

Turn2us

Safeguarding Children Policy

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1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the management of and immediate response to allegations and concerns about child abuse.

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers and third parties contracted to undertake work for Turn2us. It applies to all Turn2us services, events and activities.

The legal framework for this policy includes the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992
- The European Convention on Human Rights/The Human Rights Act 1998

Turn2us supports current practice in child protection protocols, and will conform to the principles and procedures of:

- HMG guidance 2013: Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTTSC)
- HMG Summary 2006 What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (WTDIYWACIBA).

All managers must ensure that staff who are working with service users have their own copy of "What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused" to refer to.

All Turn2us offices, including those of relevant third party providers, must have up to date contact details of their Local Safeguarding Committee and/or who to make referrals to should the need arise.

2. Definitions

A child is aged under 18 years.

Definitions of Abuse – as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM, 2010)

Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a child.

Emotional abuse

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to the child's emotional development. It may mean conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may also involve a child witnessing domestic violence and the emotional damage this may cause.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

3. The principles behind a Safeguarding Children Policy

In today's world all agencies share the responsibility to protect children from harm or the risk of harm. We all now work in a climate where we, as adults, *"have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children"* (WTDIYWACIBA).

Current guidance, as indicated above, sets out clear responsibility for all those involved, in whatever capacity, to respond to concerns about the welfare of a child.

Turn2us trustees, staff and volunteers have clear responsibilities to participate in this safeguarding agenda, on an equal basis with statutory or other agencies.

4. Role and involvement of Turn2us

It is recognised that this is a sensitive subject and that staff may feel anxious about their involvement and about the process of responding to concerns regarding the welfare of a child. Turn2us's senior management will respond sensitively to these issues and will support staff in raising these matters.

It is important that staff attempt to minimise distress to the child and should be as transparent and honest about their actions as is possible, keeping in mind that the safety of the child concerned is paramount. Turn2us staff will endeavour to promote a constructive working relationship with the service user wherever possible.

Turn2us acknowledges the importance of effective collaboration between agencies and the sharing of appropriate information to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

5. Checking trustees, staff and volunteers

All Turn2us trustees, staff and volunteers will have the appropriate background checks carried out on them before they are able to be confirmed in their role and have contact with service users. This will include a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

6. Responding to abuse

In the first instance, staff or volunteers will raise any concerns relating to safeguarding children with their immediate line manager or other senior manager within 24 hours.

If the concern relates to a senior member of staff, then there will be an option to take the concern to a different senior staff member or the Turn2us Director.

Staff should not delay or fail to respond to concerns they may have.

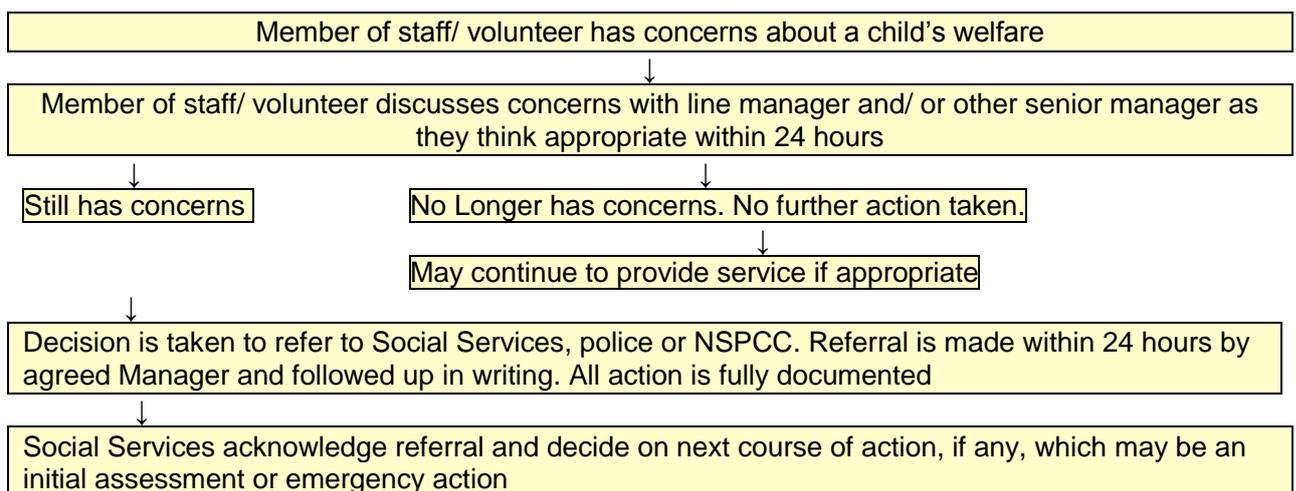
Staff will be asked to fully document their concerns and all relevant evidence (and agreed action)? Why this? What does it mean?

The line manager will discuss the available evidence with the member of staff or volunteer, will respond to this information within this 24-hour period and make a decision to refer onwards or to take no further action.

Decisions will be fully documented including any justification for taking no further action.

If a decision is taken to contact social services, the police (particularly if a crime is believed to have taken place) or the NSPCC, agreement will be made (between whom?) as to who will make this referral which should be undertaken within the initial 24 hours. It is also necessary for the line manager to notify the Turn2us Director within this time frame.

7. Turn2us referral process



Turn2us may need to follow up the referral or participate in any assessments/case conferences as agreed appropriate by the identified manager.

8. Helpline or online enquiry concerns

A member of staff or volunteer may become concerned about the welfare of a child following a telephone conversation or on-line enquiry. Should concerns arise on the phone when the caller is anonymous, the following guidance should apply:

In the first instance the caller should be encouraged to seek appropriate help and support, and be given details of relevant agencies in their area - including the local social services department. As soon as it appears to the member of staff that it may be necessary to breach our usual confidentiality policy in order to protect the welfare of a child then the caller must be informed about this possibility immediately.

It may be the case that the caller refuses to disclose their identity. If they do this the member of staff must note all details given and try to discover any others, which might more accurately identify the caller and enable further contact to be made. Where identity and contact details have been withheld, the member of staff should listen and note any accent, background noise, family circumstances, and any other information, which might help identify the family concerned. The member of staff should also note anything said which gives rise to the concerns for a child's welfare. Before the call ends, the staff member must again encourage the caller to make direct contact with the relevant agencies.

After the call ends the member of staff must refer the matter to a senior manager, and follow the procedures for referring their concern as laid out in this policy.

9. Confidentiality

Turn2us has a clear and robust confidentiality policy, which staff adhere to in their work with users. However, where the safety or wellbeing of a child is at risk, the need to respond to a child protection issue will override the preservation of confidentiality, and this should be clearly stated to the service user. Where safeguarding children issues arise absolute confidentiality should not be promised.

Breach of confidentiality relating to a safeguarding children issue should only ever be done on a *need to know basis* and should take into account

- The nature and extent of the information involved
- The purpose of disclosing such information
- Whether the disclosure of information is an appropriate response in the context of safeguarding the welfare of the child to whom it relates.

10. Data sharing

In order to provide the most effective support package for service users, there may be times when it is necessary to share users' personal information with other Agencies. Any requests for information made to Turn2us through an Agency will be obtained in writing and data will only be provided once the service user has consented to the data being collected and in accordance with the Agencies' own Data Protection, confidentiality and privacy policies.

11. Training

Staff

All staff induction must include discussion around the principles of our safeguarding children policy. A copy of the policy must be made available to individual staff. Additional safeguarding children training can be identified and arranged where this is deemed appropriate.

Trustees/other volunteers

Basic information about safeguarding children issues and clear explanation of Turn2us policy must be included in induction for all trustees and volunteers. Volunteers must be line managed and

supervised in accordance with this policy and have the opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have about the safety or wellbeing of a child with their line manager.

Adopted: when?

Last reviewed: April 2014

Next review date: April 2015

Policy Owner: Turn2us Director.

The following related policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Data Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy