



Safeguarding: Day to day

This page helps you prepare to review how well you are doing and make sure everyone involved in safeguarding is properly supported.

Safeguarding must be at the core of what you do each day, every day. You can set that expectation by reflecting it in all your organisation's key documents.

It's a good idea to also show that you take your organisational values seriously, through senior staff leading by example and by finding time to incorporate safeguarding every day. This will demonstrate your commitment and show everyone how safeguarding works in practice.

Supervise staff and volunteers

Staff and volunteers need the right support and management. Your organisation must have clear rules for the level of supervision needed in day-to-day activities, so people can be kept safe.

The decision will depend on:

- who your organisation works with
- their age
- their need for care and support
- the nature of the tasks staff and volunteers carry out
- the level of skill and experience there is in the team.

In most organisations there should be limited opportunities for someone to work unsupervised with children or adults at risk of harm. The relevant manager should be aware of any lone working and it must be in line with the organisation's policies and procedures.

Example

Anyplace Pensions Group organise a weekly social club with quizzes, games, speakers and outings for people aged 55 and over in their area. The group uses a rota to organise the sessions in turn. They agree that three people should lead every session. One of the session leaders must be trained in first aid and have completed the safeguarding training.

There are additional rules about supervision levels and criminal records or DBS checks. For example, some activities will require staff or volunteers to carry out enhanced DBS checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service if they are not supervised, but will not require those checks if they are supervised by someone the whole time.

- Learn more about taking DBS checks in getting started with criminal records checking: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/checklists-training-and-other-support/specialist-guides/getting-started-with-criminal-records-checks>

This factsheet has been adapted, with minimum changes, from a series of free, online, high-quality factsheets, practical tools, podcasts and videos to promote a good safeguarding culture in charities that were developed collaboratively by an NCVO-led partnership (<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding>).

Create space to reflect

Everyone can benefit from having time to step back from their everyday activities and consider how things are going. If your staff or volunteers are in contact with children and adults at risk of harm, it's important they have space for discussion and reflection on how they are working with those people and with each other.

The nature and frequency of your organisation's contact with children and adults at risk will determine how regular and structured the sessions should be. A session could range from a catch up coffee every few months to more formal meetings.

Running these sessions makes it harder for people to fall into bad habits. You should make sure people think about the relationships they are forming and review how they could be improved. There should always be an opportunity for them to share any concerns.

These concerns might be about:

- a child
- an adult at risk
- a team member
- the way organisation is working
- their own feelings or responses.

Within your team there could be staff or volunteers who have experienced harm, harassment or abuse themselves or know people who have. These experiences of harm could come back to them through working with children or adults at risk or hearing other people's concerns. This could provoke strong emotional reactions which affect the way they respond to a child, adult at risk or someone they are worried about. When you put sessions in place to reflect and step back, it's easier for those people to carry out their work.

Example

FoodOnTheGo is a project which delivers shopping and food to older people at risk of malnutrition. They have a team of drivers who collect food and deliver it to people who have been found to be in need of support. Most volunteers do regular shifts, one evening every fortnight. Every other month they pop by the office for a tea with the staff. They get asked for feedback about how things are going, the older people they have worked with and the other volunteers.

Use your code of conduct

You need to actively use your code of conduct to make it effective. It's essential that leaders in the organisation respond quickly when someone is not behaving as expected. This will demonstrate how important the Code of Conduct is and your commitment to keeping everyone safe from harm. When someone breaks the Code of Conduct, you should take action. This could mean giving all staff and volunteers a gentle reminder or additional training. In some cases, you may need to carry out a formal disciplinary process.

In most organisations, you will need different policies in place for how you deal with unacceptable behaviour from staff, volunteers and the people you work with.

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Example

Smithtown Food Bank has a rule that no staff or volunteers may take photographs of people they work with during their activities. One day a volunteer sees another volunteer taking photos of people coming and taking food. When asked, they say they're posting this on their own social media to help promote the service. Later that day the manager reminds the volunteer of the rules on photos. The manager appreciates that the volunteer wants to promote the food bank and tells them they can do that by sharing the official social media accounts. The volunteer agrees to do this in future and deletes the photos.

Listen and respond to staff and volunteer feedback

You should report back to staff and volunteers about safeguarding in the organisation on a regular basis. You could:

- ask questions about what people think of safeguarding and how it's done in your organisation
- set up a way to report back to staff and volunteers about action taken in response to their concerns and suggestions.

Example

Anytown Arts Centre runs arts classes and holds exhibitions and talks across a range of art forms. It's run by a small team of staff and 30 regular volunteers but reaches thousands of local residents each year through its work. Twice a year, all volunteers have a half-day together including an update on the organisation's work and impact. A deputy chief executive gives a five-minute update on safeguarding including any new legal changes, upcoming training and trends in concerns being raised.