



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A Volunteers Guide to Safeguarding
Children and Young People

WHO IS A CHILD?

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (Children Act 2004).

In some circumstances i.e. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) or Looked After Children, safeguarding responsibilities extend to the age of 25 (using the term 'young person').

TYPES OF ABUSE

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual – contact or non contact
- Neglect – physical, emotional, medical, educational
- Radicalisation.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries
- Inappropriate behaviours
- Dirty/unkempt
- Underweight/overweight
- Withdrawn
- Isolated.

This list is not exhaustive. It is important to recognise that many signs and symptoms are more easily recognised over a period of time and that some of the symptoms can just as easily occur where there hasn't been any abuse. Avoid jumping to conclusions and don't make assumptions.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

- Abuse is a form of maltreatment; it is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights, usually for gratification
- Abuse can be self-inflicted or inflicted by another person or persons and involves acts of omission or commission
- Abusers are usually known to their victims and are trusted or depended on by them. An abuser will make every effort to establish trust and will seek to maintain the respect of friends and colleagues
- Abuse may be a single act, multiple or repeated acts
- Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- Abuse can also be a lack of love, care and attention which is neglect which could be intentional or not.

Abuse is NEVER acceptable.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Thames Valley Air Ambulance is committed to safeguarding everyone who comes into contact with the service, staff, volunteers, and those who receive care (patients, relatives and the public). Thames Valley Air Ambulance also recognises that children and adults at risk from harm require particular safeguarding measures to be taken. Thames Valley Air Ambulance is committed to providing a culture of zero tolerance of any forms of abuse.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Volunteers have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

LONG TERM EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

Children who have been abused may experience difficulties with:

- Behaviour
- Mental health
- Education
- Relationships
- Drug alcohol and substance misuse
- Self-harm.

The potential long-term consequences of abuse on children further underlines the importance of responding appropriately to all concerns about a child's welfare.

We must act promptly and collaborate with other agencies in the best interests of the child.

WHO COULD SUFFER ABUSE?

Anyone can experience abuse or neglect. However, research has shown that some children who have experienced abuse share one or more of the below risk factors:

- Children with disabilities and/or special educational needs
- Young carers
- Those with other family issues, e.g. a parent with an addiction
- Refugee and asylum seeking children
- Minority ethnic groups
- Looked after children (children in or leaving the care system).

MINIMISING RISK WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Ensure that there is always more than one person present within hearing or sight when working with children
- If you must touch a child, for example to treat an injury, always try and have another person present and explain what you are doing and why
- Never take photographs of children without getting parental/carer's and where possible the child's consent
- Always use language which is appropriate when communicating with children.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE SHARES A CONCERN

- Remain calm, approachable and receptive
- Listen carefully to the person telling you about the abuse without interrupting
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you. Don't make promises or guarantees
- Ensure the person at risk is safe
- Record carefully only what has been said, heard or seen, and what you have done. Date and sign your notes
- Refer concerns or suspicions as soon as possible
- If you have immediate concerns call 999



THAMES VALLEY AIR AMBULANCE REQUIRES ITS VOLUNTEERS TO:

- Uphold Thames Valley Air Ambulance's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of everyone who comes into contact with its service
- Follow Thames Valley Air Ambulance's rules and procedures, including health and safety, equal opportunities and confidentiality
- Protect, safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk
- Respect the skills and dignity of patients, other volunteers and staff members
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour, respecting the charity's values (Respectfulness, Accountability, Integrity, Support and Evolution)
- Undertake safeguarding training
- Risk assessments will be completed for Thames Valley Air Ambulance events and activities in relation to safeguarding of volunteers, the public and Thames Valley Air Ambulance staff.

VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT:

- Behave in a way that harms, or may harm, a child or adult
- Behave towards a child or adult in a manner that may indicate they are unsuitable to work in a position of trust. Any volunteer doing any of the above, either within their work or as a consequence of actions within their personal life, will be subject to an investigation.

TO RECAP

- It is not our job to investigate allegations, but it is our responsibility to be vigilant and to report any concerns we have.
- To get in touch with Thames Valley Air Ambulance regarding any concerns, please contact:
 - The manager responsible for the event/activity
- The charity recognises that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be distressing and stressful for all concerned. Volunteers will be offered the opportunity to talk to someone and debrief on the issue they have encountered.
- We have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all the children and young people who have contact with us. Our safeguarding policy will be applied to all children without discrimination.



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