospective disclosure of abuse</p>	<p>Clear and rigorous training provided for all staff and volunteers in the following areas <u>prior</u> to any contact with children or young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Safeguarding & Protection Training – Tusla eLearning module - Code of Behaviour for Staff & Volunteers - Accessible safeguarding information available & introduced to children & young people during initial contact - Accessible safeguarding information available & introduced to parents/guardians - Incident Reporting Policy & Procedures in place - Procedure in place for handling allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers - Disciplinary Policy & Procedures in place - Reporting Policy & Procedure in place

<p>3.</p>	<p>A child or young person may be harmed by being bullied or abused by another child or young person during activities, after activities, on the premises or via social media</p> <p>A child could be harmed if misconduct by another child towards them was unchallenged and left to continue</p>	<p>Clear process in place of contracting/setting ground rules with all groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of behaviour in place for children & young people - Group contracts in place - Safeguarding policy in place and visible at activity level - Anti-bullying Policy & Procedures in place - Ratios and supervision standards clearly set and communicated - Incident Reporting Policy & Procedures is in place - A complaints Policy & Procedures is in place
<p>4.</p>	<p>A child or young person may be harmed by not knowing or learning about their rights and not being empowered to assert their boundaries</p>	<p>A strengths and rights based curriculum underpins all programmes and services offered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A charter of rights has been developed in consultation with children and young people and is clearly visible and accessible - A Complaints Policy & Procedures is in place
<p>5.</p>	<p>A child could to be harmed if a staff member or volunteer did not know the kinds of abuse that can occur and therefore failed to recognise the signs and identify a concern</p>	<p>Child Safeguarding & Protection Training provided for all staff and volunteers <u>prior</u> to contact with children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Safeguarding & Protection Training including Tusla eLearning module - Designated Liaison Person in place to support persons reporting - Reporting procedures in place and clearly informed to all staff and volunteers
<p>6.</p>	<p>A child could to be harmed if a disclosure they made to a trusted person during their contact with our services was not reported</p> <p>A child may be harmed if a concern identified by staff was not reported</p>	<p>Child Protection and Safeguarding Training provided for all staff and volunteers <u>prior</u> to contact with children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Safeguarding & Protection Training including Tusla eLearning module - Designated Liaison Person in place to support persons reporting - Reporting procedures in place and clearly informed to all staff and volunteers

7.	<p>A child could be harmed if the organisation failed to provide a physically safe environment leading to accidents or incidents</p>	<p>Health & Safety Policy & Procedures in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular system checks conducted - Risk assessments conducted at centre level and for all activities - Health & Safety Audits conducted at regular intervals & improvement plans implemented - Insurance cover is adequate and limitations clearly communicated - Incident reporting Policy & Procedures in Place - Ratios and supervision standards clearly set and communicated - First Aid Responders on site
8.	<p>A child may be harmed if the organisation failed to have in place robust processes for planning activities, trips and events at local, regional, national or international levels</p>	<p>All activities are planned carefully in advance to ensure risks are avoided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity programmes agreed in advance and communicated with parents and young people - Risk assessments conducted at all levels and for all activities - Consent secured from young people and parents - Clear agreements on expectations and acceptable behaviour in advance - Insurance cover extended for all planned activities - Ratios and supervision standards clearly set and communicated
9.	<p>A child or young person could be placed in a harmful situation if adequate information is not provided to enable explicit consent to be granted by the parent/guardian and/or young person</p>	<p>Annual Membership & Consent Process in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Membership Form updated - Specific Activity Consent Forms completed prior to events - Detailed schedule of activity accompanying consent forms - Young person's consent included on all forms - Details of conditions of contract & agreements made included in consent information - Complaints Policy & Procedures in place

10.	A child or family could be harmed if private and confidential information of a sensitive nature is not securely kept and protected	Appropriate Data Protection Policies & Procedures in place <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Confidentiality Policy & Procedures in place- Data Protection Policy & Procedures in place- Aged information is shredded appropriately- The organisation has achieved compliance with the standards set in The General Data Protection Regulations (G.D.P.R.)
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Youth Work Ireland
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GUIDELINES FOR TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

1. PLANNING:

Planning is the key to a successful day out and should always include the young people involved. Follow these crucial guidelines to make the most of your trip.

Be clear about the youth works purpose of the visit.

Young people should understand that the youth club is not simply a form of recreation, but has sound educational aims and objectives.

Check that the aims and objectives are appropriate.

Who better to check with than the participants themselves?

Ascertain any associated costs.

If young people have an understanding of the budgeting and costing process, which is never too complex for a short trip, they are more likely to value the event (while also learning basic accounting skills).

Carry out a risk assessment.

If young people are involved in pre-visits, they will gain a prior understanding of the type of risks involved and will be more willing to take ownership of any good safety rules.

Provide participants with full information about the trip.

Involve members in drafting the information sheet.

Provide parents with information and obtain parental consent form (and medical consent, if necessary).

It can be a source of great frustration for a 17 year-old to be told they need parental consent to do something. If participants understand your legal duties that frustration is likely to be eased (*see section on parental consent*).

Obtain appropriate insurance.

Perhaps a member could call Youth Work Ireland Meath about the need for insurance and find out the different types available. Of course, in the final analysis, you will have to be sure of the cover.

Be clear about emergency procedures.

Again, if members have an understanding of why such procedures are necessary, and are involved in the development of these procedures, they are more likely to help in the case of an emergency.

Compile a list of all participants and contact details.

A task that could be easily undertaken by a young person.

Draw up a master plan and share it with those who need to know.

Having delegated some of your responsibilities for the running of the event, it becomes your role to be more concerned with the processes involved.

Afterwards, evaluate the activity against the aims and objectives as set out at the beginning.

If you don't actively involve young people in this decision-making process, how will you know whether the event has been a success or not?

The degree to which you involve young people in the components of a plan for your trip is up to you. Generally, they can and should participate in every sphere of such an activity for all the reasons outlined. At the end of the day, having shared power and responsibility with young people, you will have delivered a better quality of youth work and the participants will have had a more memorable experience.

2. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS:

If the thought of your legal responsibilities and the need for insurance makes you gulp, don't panic! Contact Youth Work Ireland Meath for accurate and clear advice about these issues, which in any case are less complicated than they might seem. Of course, this is not to say they are unimportant. Your responsibilities are immense and you need to be clear about where your duty starts and finishes.

A good rule of thumb is that, in essence a youth worker should exercise the same care as would a reasonable parent.

In general you should ensure:

- ✓ The activities are suitable for your group.
- ✓ The leaders have the right experience and if you're engaging in activities of a hazardous nature that they are also suitably qualified.
- ✓ You are adequately **insured** (*see below*)
- ✓ You have carried out a **risk assessment** (*see below*)
- ✓ You have sought and obtained **parental consent** (*see below*)

The danger is that with these legal duties, we may confuse care with control. Your duty is to provide the equivalent of reasonable parental care, but this doesn't mean you can't share responsibilities with young people; nor does it mean you can't allow young people an element of control over the programme.

INSURANCE:

There are three main types of insurance cover to consider – public liability, personal accident and vehicle insurance.

Public Liability: This covers you against the possibility that you may cause harm to someone else by your actions. If you are employed or working as a volunteer for an organisation, it's usual that the agency covers you, but always check!

Personal accident: This covers you or your group members against any loss or injury. The regional office has a list of 'high-risk' activities and a list of 'not-covered' activities. Check this out!

Vehicle insurance: If you are using a commercial vehicle, your insurance is included in the hire agreement.

RISK ASSESSMENT:

Youth Work Ireland Meath has a list of insured and uninsured activities. If your activity is not listed, ask the office to check with the insurers.

To be sure the activities are appropriate for the age group and abilities of your group, check with the activity centre or other suitably qualified professionals who have undertaken a similar activity.

Ask the following questions:

- ✓ Is the environment well known?
- ✓ Are leaders fully aware of the technical difficulty of the activity?
- ✓ Do leaders have proven competence to make on-site judgements related to the activity?
- ✓ Can the competence of leaders and/or instructors be assured?
- ✓ Is the quality of the equipment acceptable?
- ✓ Is the time of year and weather predictably appropriate?
- ✓ Have all objective dangers been identified and prepared for?

3. PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS:

If you are taking a young person under the age of 18 yrs out of the club, you must seek parental consent.

The consent form should include:

- ✓ Details of the trip, including the date, destination and times of the departure and the return journey.
- ✓ Information about the nature of the activities involved – be sure to specify any hazardous activities.
- ✓ A request for relevant medical details and consent to medical treatment (if necessary)
It may be helpful to list some well know medical complaints, e.g. Asthmas, allergies, use of medication e.g. inhalers, antibiotics, etc.
- ✓ Information about appropriate clothing, costs, whether pocket money is necessary (and if it is, how much is needed).
- ✓ A contact number for more information.
- ✓ Any further information you 'as a reasonable parent' might expect.
- ✓ Use of photographs in local newspapers, media or social network sites.

Hopefully none of this has put you off organising a trip or activity! Just remember exercise 'the same care as a responsible parent' - but even the children of responsible parents suffer bumps and bruises, the odd broken bone and sprains – so go for it!

YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is an ongoing, wilful, conscious desire to have control over or hurt another person. Bullying can be either physical (actual or threatened) or psychological (verbal or non-verbal) teasing or exclusion.

What steps can we take to prevent or at least reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour in our Youth Clubs and Youth Groups?

- Be aware that bullying does happen
- Provide regular sessions on bullying (videos, art work, role play etc)
- Create an atmosphere where bullying behaviour is unacceptable, by working towards a caring supportive atmosphere
- Encourage the 'silent majority' to speak out, remove the stigma of being a 'rat'
- Ensure that as youth leaders we do not reinforce bullying through sarcasm, humiliation, threatening or degrading behaviour
- Intervene straight away
- Encourage integration of young people from different background and cultures through teamwork activities
- Treat all young people equally
- Ensure adequate supervision in isolated areas
- Work with victim to develop self-esteem
- Work with bully to develop self-esteem and highlight strengths
- Ensure that all young people understand definition of bullying
- Display a written code of behaviour agreed with young people
- Design and display an Anti-Bullying Code with young people

YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH

POLICY FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

WHEN DEALING WITH A REPORT OF BULLYING:

- Speak separately and in private to the person who appears to be the victim, the person who appears to be the bully, and the person who saw what happened. Assure the victim that it is not their fault
- Write down the incident(s) on a bullying report form and report it to the Youth Leader. The form should have the following details:
 - Day, date, time, place, names of those involved, details of the incident
- Assure the victim of ongoing support and encourage them to report any further attempts of bullying.
- If considered necessary, contact the parents/guardian.
- Endeavour to provide support for the bully where possible.

The following is a guideline for disruptive behaviour situations:

- Address the problem
- Take control
 - Get support from another youth leader
 - Separate young person from the situation
 - Discuss situation with young person
- Take Action
 - Secure the situation
 - Advise young person of procedure
- Report into Incident Book
- Discuss at Committee meeting
- Inform young person of action to be taken
- Inform parent if situation is serious

YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH

SAMPLE ANTI-BULLYING CODES

“In our Youth Club everybody is valued. Difference of any type - race, religion, appearance, personality, background or interests – does not make it acceptable to bully a person.”

“The people in our Youth Club have the right to be themselves and the responsibility to treat other as they would like to be treated.”

“We are all different, that is what makes us special.”

“Silence allows people to suffer. We should speak out when we know we should.”

“We want our Youth Club to be a place where everyone can feel secure”

“No one should have to suffer name-calling, abuse or feel victimised in any way.”

“If there is a problem, share it”.

Important Notes

If the safety of a young person is considered to be at risk, if you suspect emotional, physical or sexual abuse and or neglect you should contact either the Regional Director of Youth Work Ireland Meath or the Duty Social Worker (Contact details attached)

Do not promise to keep a young person's secret. It is important not to promise confidentiality before knowing what the child is going to say, because it may be necessary to share that information with others. The child's trust has already been betrayed by the abuser and making promises that one fails to keep can compound the child's feelings of betrayal.

Make it clear to the young person that you are obliged to take the information further if you feel their safety is at risk.

It is not your responsibility to investigate.

Do not discuss a suspicion or a disclosure with anyone other than the person to whom you are making the referral.

Only those who need to know should be told.

Get support for yourself. Listening to an abused child can be very upsetting and giving the child help may be difficult if you are not given support yourself.

However, remember the above –

“Only those who need to know should be told.”

Our Code of Behaviour adheres to Children First guidelines and best practice and is a requirement for all staff and volunteers.

Code of Behaviour:

The code of behaviour helps to protect not only the children and young people in the organisation but also protects staff and volunteers. It is imperative that staff/volunteers

Do not:

- Spend too much time alone with children/young people, away from others. If it is a one-to-one situation, make sure the door is open. Tell another member of staff if you are going to see a child/young person on your own.
- Take children/young people alone in a car on journeys. Try to ensure another leader or young person is present with you in the vehicle. If you do have to transport a child alone ensure other leaders are aware of the situation and the child/young person is in a rear seat and is wearing a seat belt.
- Take children/young people to your home.
- Engage in rough, physical games, including horseplay. If you physically restrain a child/young person for any reason, be aware that it could be misinterpreted as assault.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind. Never pat a child/young person on the bottom. If you work with children/young people with special needs who sit on your lap, get a lap-cushion which they can sit on with the consent of the parent/guardian.
- Allow children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour to yourself. Report directly to the DLP.
- In a residential setting never under any circumstances, take a child/young person into your bedroom
- Make suggestive comments about a child/young people, even in jest.
- Do things of a personal nature that children/young people can do for themselves as it may be misconstrued
- Go into the toilet or bedroom alone with children/young people, if possible.

Tasks of a personal nature should be only carried out for very young children or children/young people with disabilities with the full understanding and consent of parents. All tasks of a personal nature are to be undertaken with the utmost discretion and sensitivity. Adults should explain what help they are going to give the child with personal care and in accordance with their understanding gain their consent or parental consent.

Do

- Give firm guidelines on sexually inappropriate behaviour to the child/young person. Explain that the behaviour is unacceptable and could get them into difficulty, but do not make them feel guilty. The behaviour may be an imitation of abuse the child has suffered and is not the child's fault.
- Be careful of physical embraces from children/young people, particularly when working with children/young people with special needs. This is equally important for the protection of staff/volunteers and children/young people.
- Carry identification when on journey's with children/young people.
- Have a no alcohol policy for all engaging on a residential, young people, staff, volunteers and residential staff.
- Discourage personal relationships between staff/staff, staff/volunteers, volunteers/volunteers for the duration of the residential.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the check lists in the codes of practice for residential work and adhere to them.

Keep records of:

- Any allegations a child/young person makes against you or other staff, e.g. "you're always picking on me", "you hit me", "don't touch me" etc. Keep records of dates and times.
- If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record what happened, tell a colleague and report to the DLP. Ignoring this or allowing it to go on may place you in a very difficult position.

- In the event of injury ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult.



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

Child Protection & Safeguarding
Awareness Programme

APPENDICES



Youth Club Children's Officer

The Youth Club Children's Officer will be the contact person for Youth Club members to come to if they have ideas or concerns. The Youth Club Children's Officer will bring ideas to the Youth Club Committee and concerns to Youth Work Ireland Meath contacts. The Youth Club Children's Officer will be the contact person for gathering forms for volunteers.

Role of the Youth Club Children's Officer

- Voice of the young people to the Committee.
- Contact person for ensuring volunteers have submitted Garda Vetting and Volunteer forms and have completed compulsory training.
- Contact/Report to Youth Work Ireland Meath Designated Liaison Person on issues of concern for young people.

Designated Liaison Person - Geraldine Hogarty – 087 – 2306821

Email: geraldine@youthworkirelandmeath.ie

Youth & Volunteer Support and Mandated person – Lisa Moroney – 087 – 0906062

Email: lisa@youthworkirelandmeath.ie



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

CODES OF PRACTICE & BEHAVIOUR
for
Youth Clubs & Project Work

Purpose of: Youth Clubs and Projects exist to assist in the personal and social development of young people so as to enable them to make decisions, exercise responsibility and contribute towards the development of society.

Membership

- Youth Clubs/Projects should have at least 12 members participating on a regular basis. In order to allow for active participation membership should be restricted to not more than 60 young people.
- Youth Clubs/Projects should operate in different sections, one for under 15s age group and one for over 15s.
- Youth Clubs/Projects should keep a current record of membership and attendance by young people.

Programme

Youth Clubs/Project should:

- Hold regular meetings and provide regular programme activities at least once per fortnight.
- Provide encouragement and preparation for participation on an equal basis for all young people.
- Provide opportunities for young people.
- Encourage participation in creative and aesthetic activities.
- Encourage participation in sporting and recreational activities.
- Encourage Voluntary Community involvement.
- Provide opportunities for civic and international awareness.
- Ensure that programmes respond to the needs of all in an inclusive way.
- Staff, volunteers and members involved in Youth Club/Project activity will adhere to YWI Meath Drugs & Alcohol policy while involved in activities.

Facilities

- YWI Meath Youth Clubs/Projects aim to provide adequate facilities to facilitate the development of all young people.
- YWI Meath Youth Clubs/Projects who provide meeting venues are expected to follow the Basic Safety Points in the Volunteer Induction Booklet.
- Venues for Youth Clubs/Projects activities should have adequate toilet facilities for males and females and disability access where appropriate.

Leaders

- YWI Meath Youth Clubs/Projects should have at least one trained leader (over 18 years of age) for every ten members of the Youth Club/Project.
- Leaders are expected to show the highest degree of responsibility and example to club members. The agreed expectations and obligations of voluntary leaders and the professional youth work staff of the youth service is stated in our Charter for Volunteers.
- Leaders aged 18 years old should not work with members aged 16 or older.

Participation

- Youth Clubs/Projects should have a junior committee to enable young people to participate with their peers in the exercise of responsibility and real participation in decision-making within the club.
- Young people who form a member committee should receive training appropriate for their roles.
- Specific measures should be put in place to ensure participation by club members in the organisation of activities in the club, including:
 - Fundraising
 - Management of the club
 - Determining value for money in all programmes, having regard to objectives and resources available
 - Decision-making in youth matters through participation at regional and national levels.
 - Parent/Guardians should be encouraged to play an active supporting role in the youth club through helping with fund-raising, transport, advice and support.

Training

- The completion of basic leadership training for all staff and volunteers of a Youth Club/Project is a prerequisite for acceptance of affiliation by the club and provision of insurance. This training should cover what happens on a club night; dealing with programme planning; dealing with youth services available.
- YWI Meath aims to offer further ongoing training for their club leaders. This should include an in-club training programme in every club at least once every three years.
- YWI Meath aims to offer, either directly or indirectly, training and support to leaders in personal development, interpersonal skills and specific programme areas, e.g. arts, outdoor pursuits.
- Where appropriate, young people should receive training in managing the affairs of their Youth Club/Project, running groups, programme planning and club development.

Administration

- Youth Club/Projects should maintain adequate financial records and accounts
- Youth Club/Projects should maintain a file of application forms; parental consent forms, and any relevant medical information.
- Youth Club/Projects members should be aware of the rules of the Youth Club/Project and disciplinary matters should be dealt with in line with YWI Meath document on Bullying & Disciplinary issues.

Local Youth Service Support

- Youth Work Ireland Meath will provide a structure for representatives of the youth club/project to advise on policy and the development of programmes.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath will designate a staff person as key support worker for Youth Club/Projects with responsibility for development work with the youth club/project.
- The ratio of youth workers necessary to support a given number of youth clubs/projects will vary according to the level of development of the local youth service, but in no circumstances should a Club Development Worker be expected to support more than 20 Clubs/projects.
- Youth Work Ireland Meath will organise a regular programme of social and developmental events for volunteer leaders.

Our Code of Behaviour adheres to Children First guidelines and best practice and is a requirement for all staff and volunteers.

Code of Behaviour:

The code of behaviour helps to protect not only the children and young people in the organisation but also protects staff and volunteers. It is imperative that staff/volunteers

Do not:

- Spend too much time alone with children/young people, away from others. If it is a one-to-one situation, make sure the door is open. Tell another member of staff if you are going to see a child/young person on your own.
- Take children/young people alone in a car on journeys. Try to ensure another leader or young person is present with you in the vehicle. If you do have to transport a child alone ensure other leaders are aware of the situation and the child/young person is in a rear seat and is wearing a seat belt.
- Take children/young people to your home.
- Engage in rough, physical games, including horseplay. If you physically restrain a child/young person for any reason, be aware that it could be misinterpreted as assault.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind. Never pat a child/young person on the bottom. If you work with children/young people with special needs who sit on your lap, get a lap-cushion which they can sit on with the consent of the parent/guardian.
- Allow children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour to yourself. Report directly to the DLP.
- In a residential setting never under any circumstances, take a child/young person into your bedroom
- Make suggestive comments about a child/young people, even in jest.
- Do things of a personal nature that children/young people can do for themselves as it may be misconstrued
- Go into the toilet or bedroom alone with children/young people, if possible.

Tasks of a personal nature should be only carried out for very young children or children/young people with disabilities with the full understanding and consent of parents. All tasks of a personal nature are to be undertaken with the utmost discretion and sensitivity. Adults should explain what help they are going to give the child with personal care and in accordance with their understanding gain their consent or parental consent.

Do

- Give firm guidelines on sexually inappropriate behaviour to the child/young person. Explain that the behaviour is unacceptable and could get them into difficulty, but do not make them feel guilty. The behaviour may be an imitation of abuse the child has suffered and is not the child's fault.
- Be careful of physical embraces from children/young people, particularly when working with children/young people with special needs. This is equally important for the protection of staff/volunteers and children/young people.
- Carry identification when on journey's with children/young people.
- Have a no alcohol policy for all engaging on a residential, young people, staff, volunteers and residential staff.
- Discourage personal relationships between staff/staff, staff/volunteers, volunteers/volunteers for the duration of the residential.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the check lists in the codes of practice for residential work and adhere to them.

Keep records of:

- Any allegations a child/young person makes against you or other staff, e.g. "you're always picking on me", "you hit me", "don't touch me" etc. Keep records of dates and times.
- If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record what happened, tell a colleague and report to the DLP. Ignoring this or allowing it to go on may place you in a very difficult position.
- In the event of injury ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult.

Codes of Practice for Residential Work:

There are undoubted benefits to be gained from residential visits, benefits to both the organisation in helping it to meet its objectives, and benefits to the children and young people in their personal development. The residential setting can greatly accelerate the process of making friendships, and developing relationships – a process which is part of growing up. In order to get the most benefit it is essential to plan carefully and thoroughly. It is hoped that the guidelines and checklists that follow will be a valuable tool towards running well-organised, successful and enjoyable residential visits.

It is important to spend time planning all residential visits thoroughly. The type of premises will depend on the aims and objectives of the residential. It is essential that at least one leader visits the residential centre in advance of the trip. It is advisable that this person is the nominated leader-in-charge of the residential and keeps records of this visit. The following checklist should help with advanced planning visit:

General Checklist

- Name of the Centre
- Address of the Centre
- Telephone Number/Fax number/email address
- Date of advanced Planning Visit
- Name of Nominated Group Leader
- Name of Residential Centre contact
- Emergency contact numbers for the centre
- Booking procedure
- Entry requirements (age, minimum/maximum numbers etc.)
- Catering Arrangements
- Disabled access (if required)
- Are our ratios of leaders to young people acceptable to the centre staff – with a mixed group that there is at least one male and female leader, there is a minimum of one adult leader to every eight young people
- Have the centre staff been fully trained in first aid procedures – ask for copies of the centres emergency procedures, activity guidelines and specifications
- Clarify and agree how much responsibility for supervision lies with the centre staff and how much lies with your own leaders
- Agree our policy on drugs, alcohol, bullying etc. with the centre staff and vice-versa
- Agree control and discipline policies with the centre staff
- Discuss and agree the centres special rules e.g. out-of-bounds areas etc/are these areas fenced off?
- Discuss and agree the programme of activities for the residential with the centre staff
- Enquire into the centres complaints procedures
- Are you aware of all of the costs e.g. extra costs for programmes, transport and activities?
- Will your group be responsible for breakages or other damage? If so what conditions are attached to this?
- How much notice is required for cancellation of a visit
- Will there be a cancellation fee?
- When will you have to pay for the visit
- What facilities are available in the area?
- Have you booked transport with a reputable travel company with adequate insurance, taxation, and roadworthy vehicles
- Private cars can be used as long as they are not used for hire or carrying passengers for reward. However you should never carry groups of children/young people in your car unless you are sure that your insurance covers this. Always check with your insurance company of any special conditions within your policy. Avoid transporting a child or young person on your own. Try to ensure another leader or young person is present with you in the vehicle. If you do have to transport a child alone ensure other leaders are aware of the situation and the child/young person is in a rear seat and is wearing a seat belt.
- If you are using public transport check the time-table as they may be up-dated or changed on a regular basis, check the travel company takes group bookings and book well in advance – Good supervision is essential on all forms of public transport

Accommodation Checklist

- Is the centre clean and tidy throughout?
- Are there separate sleeping, washing and toilet areas for males and females, and staff and young people?
- How many rooms are there and how many beds in each?
- Have you ensured that the leader's accommodation is within earshot of the young people?
- Is your group expected to share facilities with another group? If so are they likely to be compatible?
- Is the washing and dressing facilities suitable and allow for the privacy of the young people?
- What bedding do you need to bring?
- Are the kitchen and eating areas clean and hygienic?
- Discuss and agree menus with the centre catering staff. Ensuring that you make them aware of any special dietary needs/requirements?
- What are meal times and do these times fit in with your programme?
- What are your groups responsibilities regard the setting of tables, cleaning up, washing dishes etc – prepare a rota for the participants in relations to kitchen duties?
- What is the availability of out-of-hours catering arrangements e.g. tea and coffee making facilities?
- Is there a tuck shop/need to bring snack foods with you?
- Are there facilities available for young people who need to receive medication/injections?
- What equipment does the centre provide and do you need to book it in advance?
- How much cleaning is your group expected to do before leaving?

Programme Checklist

If possible you should consult with the young people, parents and colleagues when drawing up your programme of activities to ensure that everyone will gain the maximum benefit from the programme. If it is not possible to consult in advance, you should provide the young people, parents and colleagues with the programme in advance of the visit. When planning the programme you should take account of the following:

- What are the objectives of the programme?
- How much money is available for the programme costs?
- Do you need any special equipment and is it available in the centre or do you need to provide it?
- What facilities are available in the residential centre e.g. board games, videos, overhead projectors etc – do they need to be booked in advance and is there a cost involved for them?
- Are the activities arranged suitable to the age, gender, ability etc. of your group?
- Does anyone in the group have a disability? If so, how are activities planned to cater for this?
- Does the programme have a balance of activities? (indoor/outdoor, noisy/quiet, small group/large group/individual, organised activities/free time etc).
- Have you made emergency plans for bad weather or unexpected occurrences?
- Are the leaders in need of special training or qualifications to lead any of the activities?
- Have you allowed for some time off for each of the leaders during the residential?

Preparation of Leaders

It is imperative that there is adequate time given for the preparation of leaders to exchange information, discuss the programme, arrangements, policies etc. The following checklist should be used to ensure leaders are adequately prepared:

- Have all leaders registered as volunteers within the organisation?
- Have all leaders been Garda Vetted as required by YWI Meath.
- Have you explained accident and emergency procedures to the leaders in advance of the visit?
- Have you provided leaders with rotas, programmes etc. before the visit?
- Are the leaders aware of Child Protection Procedures and completed Child Protection training?
- Are the leaders aware of Health and Safety Policy?
- Are the leaders aware of the Code of Behaviour?
- Has the insurance company been informed of your trip?
- Have all leaders been provided with a contact number for the Regional Director in case of emergency?
- All leaders must participate in an evaluation of the residential assessing their involvement in the residential and additional training requirements for leaders arising from their experiences

Preparation of Young People

It is essential that the young people participating in any residential work are adequately prepared. The young people should be involved in drafting the Codes of Behaviour for their residential. They should also be involved in the design of the programme for the residential.

The young people need to be made aware of the following:

- Clothing requirements for the residential – being conscious of participants not wearing clothing and symbols that may be deemed to be offensive or provocative toward participants from any sections of the community.
- Programme content
- Cooking and/or cleaning rotas
- Accident, emergency and complaint procedures
- Rules and regulations of the centre they are visiting
- Child Protection procedures

Preparation of Parents

A meeting with parents should be organised in advance of a residential where practicable. If it is not possible parents should receive the same information, including the following:

- An explanation of all arrangements for the residential
- Copies of the organisations policies
- Emergency contact details

In addition parental consent must be acquired from parents including details of their child's medical information.

During the Residential:

Make sure

- You find out who is your contact person for the duration of your stay
- That your group is informed of fire procedures and fire exits and that these are not blocked at any time during your stay
- That you take a record of which young people are sleeping in which rooms in case of emergency and as a check list at night time. This record should be kept on your person at all times.
- That accommodation is specific to gender and night time checks are gender specific as per our Youth Charter.
- That there is access to an outside telephone line at all times
- That you get a copy of all emergency numbers that may be required and keep them on your person at all times (fire, police, doctor, hospital, social services etc.) and are issued to all of the participants
- That you find the 24hour emergency contact number for the contact person for the centre and keep it on your person at all times
- That the leaders and young people are informed of the house rules
- That you carry details of group member dietary, cultural and medical needs, home and emergency numbers on your person at all times
- That you carry a first aid kit with adequate supplies
- That you have access to transport at all times in case of emergency
- That there is a leader-in-charge appointed at all times (on rotation) and that everyone is aware of who the leader-in-charge is at any given time
- That you have daily staff meetings for your leaders (and centre staff if necessary) – these meetings should include the programme, conditions, progress of the individual participants (where centre staff are not involved in the meeting they should be met daily to exchange information)
- That there are daily meetings with the participants to assess their enjoyment and involvement in the residential
- That you keep a record of all meetings

Emergency Procedures

Make sure that

- You have emergency procedures if residential staff are not on site 24 hours a day
- You provide all group leaders with an emergency contact persons name and telephone number and a back-up system before the visit
- You immediately establish the names of any injured people and the extent of these injuries
- The injured people are accompanied to hospital (preferably by an adult they know)
- All members of the group are accounted for, that they are supervised and have understood what has happened and the implications for the rest of the programme
- You share the problem by advising all other staff and volunteers that the accident/emergency procedure is in operation
- You immediately make contact with the Regional Director and give details of the accident and emergency
- You restrict access to the telephone until you have made contact with the Regional Director and parents/guardians of the young person/people involved
- You keep detailed records of all emergencies/accidents/incidents

Travelling Abroad

While everything highlighted so far in the Codes of Practice inform all of our work, the following notes are designed as additional notes in travelling abroad with young people.

- Always provide parent with information on itinerary, travel arrangements and emergency contact numbers
- Always obtain parental consent
- It is advisable to have at least one group leader who has had previous experience of travelling abroad with a group
- The staff and volunteers should have adequate knowledge of the English language to communicate with children/young people
- Organisations/groups should be aware of differences in culture and should make an effort to accommodate these
- Once you have identified a contact person abroad you need to talk to them as much as possible about expectations, cultural differences, vetting of centre staff, programmes etc. Every effort should be made to carry out an advanced planning visit with the partner organisation to ensure there is clarity about the programme, accommodation, child protection issues etc.
- Explore possibilities for the participants to practice their religion whilst away from home
- Be aware of cultural differences with regard to alcohol, age, sex, attitudes etc. as these may vary from country to country
- It is essential to have local currency/travellers cheques etc. and allow extra money for emergencies
- Leaders should have discussions before departure to allow group members to express fears and talk through cultural issues, travel, expectations etc.
- Photocopies of passports and travel documentation should be left at home as they will be an invaluable record in the case of lost or stolen documents
- Check medicines required before travel and ensure these are carried with the group at all times
- Check the necessity for vaccinations well in advance of travelling
- E111 forms cover basic medical care in European countries. It is imperative that a comprehensive travel insurance policy is secured before travelling; the policy should cover extreme emergencies such as flying parents out to be with the injured participant, allowing for leaders to remain with the injured person and travel back separately from the rest of the group, theft and loss of property and money etc.

- Ensure you allow enough time to apply for Visa's
- Plan your travel in as much detail as possible taking into account delays at airports, refreshments, comfort stops, travel sickness etc
- A change of clothes and toiletries should be packed in hand luggage in case the main luggage is lost
- Ensure you know precisely what will happen upon your arrival in the foreign country – if you have had a long journey or have a long journey ahead, some refreshment and long rest will be essential

It is not advisable for the group to stay with host families; rather the young people should be staying collectively. Should the participants have to stay with host families the following guidelines should be observed:

- All members of the host family should be Garda Vetted and references provided by independent referees. The host family should be interviewed, in their home by at least one member of our staff at the advanced planning visit, agreeing house rules, bedtimes etc and ensuring that at least one member of the household is fluent in English, discussing cultural differences in food, language, religion etc. Staff must have viewed the house and seen where the young person will be sleeping
- As far as possible try to ensure that the young person and the host family are compatible with each other and that the young people are staying in close proximity with the other members of their group
- Ensure that there is a leader who is known to the young person in the same area as them
- Ensure that all the young people have been provided with emergency money and an information card listing their leaders and emergency telephone numbers
- The Leaders should meet with the participants daily and visit them in the homes they are staying in and ensure they are given an opportunity to talk openly with you about any fears or concerns they may have
- The host families must be informed of all health and dietary needs that the young people have
- All activities should be conducted in accordance with our standards of safety and supervision and those laid down by the host nation – adhering to whichever country's are the highest
- Weather conditions can have a profound influence on the safety of activities. Ensure you check with local experts to ensure that activities are appropriate for the climatic conditions at the time of your visit.

Evaluation of the exchange:

At the end of the residential it is very important that leaders get together to share their ideas and comments on it. At this session the following questions should be addressed:

- Was the trip/residential/exchange well planned and organised?
- Did you give enough attention to new ideas?
- Could better use have been made of the facilities?
- Was the group balanced in terms of age, gender, religion, abilities, race etc?
- Were there any disciplinary problems?
- If so, how would these be avoided on a future trip?
- Did the leaders and participants get on well together and participate collectively?
- Was the staff in the centre pleasant and easy to work with?
- Did the programme offer equal opportunities to everyone irrespective of age, gender, ability, religion, race and cultural background?
- Were the activities chosen suitable for everyone?
- Has there been an assessment of the participants' evaluation?
- Have you planned follow-up activities for the group?
- Are you planning future residential trips to build on this one?

Safety List for Young People and Parents

- Name
- Leader's names and mobile phone numbers
- Residential Address
- Residential and Emergency telephone numbers
- Host Parents Names, address, telephone numbers
- Parent's emergency contact numbers (home, work and mobile)

References

Youth Work Ireland Meath's:

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Organisational and Youth Club Risk Assessments
- Drug & Alcohol Policy
- Basic Induction training for Volunteers
- Health & Safety Statement
- Volunteer Charter
- Youth Charter



Mission Statement

“To support our young people and volunteers to create social and educational activities that are fun and constructive for their future and the future of their communities”.

Consent Form

I give my consent for _____

to attend Youth Work Ireland Meath Summer Camp in Youth Cafe between the hours of 10.30 am & 2.00pm on 13th– 16th August

Address: _____

D.O.B: _____

Contact No.: _____

Contact No.: _____

Please outline any illness or medication required:

I give permission to have photographs and video footage taken of my child to be used for:

Facebook Yes No

Our Website Yes No

Newspapers Yes No

Other Promotional Material Yes No

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

PERMISSION MUST BE SIGNED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN

Please Note: In line with Data Protection Policy, all information will be shredded after the activity.

Guidelines for completing Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1)

Please read the following guidelines before completing this form.

Miscellaneous

The Form must be completed in full using **BLOCK CAPITALS** and writing must be clear and legible.

The Form should be completed in ball point pen.

Photocopies will not be accepted.

All applicants will be required to provide a minimum of 2 documents to validate their identity eg:

- Irish Driving licence or Learner Permit
- Irish Public Services Card
- Passport (from country of citizenship)
- Birth Certificate
- Irish certificate of naturalisation

If the applicant is under 18 years of age, a completed NVB 3 - Parent\Guardian Consent Form will be required. Request from YWI Meath office.

Personal Details

Insert details for each field, allowing one block letter per box.

For Date of Birth field, allow one digit per box.

Please fill in your Email Address, allowing one character/symbol per box. This is required as the invitation to the e-vetting website will be sent to this address.

Please allow one digit per box for your contact number.

The Current Address means the address you are now living at.

The address fields should be completed in full, including Eircode/Postcode. No abbreviations.

Role Being Vetted For

The role being applied for must be clearly stated. Generic terms such as “Volunteer” will not suffice. Volunteer Youth Worker is acceptable

Declaration of Application

The applicant must confirm their understanding and acceptance of the two statements by signing the application form at Section 2 and **ticking the box provided**.



Your Ref:

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Form NVB 1

Vetting Invitation

Section 1 – Personal Information

Under Sec 26(b) of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, it is an offence to make a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a vetting disclosure.

Forename(s):																										
Middle Name:																										
Surname:																										
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Current Address:

Line 1:	
Line 2:	
Line 3:	
Line 4:	
Line 5:	
Eircode/Postcode:	

Section 2 – Additional Information

Name Of Organisation: Youth Work Ireland Meath

I have provided documentation to validate my identity as required *and*
 I consent to the making of this application and to the disclosure of information by the National Vetting Bureau to the Liaison Person pursuant to Section 13(4)(e) National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016. Please tick box

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

D	D	/	M	M	/	Y	Y	Y	Y
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Note: Please return this form to the above named organisation. An invitation to the e-vetting website will then be sent to your Email address.



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

Youth Work Ireland Meath Accident/Incident Report Form

1. Location of Accident/Incident:							
2. Accident/Incident reported by:							
3. Accident/Incident Details		Day:		Date:		Time:	am/pm
	Tick as appropriate					Information	
4. Category	Injury to employee/volunteer						
	Injury to young person/club participant						
	Injury to member of public						
	Damage to Property						
	Road Traffic Accident/Incident						
	Near miss						
	Other (specify)						
5. Personal Details of Injured Party (Separate forms for each person if more than one injured)							
Full name							
Date of Birth							
Home Address							
Job Description							
Were persons involved authorised to be undertaking this activity? Yes / No						Information:	

6. Description of Accident/Incident:

(Please provide as much information and photographs/sketches where possible)

7. Injury Details	
Nature of Injury (Cut, strain, fracture, bruise etc.)	
Area of body injured	

8. Medical Assistance (if applicable)	
Was assistance of First Aider required?	
Was person examined by a doctor?	
Did the injury necessitate the person leaving work/activities?	
Was person examined at a hospital?	
Treatment received and duration of stay:	

9. Personal Protective Equipment		
Include information of PPE required or being worn at time of incident (if applicable)		
	Supplied/Required	Worn
High Visibility Vest		
Ear Defenders		
Gloves		
Other (Please Specify)		

10. Training
Training course information and copies of certificates of each person involved to be attached (if applicable) e.g. Child Protection Cert, Manual Handling Cert. etc

11. Witnesses

Were there any witnesses to the incident? Yes / No
(Any statement to be written and signed below)

The details given in this report are true to the best of my knowledge

Signed:

Date:

Signed:

Date:

Signed:

Date:

NOTE: FORWARD COMPLETED DOCUMENT IMMEDIATELY TO:

**GERALDINE HOGARTY
YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH OFFICE,
ST MARY'S CHURCH GROUNDS,
TRIMGATE STREET,
NAVAN,
CO. MEATH,**

**PLEASE DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO ANY OTHER PERSONS.
EXTERNAL ENQUIRIES FOR COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE REQUESTED
THROUGH THE YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEATH REGIONAL DIRECTOR.**

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Use block letters when filling out this form.
Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*	
---	--

2. Date of Report*	
---------------------------	--

3. Details of Child

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address*		Date of Birth*	
		Estimated Age*	
		School Name	
		School Address	
Eircode			

Details of Concerns* Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary

Please see *'Tusla Children First – A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns'* for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla

4. Type of Concern

Child Welfare Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Details of Reporter

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

6. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

7. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:				

8. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

*MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)*

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

9. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

10. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

*MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)*

11. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1983 & 2002. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specific lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by

First Name	Surname	Date

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

*MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)*

First Name		Surname		Date Sent	
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Authorised Person Signature*	
Date*	

Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated Case No				

SAMPLE



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

Child Protection & Awareness
Programme

Guidance Sheets

and

Frequently Asked Questions



CHILD PROTECTION AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Ratios

Due to the number of potential variables, it is not possible to recommend “one size fits all” guidance to cover all activities involving children and young people. There are, however, a number of key principles that are recommended as good practice:

- Employees/volunteers (especially within the context of youth organisation/group activities involving large numbers of young people) are recommended to make sure that there is sufficient help available for activities to be organised in a way that maximises fun, learning, safety and participation. When dealing with group members of mixed sex, it is important that there are sufficient adults of both sexes to properly manage all activities and areas of any premises in use.
- The minimum adult/young person ratio in any group should ideally be one adult per group of ten plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of ten thereafter. Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the workers should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.
- Many groups/organisations have a system to allow young people who are under 18 to act as ‘junior leaders’, but this should be about developing a young person’s sense of belonging & responsibility rather than depending on them to take full responsibility for managing a group of children. Junior leader’s under 18 years can supplement the numbers of adult leaders supervising the activity but should not be counted as part of the core ratio.

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Trips away from Home

Checklist for day trip away

Have you:

- Identified the aim and outcomes of the programme
- Followed your organisations child protection policy and procedures
- Carried out a risk assessment
- Recruited and selected staff/volunteers using safe practices procedures
- Selected a key staff member who has overall responsibility for the trip
- Selected staff for the trip who are appropriately trained and qualified
- Nominated a staff member who is responsible for first aid
- Ensured you have adequate and gender-based supervision
- Appointed a contact person at home who has access to all information and contact details
- Checked your own insurance and ensured you have coverage for all activities
- Checked the transport has appropriate insurance and qualified drivers, seatbelts etc...
- Carried out an equipment safety check
- Checked the first aid kit
- Ensured there is plan B
- Made provision for returning home early
- Allocated a budget and contingency fund
- Checked out centres' Child protection policy, health and safety etc...
- Recruitment procedures
- Insurance cover
- Staff are appropriately trained and qualified
- Changing areas for boys and girls (if required)
- Disability access (if required)

Have the young people/participants:

- Been involved as much as possible in the planning of the trip
- Agreed a behaviour contract with consequences
- Agreed boundaries around unstructured time
- Been given information on appropriate clothing, a 'help me' card, and contact details for leaders.

Have Parents /carers:

- Met with leaders and been informed of the programme
- Been given a copy of the organisations child protection policy and procedures
- Consented in writing
- Given contact details, medical details including allergies, illnesses, medications and dietary requirements.
- Been given contact details of leaders and centre
- Been given details for pick up and drop off of young people/participants

Have staff:

- Been trained on the organisations' code of behaviour and child protection policy, on how to deal with a disclosure and in dealing with challenging behaviour
- Been assigned responsibilities and scheduled for breaks
- Been made aware of how to handle an emergency and made aware of who to contact in an emergency
- Evaluated programme with young people

Extra considerations if staying overnight

Have you checked?

- if there is access to centre staff 24/7
- Is there appropriate sleeping arrangements for young people, i.e. separate provision for boys and girls and separate provision for leaders (within ear shot of young people)
- Centres supervision and security
- Drugs and alcohol policy of centre

Extra considerations if going abroad

Have you checked?

- Appropriate paper work is in place, e.g. passports, visa
- Copies of documents and passport numbers are with leaders at home and away
- Insurance cover for all aspects of travelling
- Detailed travel itinerary
- If staff and young people have contact details for leaders locally and at home
- Currency, climate, time zones, cultural differences etc...
- Legal differences e.g. drinking, age of consent, drugs etc...
- If vaccinations are necessary
- If there are regular check in and debriefing sessions with staff and young people

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Working on a one-to-one basis with young people

There are two main situations in which the need for one-to-one working may arise

1. In a reactive situation, e.g. where a young person requests a one on one meeting without warning or where a young person needs to be removed from a group:
2. As part of a planned structured piece of work

The following provides some guidance in relation to these situations:

1. In a reactive situation:

- If you need to talk separately, try to do so in an open environment, in view of others;
- If this is not possible try to meet in rooms with visual access, or with the door open, or in a room/area where other people are nearby;
- Workers should advise another worker that such a meeting is taking place and the reason for it. A record should be kept of these meetings including names, dates, times, location, reason for the meeting and outcome;
- Workers are strongly advised to avoid meetings with individual children where they are on their own in a building;
- One to one meetings should take place at an appropriate time, e.g. not late at night and in an appropriate venue.

2. As part of a planned structured piece of work

- The particular programme / activity should have a clear rationale, aims, methodology, evaluation mechanism and accompanying work plan.
- The meetings in relation to this work should take place in an appropriate environment taking account of the issues referred to above.
- A good supervision structure should be in place to support this work and address any issues which may arise.
- Parents/guardians must be fully informed as to the nature and purpose of this work and must give written consent.
- A clear code of behaviour must be agreed and adhered to for both worker and young person
- Young people should be advised who they should contact if they have any concerns or feel uncomfortable about any aspects of these meetings

It is recommended, however, that workers be sensitive to the potential risk to personal safety and false allegations which may arise when they meet alone with a young person and an appropriate risk assessment should be conducted in order to minimise these risks.

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Developing a Code of Behaviour with Children and Young People

A code of behaviour for children/young people helps to explain their rights and responsibilities when taking part in an organisation's activities. For this to work, children/young people need to be able to develop the code for themselves with the assistance of a worker. Codes of behaviour have been shown to help children/young people to develop their sense of fair play and mutual respect.

When children/young people 'own' the code, they will protect it and support it. An effective code of behaviour should be discussed and debated by children / young people and should contain the following elements:

The general aims of the organisation;

- A description of the rights and responsibilities of all members of the organisation;
- The elements of the code of behaviour
- A description of the ways in which the organisation encourages good behaviour
- Rewards for good behaviour
- A description of unacceptable/inappropriate behaviour
- Mechanisms for achieving a supportive culture and positive environment
- A description of the organisation's approach to behaviour management
- Strategies to embrace diversity and difference within the organisation
- Strategies for the prevention of bullying and other serious misbehaviour
- Processes for managing conflict
- Procedures for informing and involving parents
- Details of support available to young people, workers and parents
- Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the policy
- Links to other policies, e.g. Bullying, Substance misuse, Child Protection, Complaints procedure etc

The code should be explained and discussed with children/young people when they first join the organisation and it should be reviewed at regular intervals.

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Physical contact with children and young people in youth work

Certain activities within youth work require physical contact with children/young people. However, it is vital that employees/volunteers should only touch children/young people in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities

- When physical contact is required, the adult should seek to explain the nature and reason for the physical contact to the child or young person. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission;
- Children and young people should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened;
- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment;
- Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
- Physical contact should take account of cultural or religious views about touching and should always be sensitive to issues of gender;
- In the case of a young person with a disability, specific support or assistance may be required. When children/young people with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, the individual child/young person should be treated with dignity and respect. Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting. It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training.
- Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is particularly important that adults understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the youth organisation in which they are involved.
- There may be occasions where a distressed child/young person needs comfort and reassurance. Workers should consider the way in which they offer this and do so in an age-appropriate way. In doing so, workers should not assume that all children/young people seek physical contact if they are distressed. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A young person may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Employees and volunteers should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. It should also be considered that what, as an adult may, be felt appropriate may not be shared by a young person.

The code should be explained and discussed with children/young people when they first join the organisation and it should be reviewed at regular intervals.

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Transporting Young People

The issue of transporting children has become very sensitive for those involved in youth work. Many volunteers describe how their groups could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are returned home or transported to events in a private car. In general, it is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual young people, especially on long journeys. This view has been taken as our knowledge has grown of how those who want to harm children have developed. Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but circumstances may arise where it is necessary to do so.

If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Parents should be informed of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses.
- The driver should attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- When leaving children off after an activity /group, workers/ volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last. Ideally two children would be left off at an agreed point i.e. one of their family homes.
- The person who leaves children home should be alternated; this would reduce the risk of any one individual from always being alone with the child.
- The driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Ensure that children are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a culture of safety is created within the group/organisation, then the child is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.
- Late collections. These can present groups/organisations with particular difficulties. Parents/guardians should be provided with guidelines addressing the issue and outlining their responsibility and the consequences of late collections. Groups should have contact numbers for parents/guardians and if possible be provided with an alternative contact number. Parents/guardians should have a contact number for the group to inform them of emergencies and possible late collections.
- Children should wear seatbelts at all times.

It should be noted that some organisations prohibit their workers from giving lifts to children/young people due to reasons of insurance. However, organisations should develop procedures to respond to emergencies using a 'common sense' approach.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Guidance Sheet: Working with children and young people with special needs or a disability

In order to facilitate a safer working environment, there are a number of considerations to take account of including:

- Children with special needs or disability may depend on adults more than other children for their care and safety, and so sensitivity and clear communication are particularly important.
- Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for a child/young person with special needs, this should be with the full understanding and consent of the parents or guardians.
- The views of the child/young person should be actively sought, wherever possible, when drawing up arrangements;
- In carrying out such personal care tasks, sensitivity must be shown to the child and the tasks should be undertaken with the utmost discretion.
- Male employees/volunteers should not assist female children/young people in toilets/bathrooms/changing rooms
- Male children/young people may prefer to be accompanied by male employees/volunteers in toilets/bathrooms/changing rooms – this preference should not be overlooked and should be respected where safe and practical
- Any care task of a personal nature which a child or young person can do for themselves should not be undertaken by a worker.
- In a situation where any variation from agreed procedure is necessary, line managers and parents/guardians should be informed as soon as possible.



Youth Work Ireland
Meath

Child Protection & Safeguarding Awareness Programme

Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is the difference between a welfare concern and child abuse?

Welfare is defined as a problem experienced directly by a child, or by the family of a child, that is seen to impact negatively on the child's welfare or development, which warrants assessment and support.

The Child and Family Agency Tusla have a responsibility to respond with appropriate support, which helps to ensure that the welfare situation does not escalate into more serious harm for the child i.e. child abuse.

2. Are we legally obliged to report child abuse?

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla - Child and Family Agency. These are known as mandated persons. A volunteer is not a mandated person, however, there is also a duty of care on all of those working with young people to report any reasonable grounds for concern to the CFA Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána.

3. Why can't I give my mobile number out to young people in my youth club?

Staff and volunteers must refer to their responsibilities in their organisational policy and code of behaviour.

It is not good practice to give young people details of the youth leaders phone numbers, instead a club/organisation phone should be used to contact young people. This prevents leaders being contacted outside of club business and a misunderstanding/blurring of the boundary of the relationship between leaders and young people. Also, it may prevent a leader, who has bad intentions towards young people from using their mobile phone to contact the young person/s inappropriately.

The same practice applies to social media such as twitter, facebook, etc...

Organisations are advised to communicate via an organisational facebook page/twitter account rather than their own personal accounts.

These guidelines protect young people from a leader who may have bad intentions towards them and protect youth leaders from misunderstandings or false allegations.

4. What if I think a child is not telling me the truth about something child protection related?

Regardless of your own beliefs, if there are reasonable grounds to report, your organisational reporting procedures must be followed.

Sometimes a young person's behaviour may be challenging for lots of reasons, they may be experiencing some difficulties in their life and/or may be testing the leader's response to certain statement or declarations. It is very important that young people feel they can talk to their leaders, while understanding the boundary on confidentiality which applies if they are at risk.

5. Can I hug a child? What do I do if a child wants to hug me? Should I hug a child if they get upset?

Staff and volunteers must refer to their responsibilities in their organisational policy and code of behaviour.

Physical contact may take place when it is initiated by the young person, acceptable to all parties, don in an open space. Physical contact should not take place privately, away from observation, where the leader has presumed that hugging a young person is acceptable to them or if the young person rejects the contact.

These guidelines protect young people from a leader who may have unsafe intentions toward them and protects youth leaders from misunderstandings or allegations. See NYC's guidance sheet on physical contact for more information. <http://www.childprotection.ie/resources>

6. Can I make an anonymous report? Can my name be kept out of any CP reports?

Staff and volunteers must refer to their responsibilities in their organisational policy and code of behaviour.

Reporting within an organisation is usually via the organisations Designated Liaison Person.

If the reporter does not wish to have their name disclose, they should make that known to the duty Social Worker at the time of the report. The Social Worker will make every effort to keep this information confidential, but cannot guarantee this. This information would not normally be released under FOI, but, once a record is made, the information could be released due to a discovery order or following an appeal to the Information Commissioner. These scenarios are rare, but they are possible.

Whiles SWs have a duty to assess/investigate anonymous referrals, it is not expected that anonymous referrals would come from organisations working with children who have reporting procedures in place. Policy would require staff and volunteers to record concerns/disclosures and report to DLP. Records are dated and signed. Reports from the DLP to the Duty Social Worker on the Standard Reporting Form would include the name of the SLP as well as the name of the staff or volunteer who raised the concern. Thus, anonymity in this context is not possible.

Children First supports partnership with parents, thus, parents should be informed of reports being made to the Child and Family Agency, unless doing so could endanger the child. This challenges the reporter to share their concerns about the child with the parent, rather than taking the position of distancing themselves from it. It raises the issue of training and support for staff/volunteers/DLPs who would find themselves dealing with difficult issues and communication with parents.

7. Will I know what happens to a concern after I have reported it?

Please refer to your organisational policy.

If the report is made via the organisation Designated Liaison Person, it is good practice for the DLP to inform the reported as to whether it meets 'reasonable grounds for reporting' and if it was reported to the statutory services. If a decision is taken by the DLP not to report, it is good practice for the DLP to inform the reporter as to that decision and to give a reason in writing. The reporter, if they so wish, is free to report directly to the statutory services.

When the DLP reports to the CFA Tusla, Children First indicated that 'People who report or discuss their concerns about the care and protection of children with HSE staff should be informed of the likely steps to be taken by the professionals involved. Other professionals involved should be kept updated and informed about the outcomes of any enquiry or investigation into the reported concern, where this is appropriate and within the normal limits of confidentiality'. Children First.

8. Can I take a child home with me to keep them safe?

If you are concerned about an immediate risk to the child, and fear for their safety if they return home, leaders should contact An Garda Síochána. A leader who takes a child home, without parental consent, has no legal basis for doing so.

9. Why have I been vetted more than once by different organisations?

The Garda Vetting system in the Republic of Ireland is based on a process whereby the vetting information is sent directly from the vetting authority to the employer (so as to maintain the information's credibility and confidentiality). Under vetting legislation, each employer must vet each of their relevant staff/volunteers, regardless if they have been vetted previously. It is very bad practice for an employing organisation to rely on vetting information from another organisation, as it could be out of date or incorrect.

10. Is it OK to give a lift in my car to a youth club member?

Please refer to your organisational code of behaviour and policy.

In general, it is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual young people, especially on long journeys. Unfortunately, the journey to and from the club has been used to gain access to children on their own by those with bad intentions towards children. Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but circumstances may arise where it is necessary to do so.

If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk.

Please see NYCI's guidance sheet on transporting young people.

<http://www.childprotection.ie/resources>

11. Do I report knowledge of underage 'consensual' sexual activity?

Please refer to your organisational policy.

Advice is that workers have to use their common sense on such issues. Consensual sexual activity between older teenagers still under seventeen, although technically illegal, is common and not pursued criminally unless there is a complaint from one of the young people. Social work services would usually only regard such a report as requiring assessment in situations where one of the young people might be considered at risk and potentially being abused. If parents are aware and behaving appropriately then this would reassure that the young people concerned are not at risk of abuse. Of course this advice takes on a different hue if the teenagers are younger 13yrs/14yrs or where there is a clear disparity in age between the young people i.e. 19-year-old boy and 15-year-old girl. In such situations where parents be aware and consenting consideration has to be given to the standard of parenting and the potential life consequence for young teenagers, for example an early pregnancy will have dramatic impact on the young people and also have significant life consequence for any child they may have together. Furthermore, consideration must be given to any power differentials which may exist between parties involved. For example, where one of the young people holds a position of responsibility i.e. youth leader.

Each situation has to be judged on an individual basis and there is no common rule. Where a worker is unsure as to whether they should report they should informally contact their local social work department and discuss the detail of the situation with a social worker who will advise on appropriate action.

DCYA are expected to prepare a position on underage sexual activity as part of the advice that will be made available to practitioners when the Children First legislation is implemented.

12. Where do I go for additional help/information?

If you are concerned about a child's welfare, please contact the DLP in your organisation –
Geraldine Hogarty – 087 2306821

Or contact the Child and Family Agency Tusla

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/meath-duty-social-work-team>

and or An Garda Siochana.

Useful websites and publications

www.youthworkirelandmeath.ie

www.tusla.ie

www.nyci.ie

www.webwise.ie



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