



Community & Voluntary Service

Mid and North Bedfordshire

How to Write a Child Protection Policy

1: What is child protection?

Some children may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm, either as a result of a deliberate act, or of a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both. These children need to be made safe from harm, alongside meeting their other needs.

(Source: Paragraph 1.7, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 1999)

2: Why do we need a child protection policy?

It shows the group's commitment to protecting children, giving clear signals that the group takes child protection seriously in all aspects of its activities. It also shows shared responsibility for child protection. The development and implementation of clear and concise child protection policies and procedures are a key requirement for any organisation working with young people.

3: Contents of a policy

A policy usually contains:

- a) Introduction
- b) Policy issues: definition of abuse, how to respond to abuse and selection of staff
- c) Lists of good practices expected of workers
- d) Contact details of assigned child protection officers

A) Introduction

This section can include the following:

- Contents page
- Definition of terms (glossary)

- Why you need a policy and who it covers
- Policy principles definition of a child and principles of treatment and value of children
- Acknowledgements any help you have received in putting the policy together, plus references to any applicable laws
- Declaration if this policy applies to any partnerships you have

B) Policy issues

This section can include the following:

- Your mission statement on child protection
- Definitions of child abuse how you define child abuse and the symptoms it can cause
- Common forms and causes of abuse a description of the typical type of abuse faced
- Legal provision for children
- Behavioural expectations for those who work with children so to keep children safe and to avoid false accusations
- Guidelines on recruiting and screening workers, particularly for those responsible for doing so, and for workers to know what to expect
- Ways of helping children report suspicions or allegations of abuse without fear of reprisal
- Guidelines of how to report abuse, and how to respond if allegations are made.
- Guidance on how to keep all information regarding abuse confidential

C) Good practices

This section can include the following:

- How to recognise child abuse
- What to do when a child talks about abuse
- The use of host parents, fostering and adoption of children
- Child discipline
- Bullying
- Storage of data, information and visual images of children
- Safe use of internet and email

CVS – Mid & North Beds has produced a Model Child Protection Policy, that can be downloaded from www.cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk

4: Organisational ‘health check’

When formulating a Child Protection Policy use this as an opportunity to carry out an ‘Organisational Health Check’ in respect of Child Protection. This should ensure that your organisation has:

- a child protection policy and a procedure for what to do if there are concerns about a child's welfare
- a named person for dealing with concerns or allegations of abuse and step by step guidance on what action to take
- a rigorous recruitment and selection process for staff and volunteers who work with children
- a written code of behaviour which outlines good practice when working with children
- a training plan and regular opportunities for all those in contact with children to learn about child protection and about health and safety
- information for young people and for parents or carers about the child protection policy and where to go for help
- a protective culture that puts children's interests first – children must feel confident that if they have concerns someone will listen and take them seriously
- guidance on taking children away on trips and on internet use: new technology safety, guidance on use of photographs, video, digital equipment and websites
- policies on bullying and on health and safety. You will need processes for dealing with complaints and for taking disciplinary action where necessary.

4: Further help

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NSPCC inform - is the UK's only free, online, specialised child protection resource for practitioners, researchers, trainers, policy-makers and other professionals working to protect children - www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform

Child Protection in Sport Unit - www.thecpsu.org.uk

Beds Rural Communities Charity - the RCC has registered as an umbrella organisation for Criminal Records Bureau checks. Members can use this service to carry out a check on their employees and volunteers. The service is FREE for checks on volunteers; but for employees costs £40 plus VAT for the standard disclosure, £45 plus VAT for the enhanced disclosure - www.bedsrcc.org.uk

This is one in a series of fact sheets produced by CVS – Mid & North Beds, on subjects of interest to voluntary and community groups. It is intended for guidance only and is not a comprehensive statement of the law.