

# Our Safeguarding Policy

Essentials for IOP members  
and volunteers



# Our Safeguarding Policy

## Members and volunteers

### What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to protect from harm.

### Key Definitions

- **Child:** a person/people under the age of 18. Children therefore means children and young people.
- **Vulnerable Adult:** an adult is any person aged 18 or over. Some adults may be vulnerable and entitled to be safeguarded because they are unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation for several reasons.
- **Age of consent:** in the UK, a person can legally consent to sexual activity if they are 16 years old or over. However, it is illegal under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for an adult in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a person under the age of 18.

### The 5 R's to bear in mind

- **Receive:** Listen actively, open body language, accept, non judgemental.
- **Reassure:** 'You've done the right thing by coming to me', re-assure child/vulnerable adult that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don't promise what can't be delivered.
- **Respond:** Tell them what you are going to do and do it. Ensure child/vulnerable adult is ok before they leave.
- **Report:** As soon as possible, to the Member Networks Manager or your IOP contact, as appropriate.
- **Record:** Vital facts, no opinions – When? Where? Who? What?



### What do I do if I think a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm?

1. Inform your IOP Contact (e.g. Duty Building on site Manager or event lead) who will inform the Police.
2. If delivering activity on your own, please contact your Head of Nation or Member Networks Manager. Your IOP contact will inform their line manager who will then inform the safeguarding lead.

### What do I do if I am unsure that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm?

1. Speak to your IOP contact. If they are unsure, they should contact their Line Manager or safeguarding lead for advice. If none is available call the NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**. Or in Ireland call **ISPCC 01 522 4300 (M-F 9-5)**

### What do I do if I think that a child or vulnerable adult is not at risk of significant harm right now, but I have some suspicions?

1. Inform the Head of Nation / Member Networks Manager by the next working day (within 48 hours). They will inform the safeguarding team at the IOP.
2. Their Line Manager informs safeguarding lead safeguarding lead (within 24 hours) and notifies the Member Networks Manager.

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If a disclosure is made relating to FGM, you must report this to the police immediately. After you have reported this to the police, please report this to safeguarding lead.

### What do I do if someone tells me that they are being abused or neglected?

Remember the 5 R's and follow advice on the previous page.

### Staff Behaviour

If you are concerned about the behaviour of any staff member or another volunteer, you should speak to the Member Networks Manager.

### Whistleblowing

If you are worried about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices or potential failure, please speak with your IOP contact. If you feel unable to talk to your contact, you can call the NSPCC's whistleblowing helpline on **0800 028 0285** or Speak to Protect on **020 3117 2520**.

### Good Practices to follow...

- Ensure you are always in an open / visible space when working with children.
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults individually.
- Always put the welfare of each child or vulnerable adult first.



- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children or vulnerable adults.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with any details of treatment given.
- Administering medication to a child or vulnerable adult unless specifically trained and approved to do so.

### Looking After You

### Unacceptable Practices to follow...

- Taking children or vulnerable adults to your home unaccompanied.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Sleeping in the same room as a child or vulnerable adults.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adults.
- It is important that you recognise that working with children and vulnerable adults can trigger different emotions especially if there is a disclosure or concerns raised.
- It is normal to feel upset, angry or worried when you are in this situation so please do not feel embarrassed or uncomfortable.
- It is healthy to talk about how you feel within the bounds of confidentiality. IOP can offer support from your IOP contact.

Call: **020 7470 4845**  
or **07525 631 474.**

