

**streetkidsdirect.org.uk**

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Revised February 2020

*Street Kids Direct is a registered UK charity with the  
Charity Commission, London. (number 1102894)*

## **OUR COMMITMENT**

Street Kids Direct acknowledges the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Street Kids Direct is firmly committed to the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who use its facilities and services and to protecting them from all types of harm. This policy applies to everyone who is involved with Street Kids Direct in a paid and non-paid capacity.

### **The purpose of this policy:**

- To protect all children and young people and facilitate them being able to meet in a safe environment with people they can trust or can trust the people that come to visit them on the streets or wherever they may be.
- To ensure that all risks, which children and young people could encounter, are carefully assessed and that the necessary steps are taken to minimise and manage them.
- To recognise that Street Kids Direct has a responsibility to report to the relevant agencies allegations of abuse of a child or young person.
- To provide continuing support and safeguarding training for all its staff and volunteers whom have an active role with children or young persons.
- To regularly review the contents of this policy.

For ease of reference, we have divided the contents of this safeguarding policy into the areas outlined below. Additional reference and context can be found where indicated at the rear of this policy.

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## **1. Code of Conduct**

Street Kids Direct is committed to providing caring, supportive, open and transparent care for the children that our linked projects work with. A separate Code of Ethics has been produced that covers all aspects of our Code of Conduct and is available for all our linked projects in Spanish, however the following is included to help summarise our position on how adults relate to children.

The most effective way to prevent abuse is to be vigilant. All staff and volunteers who have roles with children are expected to interact in a mature, capable, safe, caring, responsible manner, with a high level of accountability and transparency. All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital that workers ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. All staff and volunteers are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others to maintain a high level of professionalism. Street Kids Direct adheres to the following guidelines as to how children and young people and adults interact with each other.

### **Adult-to-Child Behaviour**

#### **Visibility and Overcoming Isolation**

All work with children/adults at risk should be planned in a way that minimises risks as far as possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working and talking with children/adults at risk. This can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at a time when other activities are occurring

- It is inappropriate to spend an excessive amount of time alone with children/adults at risk, especially where this blurs the boundaries between professional and personal/social contact.
- Generally, at least two unrelated adults should be present in work with children/adults at risk. When this is not possible, reduce isolation by having a minimum of two children/adults at risk present, informing the parent/legal guardian/carer of the meeting, and doing it during a time and/or in a location where interaction with the person is visible to others.
- Where confidentiality is important and a young person is being seen on their own, ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is in close vicinity.

## **Accountability**

- Always be accountable to other adults regarding interactions with children/adults at risk.
- Parents and/or supervisors are to be notified beforehand of any special activities with children/adults at risk. Where the activity includes children and young people who live on the streets or who have no parents, then at least 2 adults need to agree that the child or young person can attend the activity.
- Two people should attend an emergency situation or a second person should be notified of action to be taken.

## **Supervision**

Supervision reduces risk. The child protection officer should periodically and randomly inspect areas where children/adults at risk and adults are together.

## **Technology**

Technology should be used appropriately to protect children/adults at risk from abuse and exploitation. The points below are a summary, for the full outline, please refer to the appendix section titled "electronic communication":

- Family safe filter/parental control programmes should be used to prevent downloading pornographic material (see appendix 5) from the Internet, access to inappropriate emails, chat rooms, or films.
- Instant messaging, texting, emails, chat rooms and other forms of social networking including video/camcorder/live stream/photos between staff/volunteers and children should not be used inappropriately. Appropriate boundaries include not messaging with children between 8pm and 8am unless in case of an emergency or there is a specific reason (e.g. if an event is starting before 8am). The purpose of the messaging must be for the needs of the child and focussed on arranging face to face time rather than being the main form of communication.

## **Touch**

Healthy, caring touch is valuable to children/adults at risk but unhealthy touch is abusive. Also, touch must be used in a culturally appropriate way. The following should be noted:

- Touch should be open rather than secretive. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.

- Touch should be in response to the need of the child/adult at risk, and not the need of the adult.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child/adult at risk rather than the adult. It should be with the person's permission and any resistance from them should be respected.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the child/adult at risk.
- Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children/adults at risk that they are able to do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, etc.
- Adults and other children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault a person in their care.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts:

- verbal praise
- side hugs
- pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate)
- or smaller children, touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugs, or holding them when others are present

The following behaviours between staff or volunteers and children are inappropriate and should not be engaged in:

- touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs
- showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child
- sleeping in bed with a child
- inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development
- flirtatious or seductive looks or behaviour
- any form of affection that is unwanted by the child
- showing sexually-suggestive videos or playing sexually-suggestive games with any child
- any behaviour that could be interpreted as sexual in nature.

Team members should monitor each other in the area of physical contact, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

## **Inappropriate Actions**

It is inappropriate for anyone to:

- Develop physical/intimate/sexual relationships with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Develop a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult which could in any way be interpreted as exploitative or abusive.
- Engage in behaviours which could be regarded as grooming or controlling/coercive.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade people, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour a particular person or group of people to the exclusion of others.
- Consume alcohol or use any other substance, on any premises utilised for activities with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Staff and volunteers will also refrain from consuming alcohol or any other substance, prior to assuming responsibility for any child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Be alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult unless with the express permission of the Director and/or a parent/legal guardian unless it is part of the mentoring programme. (see Item 3)
- Take any child, young person or vulnerable adult to their home, unless already agreed and with another adult present.
- Make inappropriate contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult e.g. develop relationships outside of work unless part of the on-going care process agreed with the Director.
- Leave any child, young person or vulnerable adult charged in their care unattended or with any person under the age of 18 years unless agreed by the parent(s)/legal guardian or the under 18 is a related person e.g. sibling/babysitter whom has responsibility for that person.
- Leave any child, young person or vulnerable adult in the presence of any person over the age of 18 years who has not had relevant criminal and background checks.
- Leave any child, young person or vulnerable adult in the presence of any person over the age of 18 years who has not received safeguarding training.

- Leave any child, young person or vulnerable adult in the presence of any person over the age of 18 years whom is not known to staff or volunteers without prior agreement with the persons parent(s)/legal guardian.

### **Child-to-Child Behaviour**

Children and young people are curious about other children - the same or opposite sex - and/or may have experimented sexually. However, where a child has responsibility over another child (such as a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through engaging in sexual activity, this is likely to be regarded as abusive. The same applies where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child. This is not mutual exploration. Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

These instances will be investigated by the child protection agencies in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right. Since sexually harmful behaviour can be addictive and other children could be victims now or in the future, it is important to take the matter seriously and Street Kids Direct will deal with this as they would any other allegation. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of it. Most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens (or even younger).

Other factors considered in evaluating whether sexually harmful behaviour has occurred include differences in responsibility, trust, power, development, awareness and understanding, coercion, and threats, whether implied or verbal. In addition, the following actions must be prohibited: bullying, hazing, derogatory name-calling, ridicule or humiliation, or singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion.

In all aspects of Street Kids Direct work, the following issues should be standard:

- No one under 16 should be left formally in charge of any children of any age.
- Any disclosure of abuse from a child about another child should be taken seriously and child protection procedures followed in the same way as for any other disclosure.
- Help should be obtained from professionals and statutory agencies that have expert knowledge in this area.
- Ongoing pastoral care and support to the perpetrator, victim and both families through a risk assessment or counselling if necessary should always be offered.

## **2. Designated Safeguarding Co-Ordinators**

### **Street Kids Direct:**

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### **Guatemala:**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Duncan Dyason (contact details above)

Deputy: Sony Guerra

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### **Honduras:**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Steve Poulson (contact details above)

Deputy: Duncan Dyason (contact details above)

## **3. Staffing Ratios**

Where there is sole charge of children/adults at risk for longer than 2 hours and the parents/guardians/carers are not on the premises then the following staff to children/adults at risk ratios must be adhered to. These ratios offer a minimum safe level of supervision and care.

For 0-2 year olds – 1 leader to 3 children/adults at risk

For 2-3 year olds – 1 leader to 4 children/adults at risk

For 3-8 year olds – 1 leader to 8 children/adults at risk

For over 8 year olds – 1 leader to 8 children for the first 8, then 1 leader to 12 children

There should not be fewer than 2 adults present with a group, preferably a male and a female. These figures are for regular indoor activities. It is recognised that there may be occasions and contexts where the ratios need to be different e.g. if taking an individual or a group on an outdoor activity, where you have people with special needs and international constraints/differences. In this case reasons should be evidenced in the risk assessment

#### **4. Mentoring**

We define mentoring as a therapeutic relationship that develops over time between two people, mentor and mentee, which is more informal and where the mentee is encouraged to take the lead in how the relationship develops. In order for the mentoring relationship to develop it is understood that the mentor will need to spend time alone with their mentee.

Mentors will need to follow the Safeguarding Policy of the local organisation but the mentor will be allowed to be alone with a child under the defined guidance of the local organisation and the specific training given to all new mentors. The mentoring sessions are not formal meetings in an office and as such the mentor will need to identify safe public places where mentoring sessions can be held. It is not appropriate for the mentor to invite their mentee into their own home, for example, without the presence of another adult.

The informal nature of the relationship usually requires the mentor to get involved in activities, hobbies or interests that the mentee identifies as enjoyable. The focus is on what the mentee would like to do, with the mentor helping to create a session based around the proposed activity or experience. The mentor develops a unique relationship with the mentee where trust and confidentiality are achieved through a variety of activities over time.

It is often thought that mentoring is just about “hanging out” with a child or young person and so is often discarded as a serious therapeutic intervention in the life of a child that can bring about change. While we understand that mentoring has its focus on spending time with a child or young person, in this case it is based upon our proven methodology, it does require some study and reading, as it is intentionally PROACTIVE rather than PASSIVE. The mentoring session will require great patience, energy, planning and a purpose in order to help the mentee enjoy each session and make positive life choices.

By the very nature of the mentoring programme Street Kids Direct understands that mentors being alone with a child or young person may cause rise for concern. However, since this is part of that specific programme, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

- The mentor is required to keep a weekly journal of every session with their mentee and make available to the designated safeguarding lead at any point upon request.

- Parental consent is obtained from those children and young persons involved in the mentoring programme prior to their participation. Careful consideration is given to whom the mentee will be matched with and in every event will be of the same gender.
- Street Kids Direct only authorise mentoring sessions to take place in public places, the home of the mentee where other adults are present and will usually define certain “safe” places where mentors can meet their mentees. These parameters, if adhered to, will protect both the worker and the child/young person alike.
- Street Kids Direct recognises that a child or young person will become open and trusting of their mentor which may lead to disclosures about their activities. The Fraser Guidelines help mentors to balance children’s rights and wishes with their responsibility to keep children safe from harm. Underage sexual activity should always be seen as a possible indicator of child sexual exploitation. Any such activity under the age of 13 should always result in a child protection referral. (See Appendix)

## **5. Transportation**

The following guidelines should apply to all staff and volunteers involved in the transportation of a child, young people or vulnerable adult:

- A staff member or volunteer must not transport any child, young person or vulnerable adult in a car or mini bus without insurance (staff/volunteers should contact their respective insurance company for details)
- A staff member or volunteer must not transport any child, young person or vulnerable adult in any vehicle without a valid driving licence for the particular classification of vehicle used.
- All vehicles used must be in a road worthy condition.
- The transportation of a child, young person or vulnerable adult should be with an additional adult unless agreed prior to the journey by the Director and/or parent/legal guardian unless part of the mentoring programme.
- Street Kids Direct have a separate policy for trips and activities and protocols that partner projects are expected to evaluate and accept in order to safeguard children during the event and transportation to and from the event.

## **6. Recruitment & Training**

### **Recruitment**

Street Kids Direct will ensure all paid and voluntary workers appointed will be trained, supported and supervised. All such persons from the age of 16 years will be requested to read the Safeguarding Policy via our website. A signed declaration of acceptance will be obtained from each individual to obtain their commitment to it. This is to be completed before their work commences, a copy of which will be stored in the Street Kids Direct office.

If the individual is travelling as part of a group, this recruitment process is expected to be carried out by the organisation sending the group (see Volunteer/visitor policy). If they do not have the means to do this, they can use the Street Kids Direct system.

All staff and volunteers should complete an application form (see Appendix) supplying the following information:

- Personal details
- Previous experience
- Competencies and areas of interest
- Name of 2 independent referees
- Detail any Criminal Convictions
- Signature and date

### **Criminal Convictions**

All staff and volunteers aged 16 years and over having a role that directly works with children, young people or vulnerable adults should include an up-to-date report on any criminal convictions from their country of birth or the country where they normally reside. (more information below)

Street Kids Direct also utilises the skills of staff and volunteers in roles that are not directly in contact with children, young persons or vulnerable adults e.g. administrative roles. These roles will be decided on a case-by-case basis as to whether a criminal convictions request is necessary.

Street Kids Direct will keep a copy of all the relevant records in a safe place and they will be disposed of one year after the staff member or volunteer leaves Street Kids Direct. Any staff member or volunteer can request a copy of any record kept about them any time.

All trustees are required to have an enhanced DBS Certificate.

**Guatemalan Resident:**

A “Certificado RENAS” is required for all Guatemalan Residents. This can be easily obtained by going to the website: <http://www.mp.gob.gt>, clicking on the “Certificaciones RENAS” button and filling in the appropriate information. Once the certificate is obtained a copy must be submitted to the child protection officer.

**Honduran Resident:**

A “Judicial check” (antecedentes judicial) must be obtained from the Judicial Building in La Granja, Tegucigalpa and a “Police Check” (antecedents policiacos) from the DIC in la Kennedy, Tegucigalpa. These can only be obtained in person with the appropriate identification, e.g. ID Card or Residency Card and Passport.

Once these are obtained they must be shown to the Child Protection Officer where they will be verified and a copy taken and stored safely and securely.

**UK Resident:**

A DBS Check is required for all UK residents. The process is facilitated by the company DBS Assist. Their website is: [www.dbsassist.co.uk](http://www.dbsassist.co.uk) and all applications from UK residents must go through their process. The cost is covered by the volunteer and must be carried out before they can be accepted as a volunteer.

During the volunteer application process a DBS application will be made by Street Kids Direct, and the volunteer must then follow the instructions on the DBS Assist website.

**US Resident:**

A background check is required for all US Residents. The process is facilitated by our partner mobilizemyministry.com.

During the volunteer application process a background check application will be made by Street Kids Direct, and the volunteer must then follow the instructions on the Mobilize My Ministry website.

**Resident of other Country:**

An individual resident in any other country not listed above will need to go through the appropriate channels in their country of residence and, if necessary, provide an accredited translated copy in English or Spanish.

## **New Volunteers**

All new volunteers must work alongside a fully vetted and trained member of staff until references have been received and criminal checks completed.

Street Kids Direct will retain a copy of all the above records in a safe and secure place. The records will be disposed of one year after the staff member or volunteer leaves Street Kids Direct. A staff member or volunteer can request a copy or view any record held in relation to them at any time.

## **Training**

As an organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we strive to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop healthy relationships and minimise the risk.

All staff and volunteers who work directly with children need to be fully trained in child protection, regardless of the length of their visit. For those who live in country the training must be renewed once a year, and for those who visit regularly need to renew their training before every visit.

The training for overseas visitors is provided online via the Protect My Ministry website and the contents of this policy will be included in the induction process for all staff and volunteers. They will be required to attend appropriate Child Protection training courses offered at regular intervals by Street Kids Direct or other appropriate agencies.

Street Kids Direct will insist on attendance at these sessions that will help staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities and provide information on identification of, and appropriate response to, child protection issues. Please refer to the table above for more details.

## **7. Defining Abuse**

In order to safeguard appropriately, Street Kids Direct adheres to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19 which states;

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms or prevention and for*

*identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

In addition, Street Kids Direct acknowledges the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular Article 5 which states: *“No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”*.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines a child and states: *“Every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable the child majority is attained earlier”*.

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a complex issue which incorporates harm inflicted or an omission to prevent harm. The full text and definitions below (apart from the final paragraph on spiritual abuse) come from the World Health Organisation.

### **General Definition**

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes: all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of an interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be a single or repeated incidents.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Acts include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

### **Neglect and negligent treatment**

Neglect is the failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and causes or has a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social

development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which they are not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to:

- The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity.
- The exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices.
- The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.
- The exposing of a child to pornographic materials or activity. (see appendix for more information)

### **Exploitation**

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour and child prostitution. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, or spiritual, moral or social-emotional development.

### **Spiritual Abuse**

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing a child into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. A leader who is intimidating and imposes their will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed might indicate spiritual abuse. They may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership become fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval. (Taken from *Safe and Secure – the Manual*)

### **Domestic Abuse**

Street Kids Direct recognises that a child is deemed to be at risk if they suffer domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a widespread issue and could be any of the types of abuse defined above, in the context of the home. Children don't have to be the direct victims of this abuse to be affected, if they witness any other individual(s) being abused, they in turn can be affected.

## 8. Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a member of staff or a volunteer conduct their own investigation into a suspicion of abuse. In order to deal with such issue effectively the following procedures will apply:

### 1. If abuse is **suspected**:

- Observations, conversations or concerns will be documented, signed and dated on the SKD referral form (appendix) by the staff member or volunteer and be passed to one of the safeguarding leads as soon as possible.
- The record will be retained in a secure location.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated and responsible for the safeguarding of children (see item 2) including the parent(s) of any child or young person.
- The designated safeguarding lead in conjunction with another will collate and clarify the information and disseminate the information on to statutory services as appropriate and accordance with the adopted MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) guidance for referrals (see appendix).

### 2. If abuse is **reported/alleged**:

Under no circumstances should a member of staff or volunteer conduct their own investigation into an allegation or report of abuse. In order to deal with such issues effectively, the following procedures will apply:

- The preservation of life is paramount and medical attention will be sought as a priority, if relevant, if physical abuse is disclosed.
- In the event of sexual abuse, the disclosure must be brought to the immediate attention of a designated safeguarding lead to assist forensic recovery timescales if relevant. The timescale in Guatemala is 72 hours and in Honduras is 48 hours.
- If the matter is regarded as critical e.g. there is an immediate and/or safeguarding concern that requires action to ensure the safety of a child or young person (traffic light system red/amber/green/blue – decision made by both CPO and DCPO – see appendix), this should be referred immediately and directly to the statutory agencies whom have a duty to investigate as soon as practicable.

- The staff member or volunteer in receipt of the information will report the disclosure to one of the safeguarding lead as soon as practicable, who are nominated to refer the matter to statutory agencies.
- The staff member or volunteer will complete the relevant safeguarding referral form which will be signed and dated by them.
- This document will be retained in a secure location. (see appendix)
- Allegations and reports must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated and responsible for the safeguarding of children (see item 2) including the parent(s) of any child/young person
- All staff and volunteers are reminded that the child or young person making an allegation will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgment.
- It will be explained that in terms of Street Kids Direct's Confidentiality Policy, information may need to be shared with others in certain circumstances in order to appropriately safeguard a child or young person.
- The designated safeguarding lead will collate and clarify the information and disseminate the information on to statutory services as appropriate and accordance with the adopted MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) guidance for referrals (see appendix)

## **9. Allegations about Staff and Volunteers**

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people, including those in a voluntary capacity, is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is subject of the allegation. If any allegation is made or suspicions emerge regarding any staff member or volunteer these should be reported to the designated Safeguarding lead who will decide if further action is required. The following procedure will apply during which all information relating to the allegation will remain confidential:

- A detailed factual record of the allegation will be recorded and retained by the person receiving a disclosure or raising suspicions.
- Information will be passed to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as practicable who will ensure a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how and who followed up the allegation, and any resolution/conclusion is recorded.

- Consideration will be given to the suspension of the person involved taking account of the risks to other children or young people and the staff member of volunteer concerned.
- If the allegation involves a child or young person, contact will be made with their parents as soon as possible if they are not already aware. Parents should be advise of the process and progress.
- Relevant external bodies including the police (if necessary or appropriate) will be advised.
- The designated safeguarding lead should keep the person who is subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.
- Every effort should be made to maintain the confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being considered or investigated.
- The fact that a staff member or volunteer tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide services must not prevent an allegation being followed up. This will include where the individual refuses or fails to co-operate.
- If the individual involved is the designated safeguarding lead or Deputy, then the report must go to the individual who is not allegedly involved.
- In the cases of suspected abuse and reported abuse, the safeguarding lead will assess the referral based on the Assessment of Need triangle in support of the SOS framework and practice. This includes the RAG system of RED/AMBER/GREEN/BLUE based on the MASH guidance (see Appendix). If no further action is required e.g. the information has been assessed as blue, approval of a secondary safeguarding will be required to retain transparency and accurate recording of information.

### **Whistle-Blowing**

All staff/volunteers are encouraged to report concerns about the behaviour of an individual towards a child or young person. It is also recognised that individuals may not express concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal or they may fear harassment or victimization. In such cases, individuals may report suspicions to a trustee, as opposed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any individual making a referral will be protected by the Trustees without fear of repercussion to ensure a culture of informing without reprisal/negative consequence, protecting their anonymity as far as possible except where it could endanger another individual. Accurate records will be kept so any patterns in behaviour can be monitored and any reported incidents will be thoroughly investigated regardless of how unlikely they seem.

### **Policy in cases of abuse**

Anyone who is known or determined to have committed any type of abuse of a child at any time during his/her adult life is not eligible for employment/service and, if employed, will have his/her relationship with Street Kids Direct terminated, with no later opportunity to be employed, serve long term, short term or as a volunteer.

### **Policy in cases involving persons under the age of 18 who have committed abuse of a child**

The priority of Street Kids Direct is the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we will seek to manage risk at all times. The disclosure of offences against a child or young person may not prohibit their employment or voluntary position. Anyone who committed an offence against a child before the age of 18 will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering such factors as age, seriousness of offence, acknowledgment of responsibility and efficacy of treatment. The decision to continue to employ/accept on a voluntary basis will be subject to structured review by two safeguarding leads.

Any employee whose children (under the age of 18) have been determined to have committed sexual abuse or to have initiated inappropriate sexual behaviour with another child or any other form of abuse will be required to follow an action plan (see appendix section titled "personal action plan" for the template). Failure by the parent/s of that child to comply with the action plan for the child will lead to termination. This section is pertinent when the employee lives onsite with their family and are responsible for the actions for their underage children. Reapplication would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**10. Useful Contact Information:**

**Guatemala:**

Ministerio Público: +502 2411 9191  
PGN: +502 4987 2285  
Missing Child Hotline: 1546  
Police: 911  
Duncan Dyason: +502 5522 3333

**Honduras:**

Ministerio Público: +504 2221 3534  
DNAF (Dirección de niñez, adolescencia y familia): +504 2239 9605  
Police: 911  
Steve Poulson: +504 9501 2522

**United Kingdom:**

Bucks County Council: 01296 383962  
Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS): 0303 0031 111  
Thames Valley Police (non-emergency): 101  
Police (Emergency): 999  
NSPCC National Helpline: 0808 800 5000

**We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually:**

This policy was last reviewed by Sarah Elliott, Suffolk Constabulary, Duncan Dyason, Street Kids Direct and Steve Poulson, Street Kids Direct on: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020.

Signed: .....

Position: TRUSTEE AND DIRECTOR

## **11. Appendix and Reference**

### **Item 1 – Referral Form “Denuncia”**

### **Item 2 – Fraser Guidelines**

Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines refer to a legal case which looked specifically at whether doctors should be able to give contraceptive advice or treatment to Under 16 year olds without parental consent. These guidelines are now more widely used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions. This must be balanced against the child's rights and wishes with the professional responsibility to keep children safe from harm. Assessing this will be dependant on the child's maturity and understanding and the nature of the consent required. The child must be capable of making a reasonable assessment of the advantages and disadvantages.

### **Item 3 – Visitor/Volunteer Process**

### **Item 4 – Recruitment Application**

### **Item 5 – Defining Pornographic / Prohibited Images**

**What is meant by Pornographic?** This is an objective test that the material was pornographic, which means it must reasonably be assumed to have been produced solely or principally for the purposes of sexual arousal. This test should eliminate most works of art, news and mainstream documentary programmes and films.

**What is a prohibited image?** In order for an image to be a 'prohibited image', there are three elements that must be satisfied. An image must meet all three of the elements before falling foul of the offence. The elements are:

- 1) That the image is pornographic;
- 2) That the image is grossly offensive, disgusting, or otherwise of an obscene character; and
- 3) That the image focuses solely or principally on a child's genitals or anal region, or portrays any of the following acts:
  - a) the performance by a person of an act of intercourse or oral sex with or in the presence of a child;
  - b) an act of masturbation by, of, involving or in the presence of a child;
  - c) an act which involves penetration of the vagina or anus of a child with a part of a person's body or with anything else;
  - d) an act of penetration, in the presence of a child, of the vagina or anus of a person with a part of a person's body or with anything else;

- e) the performance by a child of an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive or imaginary);
- f) the performance by a person of an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive or imaginary) in the presence of a child.

This will include non-photographic pornographic images such as cartoons or CGI.

(Above taken from the Coroners and Justice Act 2009)

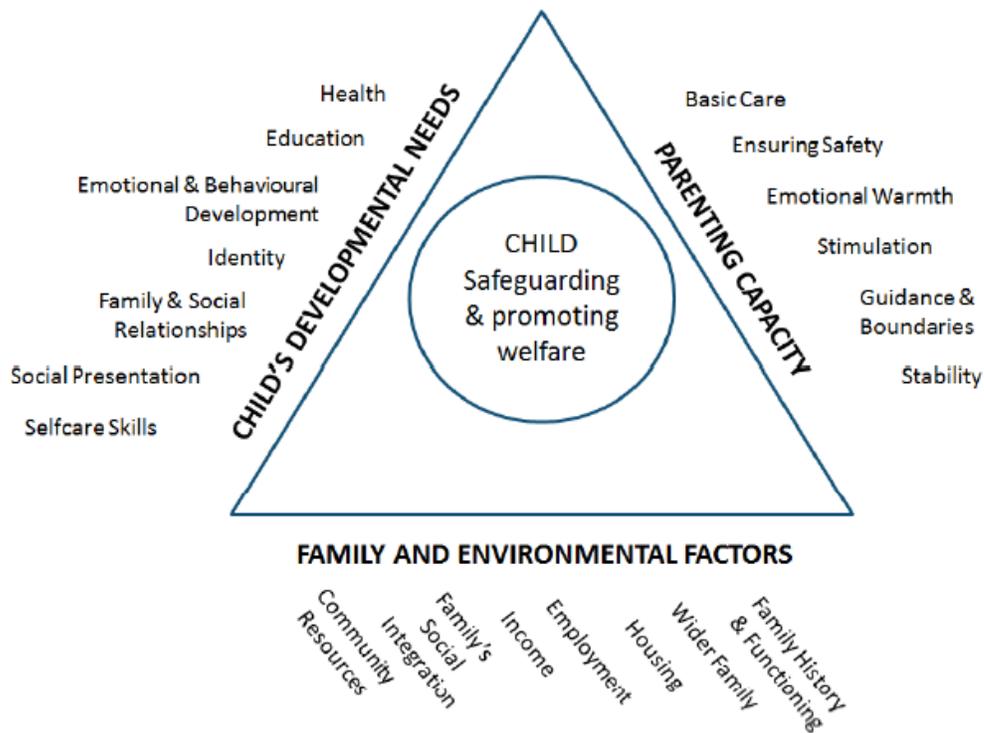
**What is an Indecent Image?** The Criminal Justice Act defines indecent images of children into three categories;

- A) Images involving penetrative sexual activity
  - Images involving sexual activity with an animal
  - Images involving sadism
- B) Images involving non-penetrative sexual activity eg between adult and child, child on child, or solo masturbation by a child
- C) Other indecent images not falling with categories A or B eg images depicting erotic posing with no sexual activity.

**What is extreme pornography?** The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act defines this as extreme adult violent images – includes images of actual scenes of serious violence or realistic depictions of serious violence, produced for the purpose of sexual arousal. This also includes sexual images involving penetration of or by animals with adults.

**What is an Indicative/Borderline/Notable Image?** This includes nudist – naked/semi-naked images in legitimate settings/sources and surreptitious photographs showing underwear/nakedness. This also includes images of children that do not specifically fall into Category A but would appear to be from the same source where the child is still dressed or partially dressed.

**Item 6 - Considerations to making a referral.** Guidance taken from LCSB (Local Childrens' Safeguarding Board)



Use the Assessment of Need triangle to Support the SOS framework and practice.

Factors to consider when considering whether to make a referral;

- What support or interventions can your organisation offer? Could this meet the needs of the child/young person and their family?
- What is life for this child/young person and their family?
- What are the child or young person's wishes and feelings?
- What are the child/young person and family's strengths and protective factors? Can they help the situation?
- A child's/young person's behaviour, health, or disability must be understood in the context of the parenting they are experiencing.
- What support or intervention has been offered previously? Did this make a difference?
- The need to always consider the bigger picture?
- Consideration of historical information.
- What are the worries for this child or children?
- Are you clear about the signs and symptoms of neglect?

- Can you recognise risk?
- Have you given consideration to the child's development?
- Have you considered family and environmental factors?
- Have you considered the capacity of parents?

**MASH RAG system:**

**RED** – High level of Risk. Where there is immediate and/or safeguarding concern requiring action to ensure the safety of the child/young person and to secure and preserve evidence. Action/referral within 4 hours

**AMBER** – There are significant concerns for a child/young person but immediate action is not required to safeguard the child/young person. Action/referral within 24 hours

**GREEN** – Further Information is required to ascertain level of intervention required. Action/referral within 72 hours

**BLUE** – No further information or intervention is required.

**Item 7 - Electronic Communication**

**Areas of Concern:**

The following are areas of concern where specific guidelines will need to be introduced:

- Confidentiality
- Keeping records
- Challenging 'online' behaviour
- Time and place of communication
- Initiation of contact
- 'Who am I talking to?'
- Webcam/Video/Voice messages
- Uploading/downloading images

Taking these issues in turn, I will now outline some specific guidelines for youth workers with respect to online communication.

## **Confidentiality:**

As with most CP policies confidentiality is an important aspect of the youth workers role in relation to young people. It is built on trust. That same level of trust must be maintained in an online conversation. This means taking steps such as:

- Closing down conversations so they are not left up on the screen for all to see
- Being aware of who else is able to access your emails, Facebook (FB) messages etc.
- When forwarding messages be sure to change/delete names and email addresses etc.

NB. Confidentiality can never be promised to a young person before a disclosure of any sort, as with standard CP guidelines.

## **Keeping Records:**

Again, as with most CP guidelines, keeping a written account of what is being said is important. In some ways this is easier online as there is an automatic saving of messages sent via email etc. FB Chat automatically saves conversations to your message folder.

Records should be available for your line-manager, child-protection officer or appropriate church leadership to see upon request. They should also be open to parents to see upon request. Make sure that your communication is such that, in principle, it would not embarrass you for it to be seen by the young person's parents or church officials.

## **Challenging Online Behaviour:**

This area is a little more difficult for three main reasons: Firstly, because the level of behaviour found acceptable will change from youth worker to youth worker. Secondly because there is the removal of the ability to build up a level of telling off i.e. through a glance, through a tone of voice, through the raising of the voice. And lastly because of the ease with which comments can be misunderstood when written and read. Below are some general guidelines:

- Do not put up with behaviour online such as swearing or course joking, that you would not find acceptable in person. Just because you are not in a youth club or school setting does not mean it is any more acceptable. NB- ignoring it by going offline is not an easy way out!
- Be clear in any challenge you make as to why you are making it so that there is no room for misunderstanding
- Where possible, when you next see the young person, speak to them about their online behaviour, so it is not all done over the internet

### **Time and Place of Communication:**

This again will look to follow general CP guidelines, however, with the internet there is the potential for conversations and communication 24/7 so it requires careful monitoring. Wisdom also needs to be applied as to how well you know the young people involved, and as to whether or not they are the same sex as you. As a general rule the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Do not communicate 'live' (i.e. FB Chat, text message) to young people later than 10.00pm or before 7.00am
- If communication is happening during school hours, be aware as to why this is, and what the school guidelines are on having mobile phones in school.
- If it is your day off, it is best not check email, or sign in to FB or reply to Text messages (unless in obvious cases of emergency). It may be useful to have a work mobile that is only on during certain hours of the day

### **Initiation and type of Contact:**

- Do not be the person who adds or invites young people to be your friend or contact. Let the initiation come from them. If they ask you to initiate, explain why you want to keep a record of not being an adult who adds young people (particularly applicable to social networking sites such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook)
- If you need to talk to young people, it is ok to start a conversation by sending the initial message. But be aware of why you are sending it; is it to pass on information, to check how they are, or is it out of boredom or a need for friendship/communication?
- As a rule, try to keep any messages 'open' on public pages/groups. If you do need to send someone a personal message, try to keep this information based i.e. Meeting time/date/venue. Do not be drawn into significant pastoral issues online, rather suggest meeting up in a public place to discuss the problem.

### **Who am I Talking to?**

One of the dangers of online conversations is not ever knowing for sure who you are talking to- if they are the person they say they are- the same goes for young people as they talk to you, they cannot be sure either. In order to be clear on this, do not allow contact from young people you do not know well, or know well enough to recognise their traits in writing etc. This can be particularly difficult for schools' workers whom a lot of young people know, but of whom the worker will not know as many names and personalities.

### **Webcam/Video/Voice Messages:**

This is again a difficult area which may only get more difficult with further technological advances. Remember, if it is just you at the computer and just a young person at the other end, it can be a very isolated conversation/experience. As such never accept an invitation for webcam viewing from a young person and likewise never offer for them to see you through a webcam. Likewise, with voice messaging services such as Skype and Facetime these should not be used unless cleared in advance with your line manager with specific parameters in place. If you need to talk to the young person, then ring the home phone number to remove a level of privacy, and to include parents if they answer.

In the area of videos there are more dimensions to the problem. The following are some issues and guidelines:

- If you have video footage of young people from a youth club, drama, sports competition etc. then do not upload this to any website without express parental permission
- Do not store such footage on your personal computer, even if not uploaded for public viewing, without express parental permission
- If young people are putting up their own videos under the label of your youth club/event, it may be good to ask them to write a disclaimer, or to remove the name of the youth club/event from the video description

### **Uploading/Downloading Images:**

This will follow on very much from what has been written above regarding video content. NB. When referring to downloading images this has negative connotations, clearly any images downloaded should be i. appropriate and ii. Of your young people not of those from other youth groups etc.:

- If you have images of young people from clubs etc. do not put them on the internet without parental permission
- Do not put the names of young people next to photos
- Try to avoid single images of young people, but instead go for group images
- Try as much as possible to protect the images uploaded, so it is not easy for people to copy and paste them into their own files
- If you are downloading images of young people be very clear as to the reason why you are doing this, and be happy to give an answer if asked
- Tell your line-manager/church leadership what you are doing and why
- Do not keep images of young people longer than is necessary

**Item 8 - PERSONAL ACTION PLAN**

**Name:**

**Location:**

**Date AP to start:**

**Date AP will finish:**

**The nature of your unsatisfactory performance is as follows:**

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**The performance improvement required is as follows:**

--

**The actions that you are required to undertake to improve your performance are:**

**(Actions should be 'SMART' – see overleaf for details)**

Actions	To be achieved by

**Actions to be undertaken by line manager (or others) to assist you in achieving this action plan within the target dates for achievement are:**

**(Actions should be 'SMART' – see overleaf for details)**

Actions	To be achieved by

**Evidence of additional support / reasonable adjustments (if applicable):**

**Review dates**

(These must be diarised at appropriate intervals in order to monitor your progress against the actions and to provide you with feedback on your performance/attendance)

**Line manager to clarify that failure to meet the required standard will result in further management action or formal action.**

Signed..... Date .....

**(Line Manager)**

Signed ..... Date .....

**(Employee/Volunteer)**

\*I confirm that this action plan has been satisfactorily completed within the agreed timescale.  
Your performance/attendance will continue to be monitored and any failure to maintain an acceptable standard may lead to formal action being taken.

\*This action plan has not been completed within the agreed timescale for the following reasons:

\*This action plan has not been satisfactorily completed and I will be taking further action as follows:

Signed ..... Date .....  
Line Manager

\* delete if not applicable

### NOTES ON COMPLETION OF THE ACTION PLAN

This personal action plan template will assist employees/volunteers and their line managers during the informal stages of the unsatisfactory performance/attendance process.

It is designed to ensure that both the manager and the employee/volunteer concerned have the same understanding of the particular aspects of their performance or attendance that require improvement, and that the standards of performance/ attendance expected are clearly stated.

The actions that the employee/volunteer is required to undertake to achieve the performance improvement required must be SMART i.e.

**Specific** – with an exact description of what the employee/volunteer is required to do

**Measurable** – with clearly defined measures or indicators of success (usually in terms of quantity, quality, time or costs) – so both parties know whether the objectives have been achieved or not

**Achievable** – capable of being achieved within the agreed timescales

**Relevant** – and easily linked to the employees/volunteer's role, responsibilities and codes of conduct

**Time limited** – with dates for achievement

For the duration of this action plan, the individual may require support from their line manager, or someone else to assist in achieving the requirements of the action plan. However, the individual must take responsibility for undertaking these actions to show the required improvements within the agreed timescales.

Review dates are **essential**. The review meetings will allow the line manager to check that the individual is receiving the agreed support and to provide feedback on progress against the actions.