



EUROPE

# Child Protection Tool Kit

A joint project of the WSB – European Regional Office and the Europe Region WAGGGS



EUROPE

girls worldwide say



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World Association of Girl Guides & Scouts



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# The Child Protection Kit

## Why a Child Protection Kit?

Each week millions of young people take part in Guiding and Scouting activities. They do so in a range of ways such as games at the meeting place, games in the village or town involving the community, small camps, fundraising activities, service projects, patrol activities – the list is endless. While most enjoy themselves in safety, a small number are at risk of abuse or harm. UN studies suggest that 80-98 % of children worldwide have been or are facing violence on single occasions or a regular basis. In most cases, violence is inflicted on the young person by a person of confidence.

WOSM and WAGGGS are proud to be worldwide organizations that provide non-formal education to children and young people through Guide and Scout associations where children and young people are supported by a large and enthusiastic network of adult volunteers.

Our use of intergenerational dialogue and co-operation leads children and young people to trust and depend on adults to protect them from harm. Therefore we need to ensure that all adult volunteers take their responsibility for the protection of children and young people seriously and that appropriate policies and practices are developed to guide this.

Safeguarding the welfare of children and young people ought not be seen by Guide and Scout Associations as an optional activity that can be added to the programme. Protection from harm should become an integral part of the policy and practice of us all.

However, a policy should strive to protect not only children and young people but also those who work with them and look after them. It should act as a guide in helping volunteers create a safe environment for children and young people and protect themselves against allegations of improper behaviour.

## Child Protection is everyone's responsibility

Child Protection is not only the responsibility of each and every leader to look after a child properly, respecting him or her. It is also each

and every adult's responsibility to be aware of the potential for abuse, be able to recognize it and take appropriate action.

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. The situation is often not clear-cut: that is why this kit will also focus on signs that should make one look for further explanation or analysis.

## How To Use this Kit

This not an exhaustive guide to all the issues involved in Child Protection for Guide or Scout Associations. Much of the development of a policy will rely on the style of Guiding and Scouting in each country and on the legal instruments already existing for child protection. It is essential that in the development of any Child Protection Policy that national legislation and advice is taken into account. It would also be advisable to follow good practice from other similar youth organizations or work together on developing training for adult volunteers.

This Kit gives 8 key elements to be considered when developing a Child Protection Policy and agreeing its implementation. It is suggested that these key elements serve as the basis for your localized, national discussions. A number of appendices have been included that give some information on types of forms and procedures that could be followed.

Few Associations can have escaped having to deal with child protection issues at some point – and many have found it a traumatic and difficult experience, particularly if there are no clear policies, processes and procedures.

*Please use this kit as the starting point in developing what your Association needs in order to ensure that all the children and young people we work with are safe at all times – that is the main purpose.*

# Recognise that children and young people have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect

## What does this involve?

1.1 Recognising the rights of the child / young person

1.2 Recognising the rights of the adult

1.3 Child protection is everyone's responsibility

## 1.1 Recognising the rights of the child/young person

If one uses the Internet and types in the word "rights" on a search engine, the likelihood is that the vast majority of the entries for the word will cover or be closely related to the area of "Human Rights". Needless to say, Human Rights are paramount and non-negotiable.

### Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

*"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."*

Children and young people, being individuals, have equal status with adults as members of the human family. That being said, children and young people are more vulnerable as they do not have the same understanding, experience and tools as adults to identify what is right or wrong and to act or react accordingly.

This means special attention has to be paid so that their individual freedoms and rights are secured during their development and this is the responsibility of each and everyone.

The United Nations identified a set of minimum standards in protecting children and young people's rights listed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UN considers as children the age range from 0-18 years.

## The first three articles state:

### Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

### Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

### Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.

3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Young people must be given the opportunity to identify what is right and what is wrong in the way they are treated. In this it is equally important to consider the individual needs of young people.

## **1.2 Recognising the rights of the adult**

.....

Adults taking care of children and young people have rights as any other adults do. It is of great importance that adults who are in relatively close contact to children and young people are given appropriate training and trust.

It is the responsibility of each organization to create the best and most adequate conditions for adults to be able to play their role as educators either as volunteer or staff.

.....

## **1.3 Child Protection is everyone's responsibility**

.....

Child Protection is not only the responsibility of each and every leader.

It is not merely about looking after children and young people properly and respecting them. It is also each and every child, young person or adult's responsibility to be aware of abuse, be able to recognize it and take appropriate action. Attention should also be drawn to child protection issues between children and young people themselves including anti-bullying policies.



# Recognise that general welfare, health and full development of children and young people always come first and protects them from harm of all kinds

## What does this involve?

2.1 The welfare of the child always comes first

2.2 Creating the best conditions and environment possible for a child or young person to feel at ease and be able to develop

2.3 Adopting a policy on child protection

### 2.1 The welfare of the child or young person always comes first

The interests and well being of the child or young person are paramount.

In European law, including cases of divorce, the interests and well-being of the child or young person are paramount. Indeed, a child or young person is dependent and easily influenced. It relies on adults for guidance. The welfare of a child or young person depends on that relationship. It is therefore essential that the children or young people and their well-being are very top of the list of priorities.

### 2.2 Creating the best conditions and environment possible for a child or young person to feel at ease and be able to develop

Special attention needs to be brought to create an environment and atmosphere in which the child or young person feels at ease and can best develop him/herself. Not only the physical conditions have to fit their purpose, the human dimension is here particularly relevant.

Depending on their character and upbringing some children and young people will naturally fit in more easily or be more at ease while others might be shy or less confident. It is important that all can find their place, somewhere that meets their needs.

A great deal of this challenge rests on the quality of training provided for adult leaders and their experience.

### 2.3. Adopting a policy on child protection

Why have or adopt a policy on child protection?

In a youth organization such as Guiding or Scouting, enthusiastic volunteers help young people to develop fully their intellectual, physical, and emotional potential. Children and young people trust and depend on adults to protect them from harm. There is a need for a child protection policy as to ensure the children and young people are really safe and the volunteers in charge take up their responsibilities seriously.

*It is therefore to be strongly advised that all organizations working with children and young people have a Child Protection Policy. Such a Policy should strive to protect not only the children and young people but also those who work with them and look after them.*



It should also act as a guide in helping volunteers create a safe environment for young people and protect themselves against allegations of improper behaviour.



# Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of young people and protecting them from harm

## Why and How...?

Safeguarding the welfare of young people ought not to be seen as an optional activity that can be added to the programme. Protecting young people from harm should become an integral part of the policy and practice of all Associations.

It is widely recognised that in any organization good management requires that everyone is clear about what they are trying to achieve, and that they agree aims and policy statements for that purpose.

All Associations should have a brief written statement setting out their policy on safeguarding the young people under their care. A policy statement will benefit and protect the young people and it will also benefit parents, adult leaders and the Association itself.

This policy should state clearly the duty of all those involved in the Association's work to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect of all young people with whom they come into contact - the welfare and well being of young people being paramount at all times.

Everyone involved, including young people, should have a copy of their Association's policy and where possible, it should be prominently displayed.

Introducing and implementing a policy on safeguarding young people's welfare will go a long way towards minimising the risks of young people coming to harm, and towards creating an environment which is safe, rewarding, stimulating enjoyable for all young people. It will also help to minimise the risk of leaders placing themselves in situations where their actions may be misunderstood or misconstrued.

To assist you in drawing up your policy statement, sample policy statements are included in a Fact Sheet.

## FACT SHEET

### Sample policy statements

Your Association's policy statement could be something as simple as:

*"It is the policy of ... to safeguard the welfare of all Members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm."*

Or...

*"The ... Association is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its youth members. Leaders should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the ... Association."*

Or you may want to think about drawing up a more detailed policy statement, for example:

*"We in ... want to make sure that young people are protected and kept safe from harm while they are taking part in Guiding/Scouting activities."*

### We do this by...

- *Ensuring that all leaders are carefully selected, trained for and supervised in their tasks*
- *Assessing carefully all risks that young people encounter and taking all necessary steps to minimise and manage them*
- *Giving parents, young people and leaders information about what we do and what can be expected from us*
- *Letting parents and young people know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy with."*

## Raise awareness about what children and young people are entitled to be protected from

### Guidelines for good practice:

#### What is child abuse?

Good child protection practice means ensuring that volunteers and staff working with young people are aware of potential signs of child abuse.

The term "child abuse" is used to describe a range of ways in which people harm young people.

This "harm" can take the form of physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect.

### It is important to note that:

- Young people can suffer from one or a combination of these forms of abuse.
- Abuse can take place at home, at school or anywhere where young people spend their time
- In almost all cases, the abuser is someone the child or young person knows such as a parent, carer, teacher, relative or friend.

### Some definitions:

#### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when adults deliberately inflict injuries on a young person or, knowingly, do not prevent them from being physically abused. It includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. Giving a child or young person poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol, and attempting to suffocate or drown a child or young person are also examples of physical abuse.

#### Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse is a form of mistreatment that includes contacts or interactions between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person when the perpetrator or another person is in a position of power or control over the victim.

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is when adults taking care of young people continuously fail to show their child love or affection, or when they threaten, taunt or shout at children or young people, causing them to lose confidence and self-esteem, and to become nervous or withdraw. When adults are constantly

threatening, angry, sarcastic or critical they can make children and young people feel unloved and unlovable.

#### Neglect

Neglect occurs when care-giving adults fail to meet their child's essential needs, such as adequate food, warmth and medical care. Leaving children or young people who are too young to look after themselves alone or without proper supervision is also an example of neglect.

#### Bullying

Bullying is a form of violence where a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions as injury or discomfort by one person or a group of people. Bullying often describes a form of harassment perpetrated by an abuser being in a physical or social superior power position. In some European countries up to 9.8% of adults do not consider bullying a form of violence.

However, we need to be careful that staff and volunteers are **NOT** in a position to decide whether or not abuse has occurred but that they do have a responsibility to be alert to behaviour by children or workers that suggest something may be wrong. Everyone must keep in mind that even for experts and professionals working in child protection services, it is at times hard to decide whether a child or young person has been abused or not.

All staff and volunteers within the association should be aware that, essentially, child abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than the child or young person causes harm.



There is a whole range of reasons why children and young people do not tell anyone they are being abused...

- They may have been bribed not to tell.
- They may have experienced actual or threatened violence from the abuser
- They may be afraid of what will happen to the abuser, who is most often someone they know and care about.

As adult leaders it is often very hard to admit that abuse is taking place within our organization, especially to children or young people we know, and particularly by people we trust. As adult leaders we cannot assume that because we work in a voluntary organization all individuals are caring individuals: this might indeed then lead us to fail to hear or recognise or deal with the possibility that abuse is happening. It is important that all workers receive training to help them recognise this unconscious defence mechanism and become alert of the possibility that abuse may be taking place.

### What does this mean for our organization?

This means that all concerns must always be reported immediately regardless of the circumstances – e.g. a case of inappropriate adult behaviour, disclosure from a child or young person or concerns about a child or young person.

**Never wait to see what happens next!**  
*By the time you are completely satisfied irreparable Damage could have been done.*

Young people and their parents should be taught about the child protection policy of your organization and their right to be kept safe. In raising awareness with children and young people about rights it is equally important that they are also made aware of what they can and should do to help adults help them. It should be explained to children and young people the need to be truthful and honest at all times. They should be trained in understanding the difference between secrecy and confidentiality and also helped to develop some understanding of what is appropriate to talk about and to whom. As it appears, children and young people have their own responsibilities as well, which should be emphasized by the adult leaders training them.

Young people come from different areas, races, religions and social classes. In talking to children and young people about their rights one should also stress the importance of considering each child or young person as an individual and that consequently their needs can vary. Staff and volunteers should be aware of young people's particular needs and capabilities. Getting to know each child or young person individually enables the carer to be more responsive to children or young people's reaction in situations where they may be suffering from abuse but are unable to tell anyone.

### Anti-bullying procedures

Anti-bullying procedures reiterate that children and young people have the right to protection from all forms of physical, mental and emotional violence. An anti-bullying policy seeks to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the prevention of all forms of bullying among members. Every Association should therefore have rigorous anti-bullying strategies in place.

*"Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm and receive proper care from those looking after them".  
 (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)*

It is the responsibility of all adults within your organization to help develop a caring and supportive atmosphere, where bullying in any form is unacceptable.

#### Staff and volunteers should:

- be aware of the potential problems bullying may cause
- be alert to signs of bullying, harassment or discrimination
- take action to deal with such behaviour when it occurs, following the Association's policy guidelines
- provide access for children or young people to talk about any concerns they may have
- encourage children, young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

## Plan the work of the organization so as to minimize opportunities for young people to suffer harm and protect adult leaders from situations which could cause concern

### Guidelines for good practice

Since we know that young people can suffer harm in all sorts of ways, it is important that the planning and management of the activities of your organization in such a way as to minimize opportunities for them to suffer harm of any kind while under your care.

It is essential that everyone involved in your organization knows what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. This can be done through a Code of Behaviour.

#### There are 3 key elements that your organization will benefit from having a code of behaviour in place:

- It helps protect children from harm
- The organization shows professionalism
- It ensures that adults are protected from situations that could cause concern.

A code of behaviour minimizes the opportunity for young people to suffer harm and seeks to protect staff and volunteers from false allegations. It will inform parents of the child-centred ethos of your organization. It will ensure consistency of practice and will promote the safety, protection, enjoyment and comfort of young people. Staff and volunteers will be able to carry out their roles and develop positive relationships with children in confidence.

For a code of behaviour to be effective, and not to become a negative list of rules, staff and volunteers should be asked to give their input and to be involved in the development of this code of behaviour. It should apply to all adults.

It is highly recommended that the code of behaviour covers the following points:

- Positive statements about how your organization expects staff and volunteers to act towards young people
- Provide help for adults to check and ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- Safeguard the welfare of young people
- Protect themselves from situations which could provide concern

### Into practice, a code of behaviour should include:

- ✓ Avoid all one-to-one situations with a child or young person. Where such a situation is unavoidable, always keep a door open or ensure someone else is close by
- ✓ Ensure that everyone is aware of the dos and don'ts of physical contact
- ✓ Where residential events or courses are concerned, male staff is not permitted to enter female rooms/tents or vice versa. If the need for a female/male to enter accommodation arises, that person must always be accompanied
- ✓ Remember that if a young person discloses information to you, or if you suspect any form of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, it is your moral and possibly legal duty to report your concerns
- ✓ Never let allegations by a child to be dismissed or to be unrecorded
- ✓ If a child discloses to you, it is important to reassure them and to tell them that what they have said will be taken very seriously and everything possible done to help
- ✓ Where physical contact is necessary (e.g. with First aid practical demonstrations), be sensitive and always avoid touching the children and young people yourself. Demonstrate on a colleague with their pre-arranged permission. Alternatively ask an experienced young person to demonstrate on another of the group
- ✓ When a child is upset, try to seek ways to provide comfort and support without unnecessary or excessive physical contact
- ✓ Where physical contact is unavoidable, ensure that another adult is present
- ✓ Horseplay and potentially violent games should be avoided

## Developing safe practices in a group or organization

Planning and managing activities of your organization are essential in order to minimize harm.

- ✓ Keep a record on each child, including medical details, any special needs and emergency contact telephone numbers
- ✓ Keep records of attendance and also of accidents, comments and complaints that take place
- ✓ Follow thorough recruitment and selection procedures (refer to Section 5)
- ✓ Make sure that the facilities you use (including toilets, heating, ventilation etc.) are safe and meet the required standards
- ✓ Ensure appropriate levels of supervision and ensure that children are not left unattended
- ✓ Have adequate insurance
- ✓ Provide rules on appropriate adult to child ratios and recommended levels of supervision
- ✓ Make sure parents, children and young people know how to voice their concerns if they are unhappy about anything

## Why is Supervision Important?

No matter how good recruitment and selection procedures are they may not be 100% foolproof. Good practice in management of staff and volunteers after appointment is equally important. Supervision is an integral part of that management.

### Clarity about Roles and Responsibilities

This is important because everyone needs to understand what is expected of them and what your organization permits and does not permit. It is also a time for volunteers and staff to explore and check out responsibilities.

### Review of work by Staff/Volunteers

Supervision provides an opportunity to look specifically at the work being undertaken by staff and volunteers and to discuss any issues/concerns that may have arisen.

### Professional/Personal Development

Supervision provides an opportunity to explore how staff/volunteers wish to develop their skills as well as to ensure that they have satisfaction both at professional and personal level.

## To reduce stress

Often the demands at work can be stressful due to personal issues, or if dealing with difficult situations or uncertainty about what to do in a given situation. An opportunity to discuss this in a confidential way can relieve stress and help to develop solutions to problems.

## To provide support

Sometimes staff/volunteers can feel isolated or insecure. Supervision creates a regular opportunity to share and discuss work and to provide support for staff/volunteers.

Supervision can be formal and/or informal, yet both are important to ensure that staff are supported and that the quality of care being provided is appropriate. Informal supervision takes the form of observation on the ground, working with children/young people and other team members, while formal supervision takes the form of a meeting with an individual on a regular basis with an agreed agenda and clear and confidential record. This is often the place to discuss issues that may have been addressed through informal observation.

## Supervision of Young People

Each organization has a duty of care; this is about protecting young people from accidental harm and from abuse, whether caused intentionally or unintentionally.

Making arrangements for the proper supervision of young people is one of the most effective ways of minimizing opportunities for children and young people to suffer harm of any kind in your organization

There is a range of practical matters to consider when planning activities, including:

- The number of participants
- The age of participants
- The type of activity
- The environment where the activity is taking place

### One should always take into account the following

- ✓ Have you completed a thorough risk assessment of the venue and activity?
- ✓ Have you informed parents of the activities that are being organized?
- ✓ Young people will be safer if supervised by two or more adults
- ✓ Young people should not be left unattended

## Adopt and consistently apply clearly defined methods of recruiting staff and volunteers

### Here is why...

Anyone who applies to work or volunteers with your organization may have the potential to abuse young people in some way. Although a very thorough selection procedure is one of the most sensible and effective ways of assessing a person's suitability to work with young people and has the advantage that it may itself act as a deterrent to potential abusers, it is often felt to be an unnecessary burden...

People are not less likely to abuse young people because they work part time or because they are getting paid, or because they have been servicing for years, or because they are a "friend of a friend"... The same procedure must be consistently applied with paid and unpaid staff, part-time and full-time workers alike.

The more routine the procedure becomes - not only in your organization but also in other voluntary organizations - the less intimidating it will be to genuine, well intended and well motivated applicants.

The majority of people who want to work in Scouting/Guiding are well motivated and without them Scouting/Guiding Associations could not operate. Unfortunately some individuals will try to use your association to gain inappropriate contact with young people.

Good recruitment and selection procedures will help screen out and discourage those who are not suitable for joining your association. Good recruitment and selection benefit everyone. Staff and volunteers will have a clearly defined role. This will enhance their self confidence, which will in turn have a positive impact on young people. Parents will be assured that all possible measures are being taken to ensure only suitable people will be recruited to work with young people.

### What does this mean in practice?

These are the things that your association should do to ensure good practice in recruitment procedure.

#### Defining the role

This involves thinking through what you exactly consider the role of a new employee or volunteer to be, identifying what skills will be required from

them to perform the tasks and being clear about what kind of person you expect to fill the post, keeping in mind a non-discriminatory policy.

#### Application form or registration procedure

A form should be supplied with a clear job description and information about the association including a copy of the association's child protection policy statement. The form should be drafted to allow applicants to provide all the relevant details and should include a written assurance that all the information received will be dealt with in confidence.

#### Interview

At least two representatives of the association should conduct an interview during which the information contained in the application form should be challenged against the qualities and skills required for the post. Obviously any previous experience of working with young people would be of particular relevance. Expectations, working conditions, and personal development are important items that should also be discussed. The interviews are golden opportunities to stress your child protection policy and ensure that the applicant has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required to put the policy into practice.

#### Identification

The interviewer should consider asking to see the identity card, passport, driving licence or another form of identification that has the applicant's full name, date of birth and current address written on it, together with a signature and/or photograph. This should be compared with the written application to ensure that the applicant is not assuming a false identity.

#### Checking backgrounds

When you have selected an applicant as a suitable candidate for a position you should consult the Data Protection Service for guidance, if it is available under your country legislation.

#### Declaration

All applicants should be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people. In particular, all applicants should be required to declare any past criminal conviction and case pending against

them. Associations should make it clear that such information will be dealt with in a confidential manner and will not be used to discriminate against applicants unfairly.

**References**

These should be taken up with at least two people who are not family members, and ideally, one of whom should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant’s previous work or contact with young people. References should be taking up in writing and should be followed up orally. You will get a more accurate and reliable reference if you ask specific questions. In particular, referees should be asked to confirm that they have no concerns about the person working with young people.

**Ratification**

Your association’s management/ executive committee should ratify all recommendations for appointment. The decision to appoint staff or volunteers is the responsibility of an association, not any individual within it.

**Effective Management of volunteers and staff**

Good management of staff and volunteers will contribute to safe activities for young people. Good management will also create an atmosphere where volunteers/staff feel valued, are listened to, and where issues can be dealt with rapidly thanks to systems already in place.

Once staff/volunteers are recruited they should be informed about your association’s policies, procedures and guidelines and be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision. This will minimise unintentional harm of young people through lack of knowledge or skills and should pick up on possible intentional harm of young people.

The following is a template to use in your association in order to develop and tailor to your structure and activities:

**Trial Period**

Appointment should be conditional on the successful completion of a trial period, the length of which should be stipulated at the time of appointment.

During this period a close eye should be kept on the work of the new staff member in general and in particular to assess his/her ability in relation to working with young people and commitment to preventing abuse of young people.

**Induction**

An induction process should take place when any new worker starts with your association . This should include introduction to other workers, familiarising the new worker with your child protection policy, preparatory meetings, meeting young people’s parents etc.

**Records**

Details of the selection and recruitment procedure should be recorded. In particular a note should be kept of any matters arising during the trial period and any training needs.

**Training**

All staff/volunteers should have a child protection training that includes a basic awareness and understanding of child protection issues and the association’s child protection policies, procedures and guidelines. Training must be carefully selected to ensure it is sufficient. Training should be updated and reviewed regularly for new staff and volunteers and be in line with the legislation of your country.

**Support and supervision**

Provision of a structure for regular formal/informal, individual/group support and supervision will enable staff/volunteers to become more effective in identifying training needs and thus be able to respond to difficulties in a better and more efficient manner.

**Annual Appraisal (Staff)/ Review (Volunteers)**

This provides a means of enhancing support and supervision in order to highlight future support and training needs.

## Application Form for a Volunteer leader

Every person wishing to work in Scouting/ Guiding programmes and activities should fill in this form. They should also be given the relevant information on the group they wish to work with and a copy of the Protection Policy and guidelines.

NAME OF GROUP/S YOU WISH TO WORK WITH		
YOUR NAME:		
AGE:		
Address:		
How long have you lived at this address?		
TELEPHONE NUMBER HOME		
WORK		
Are you a member of Scouting/Guiding?	YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>
If NO, are you intending to become a member?		
If YES, how long have you been a member?		
If you have been a member for less than 2 years please indicate any previous youth work involvement:		
Please give details of any previous experience of working with young people, or any qualifications you may hold which are relevant (eg. First Aid, Outdoor pursuits etc):		
Do you suffer from or have you ever suffered from any illness which may directly affect your work with young people?		
Are you willing to attend team meetings and training days?		
<b>REFERENCES</b>		
If you have not been known to Scouting/ Guiding as a volunteer for more than two years we will require a reference from another source. Please supply a name, contact address and telephone number of someone who knows you well. This should not be a family member.		
Name:		
Address:		
Telephone:		
Relationship:		
<b>DECLARATION</b>		
In applying to work with Scouting /Guiding must understand the great responsibility involved in working with young people and the need to ensure their safety. We would therefore ask you to sign the following declaration.		
Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense, or are you at present the subject of criminal charges? (NB the disclosure of an offence may be no bar to you appointment)	YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>



Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense, or are you at present the subject of criminal charges? (NB the disclosure of an offence may be no bar to you appointment)	YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>
If YES what was the nature of the offence		
When did this offence or charge take place?		
What was the outcome of any investigation?		
NAME (please print)		

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

I have read and I am in agreement with the principles and guidelines put forward in the Protection Policy and Guidelines document

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

## **Reference Form**

### **Private and Confidential!**

Re:

The above named has applied to \_\_\_\_\_ Scouts/Guides as a volunteer and has given your name as a referee.

In connection with this, I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire underneath.

Please be assured that all information provided will be held in the strictest confidence. Thank you for providing your assistance on this matter.

Yours sincerely

## Integrate child protection skills and awareness training into training programmes for all staff and volunteers

### Why training?

There is a variety of reasons why it is important that your association provides training for adult leaders, staff and volunteers about the nature of abuse.

Having a Child Protection policy in place provides clear procedures, yet this is not sufficient. Your staff and volunteers need to be equipped with knowledge and skills to implement this policy.

Volunteers and staff may need help in being clear about what is appropriate and what is not regarding physical contact with children. This does not mean that adult leaders, staff and volunteers should be frightened of any physical contact with children. Comforting and reassuring as an expression of concern and care for the children they are looking after can be essential depending on the nature of work and activities carried out by adult leaders within your association.

### What areas and topics should be included?

#### PART 1: Understanding the basics

- good practice framework
- why people should act
- definitions of harm
- signs and indicators of abuse
- effects of abuse
- facts/myths of child abuse

#### PART 2: What happens if?

- policy framework
- the association's responsibilities
- handling disclosures
- reporting concerns, suspicious and allegations
- talking to parents
- handling inappropriate behaviour from colleagues
- managing your own feelings

#### PART 3: Principles of good practice

- practical application of policy
- code of conduct
- developing personal responsibilities
- possible scenarios
- key messages

Larger voluntary organizations will usually have an ongoing training programme which may be readily adapted to provide training in the prevention of child abuse alongside, or as a part of, other training programmes. Smaller organizations may be able to look to umbrella, and networking bodies or to those funding departments within their national authorities who already provide training, to amend their programmes to include training in the prevention of abuse and what immediate action to take when abuse occurs.

Associations may wish to consider how to meet the training needs of their personnel in the following way:

- ✓ planning the work of the organization to prevent abuse
- ✓ becoming an 'independent person' to whom children may make representations
- ✓ using supervision as a means of protection of young people
- ✓ interviewing applicants for positions involving work with young people
- ✓ dealing with abuse which has been disclosed or discovered.

Distance learning is another technique that could be used as a form of training staff and volunteers within your Association. This method ensures that, regardless of where an individual is located, everybody receives a consistent message, at a time and place that are suitable to them.

Such a programme is not designed to train people to become child protection specialists. It provides training that complements and reinforces the association's child protection policy. It enables individuals both new to Guiding and Scouting and also those with a current involvement, to understand their own responsibilities in relation to child protection and emphasizes the importance of following good practice guidelines when working with young people.

### The Child Protection Policy

Stress that it is of vital importance that all staff and volunteers in your organization are made aware of the association's Child Protection Policy. All those involved in the association must accept and understand this policy and agree to put it into practice.

**Thus it is the responsibility of each adult to ensure that:**

- ✓ their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- ✓ they observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people
- ✓ they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse
- ✓ they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed
- ✓ in every respect, the relationships they form with young people in their care are appropriate

**The Benefits of a Training Programme:**

- It provides accessible training for every adult member
- Participants will gain confidence in child protection issues and will understand how the association's child protection policy safeguards them in their work with young people.



## Reporting concerns

### What does this involve?

- Being prepared
- Developing simple and clearly defined procedures specifically for dealing with actual or suspected incidents of abuse
- Knowing what to do if you are told of abuse
- Being well informed about the nature of the statutory child protection procedures in your country and about your role in the process
- Having a policy on confidentiality

### Guidelines for practice

Your association’s procedures for dealing with physical, sexual or emotional abuse of young people should take into account the various ways in which you may become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of abuse.

- a young person may tell you
- someone else may tell you that a young person has told them or that they strongly believe a young person has been or is being abused
- a young person may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- a young person’s behaviour may indicate to you that it is likely that they are being abused
- something in the behaviour of one of the workers or in the way a worker relates to a young person alerts you or makes you feel uncomfortable in some way
- your awareness of, or suspicion about, abuse may come about as a result of something disclosed to you by a third party (parent, friend, colleague) who suspects or has been told of the abuse

### What does this mean for your association?

Give clear written guidelines to volunteers and staff on how to respond in these situations as listed in the following key points

#### Do not deal with it alone!

Under no circumstances should any individual member of staff or volunteer or the organization itself attempt to deal with any type of child protection issue alone

### Take it seriously!

The primary responsibility of the person who first suspects or is told of abuse is to report it to ensure that their concern is taken seriously

#### Do not investigate – pass it on and have procedures to do this!

It is important that everyone in the association is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional agencies on a referral to them of concern about a young person. You do NOT know everything about the young person and should not investigate. However, your information may be an important piece of a puzzle, which may help to provide a fuller picture.

#### Confidentiality!

The difficult issue of confidentiality is one that arises particularly when abuse is disclosed to us. However, you should be aware that the procedures which you develop to deal with all allegations of / or suspicions about abuse must be based on the fundamental principle that the welfare of the young person is paramount. Your association should have a clear policy about confidentiality and how this is to be respected. This policy will cover much broader issues than young people protection. You will want families and young people in contact with your association to be sure, for example, that personal and sensitive details which they have confided about their lives or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

### Record and report!

All concerns, disclosures and allegations should be recorded and reported to the person in your association who carries the lead responsibility for young people's protection.

### How to react and what to do

There is no one simple set of rules to follow in responding to these situations. However, the actions of your staff and volunteers who are told of abuse should be guided by the following key points:

- ✓ Stay calm, approachable and receptive
- ✓ Listen and hear, do not question
- ✓ Offer reassurance without making promises
- ✓ Record accurately in writing without inquiring into details of the abuse
- ✓ Report to the designated person in your association. If necessary make a direct referral
- ✓ Act without delay

### Reporting to whom?

It is good practice for all associations to designate at least one person to be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

Everyone in the association should know who this person is and how to contact him/her. In some associations it may well be the leader in charge.

It is important to develop clear lines of communication within your association. As a general rule the shorter the referral route, the simpler, clearer and therefore the better.

The most important point, however, is that someone else should know of the allegations so that the responsibility for taking action does not lie with one person only.

The nominated person should have proper training and access to advice.

A report brought to their attention should be assessed promptly and carefully and consideration given as to the best action to take.

### This may mean

- Clarifying or getting more information about the matter;
- Where there is doubt or uncertainty, initially consult with a statutory child protection agency such as Social Services, to test out concerns and views about the situation;

- Making a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police.

The nominated person must also make sure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the appropriate people to whom they should report outside the association if they are inhibited for any reason in reporting the incident to someone within the association.

If there is an imminent risk of harm to a young person or in case the Social Services are not available, a report should be made to the Police. In case of an emergency get medical help and then follow your association's procedures.

### Recording why and how?

In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, it is extremely important to record the details of an allegation or reported incident, regardless of whether or not a referral is subsequently made to a statutory agency.

An accurate note should be made of the date and time of the incident or the disclosure; the parties involved as well as any action taken within the association.

Your record should be clear and factual since any information you have may be valuable to professionals investigating the incident and may at some time in the future be used as evidence in court. This kind of information should always be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

You should be clear about what the arrangements are within your association for handing over and accessing this type of information in the event of staff or volunteers knowing of previous incidents leaving the association

Keeping records will also help protect your association. It is good practice to draw up a checklist of details to note and questions you should ask yourself in making such a record.

Details should be recorded in the young persons own words.

Sign and date the report and keep a copy.

### What to do next?

If you decide that there are sufficient grounds to discuss your concerns or to make a formal referral, you should contact the nearest Social Services.



It is a good idea for associations to have already established contact with a person responsible for young people's protection at the local Social Services and for your staff and volunteers to know how they can access that person.

You will find that statutory protection procedures are young people centred. This means that in all investigations the welfare of the young person is the paramount consideration. For this reason the statutory protection agencies give an undertaking that any information you provide will remain confidential. Once the concern has been reported, the responsibility of gathering information and deciding what should happen next rests with the Social Services.

If you are reluctant to make a report, you can contact Social Services for advice about how to deal with a situation. If, on the basis of what you say, the person you speak to feels that there is good reasons to be concerned that a young people is suffering or is likely to suffer harm, they will try to encourage you to give more information in the interest of the young people.

#### **The sort of information you are likely to be asked for includes**

- ✓ The name and address of any young people you have concerns about;
- ✓ The nature of any injury;
- ✓ The need for medical attention (if any)
- ✓ Your reason for suspicion of abuse;
- ✓ What you have already done; any practical information you may have, such as the name of the young people's medical practitioner, school etc.

#### **Being prepared**

##### **Have you thought about how you will deal with all the different outcomes of an incident being reported, particularly where an allegation has been made against one of your staff?**

- Possible reactions of other members of staff within your association might be anger, disbelief, doubt, fear, guilt, shock, anxiety, confusion and/ or a mix of these?
- The effects on the individual against whom the allegation has been made of your own internal disciplinary proceedings, an official child protection investigation, a criminal investigation?

- The reactions of other staff and volunteers and the other young people towards a young people who has been abused or whose allegation is being investigated?
- The reactions of parents/carers and other family members?

It is extremely valuable to have thought through and discussed with staff and volunteers in as objective a way as possible what could happen and how people might feel if an allegation of abuse is made or a suspicion reported. Rehearsing the issues will give everyone concerned the confidence to face what will inevitably be a very difficulty situation, particularly if an allegation is made against a staff member.

There will be situations in which suspicions or allegations may turn out to be unfounded. It is very important that everyone in the organization knows that if they raise a concern, which, through the process of investigation is not validated, they have not in any way been wrong in their initial action. You must encourage responsible action and make sure that "whistle-blowers" are confident of support.

*Learn to trust your judgements  
Don't be afraid of overreaction*



## Confidential Report Form

PLEASE PRINT ALL DETAILS CLEARLY		
Date of Report		
Time		
Name of person making accusation		
Address		
Postcode		
Date of Birth		
Telephone		
Staff/volunteer	YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>
Member	YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>
Parent's Name (if under 16)		
Date of incident		
Time		
Description of incident		

## Read more

### **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

<http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

<http://www.unicef.org/protection/>

### **Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child. Communication from the EU Commission, 2006 (367 final)**

<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0367:FIN:EN:PDF>

### **Eurobarometer 51: Europeans and Violence against Children (DG X, 1999)**

Eurobarometer on the perception of violence against children (EU 15)

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb\\_special\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_en.htm)

### **Toolkit for the development of child protection policies in the youth sector.**

<http://www.youth.ie/childprotection/> (Includes sample forms)

### **Planning toolkit for NGOs for developing child protection policies**

<http://www.childhope.org.uk/ngo-planning.php>

### **Child Protection Policies and Procedures Toolkit for NGOs working with children**

<http://www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php>

