

## **Youth United Child Protection Policy**

It is one of the policies of Youth United to safeguard the welfare of all young people in our care, by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm

We do this primarily by:

1. Having all of our activities planned by a committee of twelve male and female parents, and five teenagers; to get a balanced and up to date overall opinion on how they should be run, for the benefit and safety of the children involved
2. Ensuring that staff and volunteers are recruited only from a trusted community of parents and their children, trained accordingly, and supervised on a regular basis
3. Ensuring that all permanent staff, working with the children in our care, have successfully completed a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure form, and obtained clearance
4. Letting parents and children know how to voice their concerns about any real or potential problems, raise a complaint, or discuss anything that they are not happy about, or would like to see improved; through any of our male or female staff; via telephone, email, personal contact, or at our AGM
5. Ensuring that, in addition to the main activity organisers, and invited trainers; there are at least two staff members, who are mothers, in attendance throughout every youth club session
6. Insisting that any parent, who brings a child under the age of eight, stays in attendance of that child; since the activity organisers will be catering mainly for 8-18's
7. Educating the children in our care as to what they should, and should not, tolerate; in terms of relating to others
8. Ensuring that any new child who joins our youth club is closely monitored, to ascertain that they of a suitably high moral quality to fit in with the rest of the group
9. Ensuring that suitable clothing is worn for the games that we play, and that all jewellery, necklaces, ear rings, belts, watches, etc are removed before starting rougher activities
10. Informing the caretaker, of the premises we use, of any actual or potential harm caused (or that could be caused) by the premises, its fixtures and fittings, or its security procedures

One nominated representative in each project will be responsible for co-ordinating child protection policy and monitoring its implementation in practice. This representative will also ensure that all members of staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training opportunities

If anyone involved with a project believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant abuse or harm; they would notify the nominated representative (or deputy); who would then make the appropriate Local Authority aware

If, for any reason, a project worker, volunteer or other participant is unable to tell the nominated officer (or deputy) their concerns; they would inform the Social Services directly

In either case, the guidelines for Procedures for Concern, as outlined in our Equal Opportunities Policy, would be observed wherever practical

*The following definitions of abuse have been extracted from the Dept of Health's guiding document "Working Together"*

**Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy, or Munchausen syndrome by proxy

**Emotional abuse:** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve 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. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone

**Sexual abuse:** 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 (e.g. rape and buggery) 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:** 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