

TOGETHER ACTIVE

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Together Active recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people and protecting them from harm. This Safeguarding policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board at least annually to check its effectiveness and to consider any updates in legislation.

Safeguarding Culture at Together Active

Together Active is a local charity forming part of a national network of 43 Active Partnerships. We are funded by Sport England, our local authorities and our universities. As a strategic organisation, we work behind the scenes to create the conditions for physical activity and sport to happen across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. We do this by coordinating and commissioning programmes, providing information, advice and guidance, and influencing systems to create change.

Sport and physical activity can and does have a powerful and positive influence on people, especially children and young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement, but it can also have a significant impact on personal development. Children and young people have a lot to gain from partaking in sport and physical activity as it provides an excellent medium in which young people can learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own unique potential. These positive effects can only take place if sport and physical activity is in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all children and young people first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

As the active partnership for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire we believe that safeguarding at Together Active is everyone's responsibility and it is our duty as a local charity to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This is our core principle. In adhering to this principle, we focus on working with our partners to provide a safe and welcoming environment for children and young people regardless of age, ability, culture, race, language, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All children and young people have equal rights to support and protection and we are committed to ensuring that all children and young people are able to participate and enjoy all forms of physical activity and sport in a safe and supportive environment.

One of the foundations of our safeguarding culture is this policy and the procedures contained within it. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors and trust board members, all of whom are trained upon its contents and on their safeguarding duties. This policy also applies to staff and volunteers working to deliver programmes that Together Active is directly responsible for.

We update this policy at least annually to reflect changes to law, guidance and best practice. Please note that Together Active has several policies that should be read alongside this document which are listed in Appendix 1.

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has also been considered when drafting this policy:

- [Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#)
- [The UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\) and the Data Protection Act 2018 \(DPA\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)
- [The Children Act: 1989](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023](#)

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's and learners' health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

Together Active Aims

Together Active is committed to creating, promoting and maintaining safe environments in sport and physical activity, identifying where there are concerns about a child or young person and taking timely action to mitigate risk. In partnership with key local statutory agencies and the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), Together Active will encourage and support all partner organisations to fulfil their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities through implementing and embedding their own policies and procedures. The CPSU forms part of the NSPCC and receive Sport England funding to ensure safeguarding standards in sport are enhanced and maintained.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make clear Together Active's commitment to safeguarding all children and young people and, alongside our safeguarding implementation plan, demonstrate how we are meeting statutory safeguarding obligations as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Raise awareness of safeguarding children and children protection, ensuring that preventative measures are in place for children and young people
- Provide guidance and clear procedures for staff and volunteers working with children and young people
- Form part of guidance documentation for partner organisations when developing their own safeguarding policies and to encourage them to work in line with the national safeguarding framework
- Provide a reference framework for Together Active to check that partner policies and procedures meet an appropriate minimum standard when commissioning or sub-contracting work that involves delivery to children and young people

The Together Active Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is based on the following core values and principles:

Values

- All children's experiences must be guided by what is best for that young person.
- Adults interacting with children and young people in sport should do so with integrity and respect for the child.
- All young people's sport and physical activity should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play.
- All young people's sport and physical activity should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- Adults who take a responsibility for young people in sport have a duty to ensure that they are competent to provide safe and rewarding experiences for those in their care, through appropriate training and education.

Principles

- The welfare of children and young people, (the Children Act 1989 defines a young person as under 18 years of age) is the primary concern.
- All people, but especially young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- **It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.**
- All incidents of poor practice and suspicions or allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Confidentiality

Together Active complies with regulations outlined by DPA, GDPR and the Together Active Data Protection Policy and will not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. While matters are treated as confidential, information is shared as per the Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners Guidance (2024) and fears about sharing information do not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

- Together Active recognises that timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- While it is recognised that matters relating to safeguarding individual children are confidential, a member of staff, visitor, or volunteer, if confided in by a child, must never guarantee confidentiality to that child as it may not be in their best interests.
- Information must only be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis, but staff do not need consent to share information if a child or young person is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm.
- The LSO and/or Deputy LSO will disclose personal information about a child or young person, including the level of involvement of other agencies, to other members of staff only on a 'need to know' basis.

Information Sharing

The LSO will normally obtain consent from the child/young person or parents to share child protection information. Where there is good reason to do so, the LSO may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for deciding to do so.

The [UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018](#) do not prevent Together Active staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. If any staff member from Together Active receives a request from a child/young person or parent to see child protection records, they must refer the request to the Data Protection Officer.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate. Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether the decision is taken to share. If required additional legal advice will be sought. As part of this decision-making process the six points below will be considered along with the other guidance set out in the [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners 2024](#) documentation.

When considering whether to share information with other organisations Together Active will always follow the following six key points:

1. Explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation
2. Always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration
3. Where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. Together Active may still share information, if in the judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent
4. Seek advice when in doubt, especially when doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others
5. Ensure that the information shared is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.
6. Always record the reasons for the decision – whether it is to share information or not

Storing Information

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with our Data Protection Policy. Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a

detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. All concerns must be recorded using the Together Active safeguarding concern form.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded on the Together Active Safeguarding tracker. This will also help develop a robust, information-led picture of the child or young person potentially at risk. Records should include

- The child's name, address or any other relevant information you may have available
- Date, time and how the concern was raised
- Any other witnesses who may have been present
- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- Details of any other agency/partner involvement
- The member/s of staff who dealt with the concern
- Details of the alleged or suspected abuser
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome Information and parent consent (if appropriate)

The parents of the child should be informed of a concern unless it is believed to be not in the best interests of the child, would place them at further risk or where it is believed a crime may have been committed

Reporting the matter to the Lead Safeguarding Officer (or police or social services department) should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the Lead Safeguarding Officer, social services or the police should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. It is the responsibility of the person reporting the concerns to ensure written confirmation is completed.

If details have been sent to either social services and/or the police a copy should also be sent to the Lead Safeguarding Officer. If the concern is about the Lead Safeguarding Officer this information should be sent to the Together Active CEO.

Roles, Responsibilities and Training

Together Active – All Staff, volunteers and Trustees

Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and trustees must:

- accept the moral and legal responsibility to provide a duty of care to young people and implement procedures to safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse.
- work with all partner organisations to promote safeguarding in sport, including local statutory agencies such as the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB).
- respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people.
- promote equity through all the work staff and volunteers undertake including child protection and welfare.
- work with all staff that are directly involved in the delivery of Together Active's initiatives and programmes (whether they be paid employees or unpaid volunteers) to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse and themselves against allegations.
- adopt and adhere to the Together Active Code of Conduct and the Together Active Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- ensure that any partners or external organisations contracted or commissioned by Together Active to deliver work that involves children and young people have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- raise any concerns about a child or young persons welfare and/or suspicions or allegations of abuse or poor practice appropriately and promptly in line with procedures outlined in this policy
- know what to do if a child or young person tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the information to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone.
- know what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or

neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.

- know the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation.
- be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.
- support LSOs and provide information/support where requested.

Training

- Staff members undertake safeguarding training at induction including Safeguarding Children and Young People, Safeguarding Adults and Equality, Diversity and Discrimination Awareness and Together Active safeguarding procedures to ensure they understand the systems in place and can identify signs of possible abuse, neglect and/or poor practise.
- Staff participate in annual safeguarding training in line with TA annual safeguarding
- Training is regularly updated and in line with latest legislation
- Staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example through team meetings and internal comms)
- Volunteers receive appropriate training respective to the role they are undertaking

Lead Safeguarding Officer

Responsibilities

- All LSOs have a responsibility for safeguarding within Together Active
- A minimum of one LSO will be available during Together Active core working hours
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns are effectively recorded and documented in line with this policy
- Assess safeguarding concerns raised promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate
- Consult initially with a statutory child protection agency such as the local Social Services Dept. or NSPCC, to test any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff
- Act as a point of contact with safeguarding partner
- Liase with the CEO to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Work in collaboration with the appointed safeguarding leads at Together Active to ensure that children and young people taking part in any activities on and on behalf of Together Active do so in a safe environment.
- refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff
- Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency (social services or police) without delay. It is NOT the role of Together Active to decide whether a child has been abused or not. However, it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate action taken.
- respond to any suspicions or allegations of abuse or poor practice appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- work with partners to access support from the local statutory safeguarding agencies where required.
- Oversee the effective local provision training programme that provides access for all sports development staff, coaches and volunteers to receive basic awareness safeguarding training in collaboration with TA Safeguarding Welfare Officer.
- Ensure that safeguarding practise is frequently reviewed at Together Active and that best practise is always adopted.

Training

- The LSO will attend the CPSU two-day course for active partnership Safeguarding Lead Officers on an annual basis
- Ann Craft Trust- Safeguarding Adults in Sport & Activity in England: Advanced Training for Safeguarding Leads (annually)
- LSOs receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates through the Active Partnership Network Lead Safeguarding Officer forums
- LSOs engage with sector safeguarding development opportunities such as conferences

The Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer

Responsibilities

- Our Deputy LSO is trained to the same level as the lead LSO and supports the LSO team with safeguarding matters on a day to day basis. The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the lead LSO.

The Trust Board

Responsibilities

- The Trust Board are the accountable body for ensuring the safety of Together Active.
- The Trust Board reviews policies/procedures in accordance with statutory guidance or more frequently if needs change.
- The Board Trustee for Safeguarding is accountable for overseeing safeguarding arrangements and being the Safeguarding Board Champion.
- The Board Trustee for Safeguarding meets with the Together Active Safeguarding team on a quarterly basis and review reports provided for the Board.
- The nominated Trustee is responsible for liaising with Together Active Safeguarding team over all matters regarding child protection. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in individual concerns raised.

Training

- Quarterly meetings with the Together Active Safeguarding team for key safeguarding updates
- Staff members undertake safeguarding training at induction including Safeguarding Children and Young People, Safeguarding Adults and Equality, Diversity and Discrimination Awareness
- Our Board Safeguarding Champion will receive additional training as required to empower them to support and challenge the Lead Safeguarding Officers and support the delivery of high quality safeguarding at Together Active.

The CEO

Responsibilities

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- Liaise with the Together Active safeguarding leads
- Liaise with the “case manager” and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- Promote, advocate and ensure good practise in safeguarding across Together Active and it’s partner organisations
- Respond to any suspicions or allegations of abuse or poor practice appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures

Staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date and empowered to provide high quality safeguarding.

New staff, volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers key policies, how to report and record concerns and information about our Lead Safeguarding Officer and Deputy LSOs.

Our trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that there is an effective whole organisational approach to safeguarding. This training is updated at least annually.

The Together Active Safeguarding Board Champion receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the Lead Safeguarding Officers and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding at Together Active.

Safer Recruitment

Together Active will take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people. Safer Recruitment Practise at Together Active involves a scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. Online searches are carried out at the point of offer for all candidates.

Candidates are informed through the recruitment process of due diligence checks including online searches. The same procedures will be adopted whether staff are paid or unpaid. Safer Recruitment procedures at Together Active comprise of six key components which can be seen in the table below.

1: Pre- recruitment Checks *(The following pre-recruitment checks will always be carried out)*

Advertising

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff, it should reflect the:

- Aims of the particular programme(s) involved
- Responsibilities of the role
- Level of experience or qualifications required
- Together Active's open and positive stance on safeguarding

Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information should be made available to potential candidates containing:

- A clear role profile outlining the role summary and role outcomes
- a person specification (clearly stating qualifications or experience required if appropriate)

2: Applications

All applicants for paid full and part-time positions, and where appropriate voluntary positions, will complete a Together Active application form. Successful applicants will complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or an Enhanced Disclosure should they meet the thresholds and requirements of an Enhanced DBS check. In circumstances where the role is not eligible for DBS check a self-declaration form will be issued.

The following list is the minimum information required from applicants for any paid position (and consideration will be given regarding which of the following are appropriate for voluntary roles, depending on their nature and expected duration):

- Name, address, ID check and National Insurance number (to confirm identity and right to work)
- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken
- Listing of past career (to confirm experience and identify any gaps)
- Self-disclosure of any criminal record including convictions, cautions and formal warnings
- Whether the applicants are known to any social services department as being an actual or potential risk to children or young people, a self-disclosure question to establish whether they have ever had action taken against them in relation to child abuse, sexual offences or violence
- The names of at least two people (not relatives) willing to provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people e.g. previous employer(s)
- The applicant's consent to a DBS Disclosure being undertaken if required
- The applicant's agreement to abide by Together Active's code of conduct

Together Active self-declaration forms clearly state that failure to disclose information or subsequent failure to conform to the Code of Behaviour will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal.

3: Checks and References

All Together Active employees that will be working in a position that involves frequent or intensive contact with children/young people and involves working in an unsupervised capacity must complete an enhanced DBS check which includes a Barred List check. All Together Active employees that will be working frequently/intensively or in an unsupervised capacity must complete a DBS check.

Two written references must be taken up. If an applicant has no experience of working with children, training will be provided. A self-disclosure form will be completed by all paid full and part time staff and volunteers as part of the Together Active employment procedures.

4: Interview and Induction

Formal interviews will be conducted for all paid posts and where appropriate for voluntary positions. All new staff will undergo an induction by someone working in an official capacity within Together Active. The induction process will ensure that

- their qualifications are substantiated
- they identify training needs/aspirations through the probationary review process
- they sign the Together Active Code of Conduct
- the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the job are clarified e.g. through a formal or informal work programme or goal-setting exercise
- safeguarding procedures are explained and safeguarding training needs established

5: Training

Appropriate training will enable staff to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse. All members of the Together Active Team will take part in frequent safeguarding training as outlined in this policy.

6: Monitoring and Appraisal

At regular intervals, all staff employed by the Together Active should be given the opportunity to receive feedback (e.g. through an appraisal) to identify training needs and set new goals. Appraisers (mentors) should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage. They should also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns/complaints.

Probationary Period

Employees new to Together Active are subject to a 6 month probationary period, with the option to extend by periods of 3 months if concerns exist. Further details of this can be found in Together Active's Recruitment and Selection Policy

Raising a Concern

All members of staff have a duty of care to respond to safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate threat to life call 999.

Together Active Flow Chart for Reporting Concerns about Children and Young People

Child Protection Procedure

**TOGETHER
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Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent

1

Concern has been raised

This might have been by a member of staff, coach, official, volunteer or the child themselves.



2

Safeguarding Concern form is completed

You must detail your concerns using the Together Active Safeguarding Concern form completing this in as much detail as possible.



3

LSO determines next steps

Your LSO will have been notified that a concern has been raised and will determine the appropriate course of action.

YOUR CONCERN MUST BE REPORTED WITHIN ONE HOUR OF WHEN THE INITIAL CONCERN WAS RAISED.

Allegations against Staff or Volunteers of Together Active

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it must be acknowledged that there is potential for individuals working in sport and physical activity settings to abuse children and young people.

Together Active staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date and empowered to be proactive provide exceptional safeguarding.

New staff, volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, how to report and record concerns and information about our Lead Safeguarding Officer and Deputy LSO.

Together Active trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that there is an effective approach to safeguarding at Together Active.

Our safeguarding trustee receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the Lead Safeguarding Officer and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding at Together Active.

An allegation against anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity (e.g. volunteers or helpers in clubs, tournament officials, team managers on training camps, coaches) could occur. If a safeguarding concern or allegation is made about a member of Together Active staff, the CEO will follow the procedures outlined in the Together Active Disciplinary Policy. For allegations made against the CEO, the Chair of the Trust Board will be informed. For allegations made against a contractor or any individual working with children and young people in a paid or voluntary capacity the procedures outlined in this policy will be followed.

Inappropriate behaviour by anyone working with children and young people could take the following forms:

- Physical e.g., the intentional use of force as a punishment
- Emotional e.g., attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality
- Sexual e.g., sexualised behaviour towards children and young people
- Neglect e.g., failing to seek medical attention.
- All Together Active staff must report face to face or via phone call, any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately.

Who is the allegation about	Who must the concern be reported to
Members of Together Active staff including trustees and volunteers	Lead Safeguarding Officer
Individual working with children and young people in a paid or voluntary capacity	Lead Safeguarding Officer
Lead Safeguarding Officer	CEO
CEO	Chair of the Trust Board

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children. Where such an allegation is made, Together Active should follow the procedures as detailed above and the LSO should ensure the matter is reported to social services or the police. This is because other children and young people, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is and has been 'disqualified' under Part 11 Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act is automatically excluded from working with children and young people.

Responding to Concerns and Handling Disclosures

People working in sport and physical activity are well placed to recognise or receive concerns relating to the welfare of children and young people. They have a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether it relates to a child's family situation or concerns arising from their involvement in sport and physical activity. If in the event a disclosure is made, it is normal to feel overwhelmed and confused in this situation.

Child abuse is a difficult subject that can be hard to accept and even harder to talk about. Children who are abused are often threatened by the perpetrators to keep the abuse a secret. As such, telling an adult takes a great amount of courage.

In these circumstances, children have to cope with a lot of issues, including the fear that no one will believe them. So, care must be taken to remain calm and to show support to the child throughout the disclosure phase. The following guidelines will help lessen the risk of causing more trauma to the child.

Receive: Stay calm, do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment. If you display denial to a child or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down.

React: Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g., "everything will be all right now". Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and that you take what is said seriously.

- Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns through the appropriate channels as outlined in this policy
- Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children and young people.
- Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse.
- Do not dismiss the concern, speculate or make assumptions.
- Do not probe for more information than is offered or demonstrate panic or shock.
- Under no circumstance should you approach the alleged abuser

Respond: Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

- Do not investigate, interrogate, or decide if the child is telling the truth. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. Let the child explain to you in their own words what happened, but don't ask leading questions.
- Do ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?"
- Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for pupils with disabilities and for pupils whose preferred language is not English.
- Do not ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

Record: Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up on the Together Active Concern form within an hour of the concern being apparent.

Record the words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang. Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

Staff may suspect that a child or young person may be at risk. This may be because the child's behaviour has changed, their appearance has changed or physical signs are noticed. In these circumstances, staff should give the child the opportunity to talk and ask if everything is ok. If the child does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the guidance outlined in this policy.

Staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened, which could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent our staff from having a professional curiosity and referring to a DSL if they have concerns about a child.

The primary responsibility for Together Active safeguarding team is to ensure that the concerns and any related relevant information is passed to the police or children's social care without delay. Remember delay may place a child at further risk.

In the event of the Lead Safeguarding Officer not being available or the concern is about the Lead Safeguarding Officer, advice can be sought by telephoning the local social services department and speak to the duty

worker or by telephoning the NSPCC 24-hour free phone Helpline on 0808 800 5000. The police also have specially trained child protection teams who will give guidance and support and deal with out-of-office-hours enquiries.

Notifying Parents

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers about their children. As such Together Active will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. However, if there is reason to believe that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are notified.

Referral to children's social care:

The LSO will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies:

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Lead Safeguarding Officer, the deputies or the CEO is not available, and a referral is required immediately.

Social Services

Social services have a statutory duty under [The Children Act 1989](#) to ensure the welfare of children. When a child protection referral is made, the social services staff have a legal responsibility to make enquiries when it appears a child or young person may be at risk of "significant harm". This may involve talking to the child and family and/or gathering information from other people who know the child. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police where a criminal offence is suspected. If action needs to be taken urgently contact the police immediately by dialling 999. If concerns identified are 'out of hours' the police and social services provide an out of hours service.

Staff welfare

Together Active staff are encouraged to look after their own mental health wellbeing and seek support from their Line Manager in the first instance. Staff can also utilise the following services:

- [Mind](#) – 0300 102 1234
- [Samaritans](#)- 116 123
- [Shout](#)- 852 58

Children who may be at greater risk

Some children are at greater risk of abuse. This increased risk can be caused by many factors including social exclusion, isolation, discrimination and prejudice. To ensure that all children receive equal protection, Together Active will give special consideration to children who:

- are vulnerable because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity or sexuality
- are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- are at risk of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, or being drawn into extremism
- live in chaotic or unsupportive home situations
- live transient lifestyles or live away from home or in temporary accommodation
- are affected by parental substance abuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- do not have English as a first language

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children

- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Together Active staff are trained to be aware of and identify these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

Disabled children may have physical, sensory and learning disabilities and difficulties. Severely disabled children often rely on parents and carers to meet most or all of their needs. They may have limited mobility and may find it hard to make their feelings and wishes known because of communication or language difficulties.

If they have been harmed or ill-treated they may find it difficult to know how they can express their own concerns about their welfare and they may not even know that the care they are receiving is not safe or appropriate. Disabled children trust their caregivers and rely on them to be sensitive to their personal care needs, their health, their emotional well-being and their safety.

What to look out for:

- Withdrawal from friends or usual activities
- Changes in behaviour — such as aggression, anger, hostility or hyperactivity — or changes in school performance
- Depression, anxiety or unusual fears, or a sudden loss of self-confidence
- An apparent lack of supervision
- Frequent absences from school
- Reluctance to leave school activities, as if he or she doesn't want to go home
- Attempts at running away
- Rebellious or defiant behaviour
- Self-harm or attempts at suicide
- Unusual frustration at not being able to express feelings
- Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, fractures or burns
- Injuries that don't match the given explanation

You must ensure that you do not use a child's disability to explain your concerns in their behaviour or changes in their usual routines. All concerns should be investigated in the same way as a concern for any other child.

- Try to talk to the child to see if they want to talk about anything which is upsetting or bothering them
- Pass any concerns you may have onto the LSO ensuring that you complete the Together Active Safeguarding concern form.
- If there is no allegation but you are still concerned there may be something that's hard for them to express report your concern using the normal Together Active procedure.

Mental health

Sport and physical activity providers have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children and young people.

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences those experiences can impact on their mental health and behaviour.

Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they must refer to a LSO. LSOs will discuss cases with Mental Health First Aiders and escalate cases where necessary to ensure children receive the appropriate support.

Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. LGBTQ+ children and young people face the same risks as all children and young people, but they are at greater risk of some types of abuse. For example, they might experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or hate crime. The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. Unfortunately, children who are LGBTQ, or are simply perceived to be LGBTQ, can be targeted by other children. The risk to these children can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open.

Together Active staff will endeavour to reduce the barriers and provide a safe space for those children to speak out or share their concerns with them.

Child on Child abuse

Child-on-child abuse – children harming other children - is unacceptable and will always be taken seriously; it will not be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘part of growing up’.

It is more likely that boys will be perpetrators of child-on-child abuse and girls victims, but allegations will be dealt with in the same manner, regardless of whether they are made by boys or girls. All staff should be clear about the policy and procedures for addressing child-on-child abuse.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- physical abuse such as shaking, hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling
- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- sexual violence and harassment such as rape and sexual assault or sexual comments and inappropriate sexual language, remarks or jokes
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- upskirting, which involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their knowledge for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) including pressuring others to share sexual content
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (also known as teenage relationship abuse) - such as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- initiation/hazing – used to induct newcomers into sports team or activity groups by subjecting them to potentially humiliating or abusing trials with the aim of creating a bond

Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

All staff recognise that that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but is not being reported.

As well as supporting and protecting the victim of this type of abuse, professionals need to consider whether the perpetrator could be a victim of abuse too. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

The importance of context:

We need to ensure that the children affected are getting the help they need. Professionals need to consider the individual circumstances and ages of the children to determine the best course of action. In all cases professionals also need to think about risks to other children. If there’s an incident in a club, has this put other children at risk? Have other children witnessed the incident? Could any siblings of the perpetrator be at risk? There may well be a need for a range of assessments and interventions for different children. A multi-agency approach may be necessary, which may include one or all of the following:

- children’s social care
- the police
- any specialist services that support children who demonstrate harmful sexual behaviour
- the family
- any other professionals who know or have had contact with the child

Following an incident of Peer-on-Peer abuse it is advised that a risk assessment should be carried out to ensure the safety of children moving forwards.

All allegations of child-on-child abuse should be passed to the LSO immediately who will investigate and manage the allegation further.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of the sports club or activity will not be downplayed and will be treated

equally seriously. We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the home or club and can occur between children outside of these environments.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap one another

Safeguarding Concerns, definitions, signs and symptoms

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Children can be abused by adults or other children.

Types of abuse:

Sexual abuse

Definition:

“Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening”.

Sexual abuse can occur between an adult and a child or between two peers. Physical contact activities include unwanted kissing, rubbing, touching or masturbation. Abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Neglect

Neglect is a form of abuse, behaviour of parents or carers that results in depriving a child of their basic needs. Neglect includes failure to provide adequate supervision, health care, clothing, or housing, as well as other physical, emotional, social, educational, and safety needs.

A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate care, shelter, supervision, or the appropriate medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.

- **Physical neglect:** Failing to provide for a child’s basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter. Failing to adequately supervise a child or provide for their safety.
- **Educational neglect:** Failing to ensure a child receives an education.
- **Emotional neglect:** Failing to meet a child’s needs for nurture and stimulation, perhaps by ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.
- **Medical neglect:** Failing to provide appropriate health care, including dental care and refusal of care or ignoring medical recommendations.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any intentional act of causing injury or trauma to another person by way of bodily contact. It is deliberately hurting a child, causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Physical abuse isn’t accidental - children who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them.

Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child, perhaps giving them medicine they don’t need and making the child unwell – this is known as fabricated or

induced illness.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development.

Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse.

Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child for the intentions of exploitation, manipulation or abuse. Grooming happens both online and in person.

Groomers will hide their true intentions and spend a long time gaining a child's trust. Groomers may try to gain the trust of a whole family or community to allow them to be left alone with a child and if they work with children they may use similar tactics with colleagues.

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child from friends or family and making the child feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make a child believe they have no choice but to do what they want.

Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten the child. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation

What is CSE?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity. Children may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

What to look out for:

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' behaviour.

Warning signs include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks
- Suspensions or unexplained absences from school
- Persistently going missing or arriving late
- Under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- Concerning use of internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

As members of Together Active staff it is your responsibility to remain vigilant, respond appropriately to all concerns raised and keep updated with safeguarding best practice.

Child Sexual Abuse Online

Groomers can spend time learning about a young person's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship.

It's easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become 'friends' with pupils they are targeting.

Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds.

Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

When sexual exploitation happens online, a child may be persuaded, or forced, to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- have sexual conversations by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Sexting

Sexting or sending nudes is when someone shares a sexual message, naked or semi-naked image, video or text message with another person. It doesn't have to be a nude image of them and could be an image of someone else.

Children can send nudes using mobile phones, tablets and laptops and can share them across any app, site or game.

Risks involved with sexting:

- losing control of the images, videos or messages and how they're shared. Once something's
- shared online it's public and can be saved or copied by others.
- blackmail, bullying and harm. Children can have their photos, messages or videos shared
- without their consent or be bullied about them. This can lead to them feeling difficult emotions
- like distress or embarrassment and shame.

Why do children sext?

There are many reasons why a child may want to send a naked or semi-naked picture, video or message to someone else:

- joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'
- boosting their self-esteem
- flirting with others and testing their sexual identity
- exploring their sexual feelings
- to get attention and connect with new people on social media
- they may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image, especially if
- the person asking is persistent

It's easy to send a photo or message but the sender has no control about how it's passed on. Some people may think that images and videos only last a few seconds on social media and then they're deleted, but they can still be saved or copied by others. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know.

Children may think 'sexting' is harmless but it can leave them vulnerable to:

- Blackmail - An offender may threaten to share the pictures with the child's family and friends

- unless the child sends money or more images.
- Bullying - If images are shared with their peers, the child may be bullied.
- Unwanted attention - Images posted online can attract the attention of sex offenders, who know how to search for, collect and modify images.
- Emotional distress - Children can feel embarrassed and humiliated. If they're very distressed this could lead to suicide or self-harm.

Substance Misuse

What is alcohol and drug misuse

Substance misuse is when someone's drinking or drug use becomes harmful or dependent.

By 'harmful' this means when someone puts themselves or others in danger. They might continue to drink or take drugs even if it puts them at risk of illness, psychological problems or physical accidents.

Dependent drinking or drug use is when someone craves alcohol or drugs and continues to use them even though it causes them social, health or even financial problems.

Effects on children:

Living in a household where a parent or carer misuses substances doesn't mean a child will experience abuse but it can be a risk.

Substance misuse can have negative effects on children at different stages in their lives. During pregnancy, drinking and drug use can put babies at risk of birth defects, premature birth, being born underweight and withdrawal symptoms.

In later years, substance misuse can put children at risk of:

- physical and emotional abuse or neglect
- behavioural or emotional problems
- having to care for their parents or siblings
- poor attendance at school or low grades
- experiencing poverty
- being exposed to drugs or criminal activity
- being separated from parents.
- Some of the signs to look out for are;
- Eyes that are bloodshot or pupils that are smaller or larger than normal.
- Frequent nosebleeds could be related to snorted drugs.
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns. Sudden weight loss or weight gain.
- Seizures without a history of epilepsy.
- Deterioration in personal grooming or physical appearance.
- Impaired coordination, injuries/accidents/bruises that they won't or can't tell you about- they don't know how they got hurt.
- Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing.
- Shakes, tremors, incoherent or slurred speech, impaired or unstable coordination.
- Unexplained, confusing change in personality and/or attitude.
- Sudden mood changes, irritability, angry outbursts or laughing at nothing.
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity or agitation.
- Lack of motivation; inability to focus, appears lethargic or "spaced out."
- Appears fearful, withdrawn, anxious, or paranoid, with no apparent reason.

Faith Abuse

It is the belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possessions, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or jinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. It can take place for some of the following reasons

- abuse as a result of a child being accused of being a 'witch'

- abuse as a result of a child being accused of being possessed by 'evil spirits'
- ritualistic abuse which is prolonged sexual, physical and psychological abuse
- satanic abuse which is carried out in the name of 'satan' and may have links to cults
- any other harmful practice linked to a belief or faith

Child abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community. Belief in evil spirits that can 'possess' children is often accompanied by a belief that a possessed child can 'infect' others with the condition. This could be through contact with shared food, or simply being in the presence of the child.

What to look for:

- A child's body showing signs or marks such as bruises or burns, from physical abuse
- A child becoming noticeably confused, withdrawn, disorientated or isolated and appearing alone amongst other pupils
- A child's personal care deteriorating, e.g. through loss of weight, being hungry, turning up at the respective setting without food or being unkempt with dirty clothes
- A child's attendance during activities becomes irregular or the child being taken out of activities all together.
- A child reporting that they are or have been accused of being 'evil', and 'or that they are having the 'devil beaten out of them'.

There are a number of laws in the UK that allow the prosecution of those responsible for abuse linked to faith or belief. One of the biggest challenges is raising awareness and encouraging victims and witnesses to come forward.

Trafficking

Trafficking is where children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse.

Traffickers often groom children, families and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere.

Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they'll make a profit from money a child "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They'll often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family "owe" to the traffickers.

Traffickers may:

- work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in
- be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children on a small scale
- be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and a large numbers of victims.

Children are trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, bag theft

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected

and may be sexually exploited.

What to look out for:

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious but you might notice unusual behaviour or events. These include a child who:

- rarely leaves their house, has no freedom of movement and no time for playing
- is orphaned or living apart from their family, often in unregulated private foster care
- lives in substandard accommodation
- isn't sure which country, city or town they're in
- is unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- might not be registered with a GP practice and has no documents or has falsified documents
- has no access to their parents or guardians
- possesses money or goods not accounted for
- has injuries which may be workplace related and gives a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children

Fabricated Illness

Fabricated or induced illness is a form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

Perpetrators of fabricated illness will go to great lengths including infecting their child's wounds, injecting their child with dirt or poo, inducing unconsciousness, exaggerating, distorting or lying about their child's symptoms, medical history, tests or diagnoses, not treating or mistreating genuine conditions so they get worse.

- Withholding food, resulting in the child failing to develop physically and mentally at the expected rate
- falsifying documents
- deliberately contaminating or manipulating clinical tests to fake evidence of illness, for example, by adding blood or sugar to urine samples
- poisoning their child with unsuitable and non-prescribed medicine

A clinician may suspect fabricated or induced illness if, after carrying out examinations and tests, there appears to be no explanation for the child's symptoms.

What to look for:

- Symptoms only appear when the parent or carer is present
- The only person claiming to notice the symptoms is the parent or carer
- The affected child has a poor response to medication or other treatment
- If one particular health problem is resolved, the parent or carer may begin reporting a new set of symptoms
- The child's alleged symptoms don't seem plausible
- The child's daily activities are being limited far beyond what you would usually expect as a result of having that condition
- The parent or carer doesn't seem too worried about the child's health
- One parent has little or no involvement in the care of the child
- The parent or carer encourages medical staff to perform often painful tests and procedures on the child (tests that most parents would only agree to if they were persuaded that it was absolutely necessary)

Gangs and Youth Violence

The police define a gang as a group of people who are involved in organised crime activity. A group of mates who live in the same area as each other, or all go to the same school, and who hang around together is not a gang and the police wouldn't see them as such as long as they were behaving in line with the law.

Being in a gang can make a child feel part of something or a sense of belonging. Some gangs take part in criminal activity and might try to get them involved with them. Being part of a gang like this can be dangerous.

Sometimes they can be forced to commit a crime or do things that are unsafe.

If a gang carries knives or other weapons, they might get them out to show off or intimidate people. This can be very scary for other people, especially if they think the gang will use them. Children join gangs for lots of different reasons, some of these include:

- fitting in with friends and other gang members
- having the same interests as other people, like sports or music
- feeling respected and important
- to be protected from bullying or from other gangs
- making money from crime or drugs
- gaining status and feeling powerful

What to look out for:

- changes in behaviour
- poor attendance at their usual activities which is out of character
- changing friends or having no friends at their usual activity setting which is a change to the normal for that child
- rebelling at clubs, activities and possibly at home (parent may disclose this to a member of staff)
- poor family or adult bonding
- having large sums of money or new expensive items which is unusual

Youth Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power to threaten or harm others by young people as young as 10. Youth violence can include fighting, bullying, threats with weapons, and gang related violence. A child can be involved with youth violence as a victim, offender, or witness.

County Lines

Children as young as 12 are being put in danger by criminals who are taking advantage of how vulnerable these children and young people are. Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

Gangs are deliberately targeting vulnerable children – those who are homeless, living in care homes or trapped in poverty. These children are unsafe or unable to cope, and the gangs take advantage of this.

These gangs groom, threaten or trick children into trafficking their drugs for them. They might threaten a child physically, or they might threaten the young person's family members. The gangs might also offer something in return for the child's cooperation – it could be money, food, alcohol, clothes and jewellery, or improved status – but the giving of these gifts will usually be manipulated so that the child feels they are in debt to their exploiter. Children can become trapped in county lines - the children involved feel as if they have no choice but to continue doing what the gangs want.

What are the signs of criminal exploitation and county lines:

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Unexplained absences from school, college or training
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Visible injuries or looking particularly dishevelled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Hate Crime

Hate crime includes prejudice or discrimination. Hate crime is where the person focuses on a child's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity.

What to look for:

- Hate incidents can take many forms. Some examples include:
- verbal abuse like name-calling and offensive jokes
- harassment
- bullying or intimidation by children, adults, neighbours or strangers
- physical attacks such as hitting, punching, pushing, spitting
- threats of violence
- hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail
- online abuse for example on Snapchat or Instagram
- displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters
- harm or damage to things such as a child's home, pet, vehicle
- graffiti
- arson
- throwing rubbish into a garden
- malicious complaints, for example over parking, smells or noise

Modern Slavery and National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. It encompasses:

- Sexual exploitation
- Criminal exploitation
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude

An individual could have been a victim of human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour

Common areas of labour exploitation:

- food processing
- factories
- construction
- car wash
- agriculture
- tarmacking

Exploiters can also force victims to claim benefits on arrival, but the money is withheld, or the victim is forced to take out loans or credit card debts. Cannabis cultivation is the highest form of criminal exploitation. 33% of those are children when referred to the NRM. Victims can be from any country in the world including Poland, Romania, Albania, China, Vietnam, Nigeria. UK citizens are also victims.

What to look for:

There are several indicators of trafficking and forced labour. Not all of the indicators will apply in every case, and some may not be immediately apparent. Victims may be reluctant to tell their story through fear of reprisal or not being believed, through a feeling of shame about letting themselves be treated in this way, or because they do not know their rights and the treatment they are entitled to receive.

There isn't a specific number of signs that definitively indicate someone is a victim of trafficking or forced labour. A single factor or a combination of factors may suggest that a person is potentially a victim, requiring that each case be evaluated individually. Guidance on indicators can be found here: [Spot the Signs](#)

The [National Referral Mechanism \(NRM\)](#) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. Victims may not recognise that they are being trafficked or exploited and might have agreed to certain aspects of their exploitation or accepted their circumstances. If you suspect that modern slavery is occurring, refer the case to the NRM for a thorough evaluation by the Single Competent Authority (SCA). It is not necessary to be certain that someone is a victim before making a referral: [Report modern slavery – GOV.UK](#)

Slavery is closer than you think. It happens all over the world including the UK. You can find out more on the

[modern slavery website](#) or to seek help or report slavery call the helpline: 0800 0121 700

Prevent

The Prevent strategy is one of the key components of the UK's counter-terrorism efforts. It aims to prevent people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. The strategy focuses on three main objectives:

1. **Challenging Extremist Ideologies:** This involves countering and challenging the ideas that underpin terrorism and extremist ideologies. Efforts are made to provide a counter-narrative to extremist propaganda and to promote values of democracy, the rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance.
2. **Supporting Vulnerable Individuals:** The strategy seeks to support individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. This involves identifying vulnerable individuals and providing them with appropriate interventions, such as mentoring, counselling, or educational support, to divert them away from radicalisation.
3. **Working with Sectors and Institutions:** Prevent works with a range of sectors, including education, healthcare, and local authorities, to safeguard individuals from radicalisation. Training and resources are provided to help staff recognise signs of radicalisation and understand how to respond appropriately.

The prevent strategy responds to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat that is faced from those who promote it. It is one of the 4 P's of the Government's counter-strategy, which was introduced after the events of 9/11. These are:

- Prepare for attacks
- Protect the public
- Pursue the attackers
- Prevent radicalisation

The main aim of Prevent is to prevent people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. At the heart of Prevent is to identify children susceptible to radicalisation by safeguarding and providing early intervention. Providing protection and diverting children away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

What is Radicalisation:

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or a group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideas and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo (current state of things) or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom.

There are negative influencers and online groomers who use the internet, social media and online gaming to spread their extreme ideas, which pupils can be exposed to. Some of these ideas may be considered radical or extreme and when a person starts to support or be involved in them, this is called radicalisation.

What to look out for:

Radicalisation can be difficult to spot. Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include;

- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if it is from a scripted speech
- Unwilling or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others i.e. peers and/or staff
- Increased levels of anger
- Increasingly secretive, especially around internet use.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It is dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

What to look out for:

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what is going to happen, but she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- A long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- A special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- A female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt.

Indicators FGM may have taken place:

A girl or woman who's had female genital mutilation (FGM) may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

The physical effects of FGM:

FGM can be extremely painful and dangerous. It can cause:

- severe pain
- shock
- bleeding
- infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- organ damage
- Blood loss and infections that can cause death in some case

A child may ask an adult for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen, or she may run away from home or miss usual activities. The police *must* be informed immediately if you're worried a child is at risk of FGM.

Bullying and Cyber Bullying

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. It can occur that the abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying. This behaviour may relate to other problems in a young person's life e.g. bereavement.

Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or has the potential to be repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, such as verbal, physical or emotionally assault and victims are often threatened and made to feel frightened and feel they cannot stop the person's behaviour.

Cyber Bullying is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones or tablets. It includes harassment, sending of abusive messages, use of extreme and abusive language, hacking (accessing details illegally) impersonating another person as well as excluding others from social group chats.

The competitive nature of sport can have the potential to make an ideal environment for bullying to take place. Bullying in sport can look like:

- a parent who pushes too hard.
- a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.
- a player who intimidates inappropriately.
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and disabled adults, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). There are a number of signs that may indicate that a young person or disabled adult is being bullied:

What to look out for:

Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

- Changes in behaviour- withdrawn, quieter than normal, tired, reduced concentration or reluctance to

- go to training or their sports club.
- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, or jewellery
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations- not wanting to go out at break/lunch times
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

It is important to remain vigilant and intervene in situations which seem concerning. Incidents of bullying must be recorded on the Together Active Safeguarding form.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

The term Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is used to describe a wide range of stressful or traumatic experiences that children can be exposed to whilst growing up. ACEs range from experiences that directly harm a child (such as suffering physical, verbal or sexual abuse, and physical or emotional neglect) to those that affect the environment in which a child grows up (including parental separation, domestic violence, mental illness, alcohol abuse, drug use or incarceration).

What impact can ACEs have:

When exposed to stressful situations, the "fight, flight or freeze" response floods our brain with corticotrophin-releasing hormones (CRH), which usually forms part of a normal and protective response that subsides once the stressful situation passes. However, when repeatedly exposed to ACEs, CRH is continually produced by the brain, which results in the child remaining permanently in this heightened state of alert and unable to return to their natural relaxed and recovered state. Children who are exposed to ACEs therefore have increased – and sustained - levels of stress. In this heightened neurological state, a young person is unable to think rationally, and it is physiologically impossible for them to learn.

ACEs can therefore have a negative impact on development in childhood and this can in turn give rise to harmful behaviours, social issues and health problems in adulthood. There is now a great deal of research demonstrating that ACEs can negatively affect lifelong mental and physical health by disrupting brain and organ development and by damaging the body's system for defending against diseases. The more ACEs a child experiences, the greater the chance of health and/or social problems in later life.

Can ACEs be prevented:

Stable, nurturing adult-child relationships and environments help pupils develop strong cognitive and emotional skills and the resilience required to flourish as adults. By encouraging such relationships, ACEs can be prevented, even in difficult circumstances, and it is crucial to support and nurture children as they develop and grow.

Commissioning or Sub-Contracting Delivery to Local Activity Providers and Partners

Together Active frequently works in partnership with other organisations to deliver sport and physical activity to children and young people. This can involve sub-contracting or commissioning other organisations to deliver initiatives or programmes such as Satellite Clubs or may simply be an agreement to work towards jointly agreed outcomes. Whatever the circumstances it is essential that the key aspects of keeping children and young people safe are understood by all partners and addressed before the work begins.

Together Active is committed to ensuring that children are not put at risk or harmed either because adequate safeguards were not put in place or because partners were unclear about their respective responsibilities. To achieve this Together Active will undertake the following when working in partnership, sub-contracting or commissioning other organisations to deliver activity to young people or vulnerable adults:

- Always apply and adhere to any recommended programme safeguarding criteria i.e. Satellite Clubs minimum safeguarding criteria
- In the absence of appropriate programme safeguarding guidance or criteria Together Active will use the CPSU Check and Challenge Tool to ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place prior to any activity starting

- Ensure all Together Active’s partnership agreements, contracts or service level agreements stipulate safeguarding requirements and make clear respective organisations’ roles and responsibilities for adhering to these, including when partners further sub-contract work or collaborate with other organisations to deliver agreed outcomes.

Promoting Good Practice

Together Active staff and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard and protect young people from abuse and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made against them.

Below are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within sport and physical activity – all Together Active staff and volunteers should be familiar with these principles and able to articulate them as statements of good practice, whether or not they are directly involved in sporting environments.

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment)
- treating all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving desired outcomes
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- Creating environments where sport and physical activity fun, enjoyable and promotes fair play
- ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and in accordance with guidelines provided by the appropriate NGB. Young people and their parents should always be consulted, and their written agreement gained
- keeping up to date with the technical skills and qualifications of a sport
- ensuring adequate insurance is held and where applicable a current coach licence
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs
- ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. (NB. Be aware that same gender abuse can also occur.)
- ensuring that at tournaments or ‘residential’, adults do not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms
- being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and young people - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- awareness of any medicines being taken by participants, or existing injuries
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Further detailed information on good practice relating to child protection in sport is available on the [Child Protection in Sport Unit website](#). This includes links to excellent resources and publications, including the ‘Safe Sport Away’ guide for clubs taking children and young people away on trips. For detailed good practice guidance and information relating to supervision ratios for specific sports, reference should be made to the NGB for the respective sport. The CPSU has also produced generic guidance on supervision ratios which is available from their website.

Practice to be avoided

There may be rare circumstances where a member of staff has to take sole charge of a child. This may be because a parent has failed to collect their child at the end of the activity. If this is unavoidable the member of staff should ensure other people are aware of the situation e.g. Lead Safeguarding Officer or colleague.

Any suspicions of abuse or poor practice should be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer utilising the procedures outlined in this policy.

Recognition of poor practise

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Staff, coaches, officials and volunteers whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. However, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child) towards a young person. As such Together Active staff are expect staff to report any concern they may have immediately using the procedures outlined in this policy.

Poor practice includes any behaviour that contravenes Together Active's recommended codes of behaviour which are available on request and on the Together Active website.

On occasions, the LSO may be informed of situations where there is uncertainty about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not and therefore is unclear about what action to take. In all circumstances whether the allegations are about poor practice or abuse advice should be sought from social services, police or the NSPCC.

Staff support

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may be abusing a child, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters.

Together Active assures all staff, coaches, officials and volunteers that it will take all allegations/concerns about a colleague's practice seriously. Together Active has several policies and procedures which underpin this. These include

- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Grievance policy

Copies of these are freely available to all staff.

Investigations

Where there is a concern raised against a member of staff or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal (carried out by the police)
- Child protection (carried out by social services and/or the police)
- Disciplinary or misconduct (carried out by Together Active)

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the person/family of the person who alleged the abuse.

The results of the police and social services investigation may influence Together Active's disciplinary investigation. Further information on the potential actions of social services may be found in the local LSCB guidelines, which are available online.

Action if there are concerns

The following action should be taken if there are concerns.

Poor Practice

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice alone, the Lead Safeguarding Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue and instigate the procedures of Together Active.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Lead Safeguarding Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be referred to the Together Active CEO. The CEO will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.
- If there is a suspicion of abuse within the incident of poor practice, all details should be recorded and reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or if it concerns the Lead Safeguarding Officer, be referred to the Together Active CEO.

Suspected Abuse

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer, who will take steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk
- The Lead Safeguarding Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department
- The Lead Safeguarding Officer will also notify the Together Active CEO who will ensure the appropriate procedures are followed
- If the Lead Safeguarding Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made directly to the Together Active CEO who is then responsible for taking the action outlined above.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

Together Active should make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, Together Active must assess all individual cases under its own disciplinary procedure, to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff or volunteers. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Together Active must reach a decision based on the available information that could suggest, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children should always remain paramount.

Support for staff

- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to children, parents and members of staff. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association of Counselling Directory may be a useful resource.
- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

Social Media

Social media has transformed how people connect and interact, with platforms like Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, and various messaging apps becoming integral to daily communication. These tools offer valuable opportunities for communities to engage with children and young people, fostering connections and promoting sport and physical activity.

However, alongside these benefits, we must recognise and address the increased risks associated with social media use. The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) continues to provide comprehensive safeguarding guidelines to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in digital spaces.

It is unlikely that staff from Together Active will be required to directly communicate with children and young people however to mitigate any risks, Together Active has implemented a Safe Social Media Policy in alignment with the latest CPSU recommendations. This policy is mandatory for all staff using social media as part of their work with Together Active.

Use of Photography at Events

Photography and video are frequently used to capture events. Whilst most of the photography is legitimate, there is evidence that some people have used events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and young people. When considering use of photography at events, Together Active staff should adopt the acceptable use guidelines.

Together Active staff and volunteers should ensure that they are vigilant to the possibilities of misuse. Any concerns should be referred to an official or responsible person in the first instance and thereafter, the LSO in line with this policy.

If Together Active staff wish to take photos or recordings at the respective event, they must only do so utilising their Together Active issued mobile device and in line with the child's photograph permissions.

If professional photographers/press are invited to attend and photograph events, it is important that they are made aware of the guidelines and Together Actives expectations in relation to child protection.

Parents/relatives and carers should similarly be made aware of the guidelines and should have provided written consent using the Together Active photo consent form to outline their wishes in relation to their child being photographed/recorded.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Link to Together Active Policies

- Data protection policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy
- Safe social media policy
- Equality diversity and inclusion policy
- Photography and video guidelines
- Code of Conduct for clubs and activity providers

Appendix 2: Key contacts

Key local and national safeguarding contacts and helpline services	
Together Active Safeguarding Team	<p>Paula Sage: paulasage@togetheractive.org, 07814 131074</p> <p>Laura Lacey: lauralacey@togetheractive.org, 07814 131074</p> <p>Moira Willerton: moirawillerton@togetheractive.org, 07800619681</p> <p>Carly Jones: carlyjones@togetheractive.org, 07814 131074 (Chief Executive)</p> <p>Safeguarding Board Champion: Julie Odams</p> <p>Chair of the Board of Trustees: Paul Muir</p>
Staffordshire Police Central Referrals Unit	0300 123 44 55, in emergency dial 999
Staffordshire Social Services (SCAS)	<p>0800 131 3126</p> <p>Emergency Duty Service: (Children & Families Out of Hours Service): 0845 6042886</p>
Stoke-on-Trent Social Services (CHAD)	01782 235100, Chad.referrals@stoke.gov.uk
The NSPCC	0207 825 2500, helpline 0808 800 5000
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	0116 234 7278
Childline UK	0800 1111
<p>Sports specific safeguarding and welfare contacts: Please refer to the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) for their safeguarding contact information and submit a concern form/process. For a list of NGBs please visit Sport England</p>	
Support services	
<p>Childline 0800 1111 childline.org.uk Support for children and young people in the UK, including a free helpline and 1-2-1 online chats with counsellors.</p> <p>Kidscape 0207 823 5430 kidscape.org.uk Information and advice for parents, carers and young people with concerns about school bullying and abuse.</p> <p>National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 0808 800 5000 (for adults concerned about a child) 0800 1111 (18 or under – Childline helpline) nspcc.org.uk Support and information for children and anyone worried about a child.</p>	

Survive Sexual Assault and Abuse Service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

0300 330 5959

<https://staffsscb.org.uk/9613-2/survive@staffordshirewomensaid.org>

Free, non-judgmental and confidential service for adults, children over the age of 4, and close family members/significant others who have been affected by sexual assault or abuse at any point during their lives.

YoungMinds

0808 802 5544 (Parents Helpline)

85258 (text the word 'shout')

youngminds.org.uk

Provides advice and support to young people for their mental health, as well as supporting parents and carers.

Help for Adult Victims of Child Abuse (HAVOCA)

havoca.org

Information and support for adults who have experienced any type of childhood abuse, run by survivors.

One in Four

0800 121 7114

oneinfour.org.uk

Offers advocacy services, counselling, and resources for adults who have experienced trauma, domestic or sexual abuse in childhood.

The National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

Website: <https://napac.org.uk/>

Email: support@napac.org.uk

Tel: 0808 801 0331

Call the free, confidential support line: Monday to Thursday: 10am – 9pm, Friday: 10am – 6pm, Saturday and Sunday – Closed

Supports adult survivors of any form of childhood abuse. Offers a helpline, email support and local services.

Support for Survivors

0115 962 2722

hello@supportforsurvivors.org

supportforsurvivors.org

Support for adult survivors of child abuse.

Mencap

0808 808 1111 (Learning Disability Helpline)

mencap.org.uk

Information and advice for people with a learning disability, their families and carers. Services include an online community.

Respond

0207 383 0700

respond.org.uk

Services for people with learning disabilities or autism, who've experienced abuse or trauma.

Ashiana

0114 255 5740

ashianasheffield.org

Supports Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and refugee women in England who have experienced domestic abuse, forced marriage and honour-based violence. Also supports children and young people.

Roshini

0800 953 9666 (domestic abuse)

0800 953 9777 (forced marriage and honour-based abuse)

roshnibirmingham.org.uk

Supports people from BAME communities who have experienced domestic abuse, honour-based violence, forced marriage, rape or sexual assault. Offers two 24-hour multilingual helplines – national support for domestic abuse, and support in the West Midlands for forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

The Hide Out

thehideout.org.uk

Information to help young people understand domestic abuse, and what to do if it's happening to them. Run by domestic abuse charity Women's Aid.

Respect Not Fear

respectnotfear.co.uk

Information for young people about domestic violence and abusive relationships.

New Era

0300 303 3778

<https://www.new-era.uk/>

Holistic Domestic Abuse service operating across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Glow

0330 0945 559

support@findtheglow.org.uk

www.findtheglow.org.uk

Domestic abuse charity that supports people experiencing domestic abuse.

Refuge

0808 2000 247

refuge.org.uk

Support, information and advocacy for women and children who have experienced domestic violence and abuse.

The Forced Marriage Unit

0207 008 0151

gov.uk/forced-marriage

Helpline to provide advice and support to actual or potential victims of forced marriage, as well as to professionals dealing with cases. Joint initiative between the Foreign Office and Home Office.

Halo Project

0164 268 3045

0808 178 8424 (freephone)

haloproject.org.uk

Provides advice and support to victims of forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation through a helpline and live chat. Can also advise concerned relatives or friends.

Karma Nirvana

0800 5999 247

karmanirvana.org.uk

Supports victims of forced marriage and honour-based abuse. Also offers a face-to-face advocacy service for people in West Yorkshire.

Bi Survivors

bisurvivorsnetwork.org

Support and advocacy network for bi+ people who have experienced domestic or sexual violence and abuse.

Galop

0207 704 2040 (LGBTQ+ hate crime helpline)

0800 999 5428 (LGBTQ+ domestic abuse helpline)

0800 130 3335 (Conversion therapy helpline)

help@galop.org.uk

galop.org.uk

Provides helplines and other support for LGBT+ adults and young people who have experienced hate crime, sexual violence or domestic abuse.

Savana (Sexual Abuse)

Service in Stoke-on-Trent for victims of sexual abuse and rape.

01782 433204

www.savana.org.uk

Sexual Abuse Rape Advice Centre (SARAC)

SARAC delivers a specialised service to people aged 13 and over in Burton-upon-Trent who are affected by rape, sexual and/or domestic abuse.

01283 517185

www.sarac.org.uk