Risk Assessment and Child Protection

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• Introduction to Risk Assessment
• What is Child Abuse?
• Introduction to Child Protection Policies
• Good Practice when working with children
• Recruiting staff/ volunteers
• Allegation Procedures
• Changing world of Child Protection
• Writing policy statements
Risk Assessment

• A careful examination of what could cause harm to people in your workplace.
• Legal requirement to do a risk assessment
• Employers with five or more employees have to record the significant findings of their risk assessment
• Hazard – anything that can cause harm

• Risk – chance high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard
5 steps to risk assessment

1. **Look for hazards**
   - Concentrate on the significant
   - Ask other people
   - Consult manufacturers instructions

2. **Decide who might be harmed and how**
   - employees, volunteers, members of public, trainees, work placements, expectant mothers, contractors
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done

- Assess whether risks are low, medium or high and how likely they are to happen

- If medium or high can they be lowered by:
  - Trying a less risky option
  - Preventing access to hazard
  - Organise work to reduce exposure to hazard
  - Issue protective equipment
  - Provide welfare facilities e.g. washing facilities
4. Record your findings

- Risk Assessments must be suitable and sufficient. You must show:
  - A proper check was made
  - You asked who might be affected
  - You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people involved
  - The precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low
5. Review your assessment and revise if necessary:
   – When you repeat the activity
   – Review buildings
Be aware of the health and safety law relating particularly to your type of work

- Manual handling
- Display screens
- Noise
- Hazardous substances
- Lead
- Asbestos

- Introduction to health and safety
What is Abuse?

- Physical
  - Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm.
  - Deliberate act
  - Failure or omission to protect

- Unexplained bruises, bruises which reflect hand marks, cigarette burns, bite marks, broken bones scalds.
- Changes in behaviour; fear, aggression, depression
What is Abuse?

- Emotional
  - Persistent emotional ill treatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s development.
  - Feeling worthless or unloved
  - Inadequate or valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person
  - Failure to thrive, sudden speech disorders, developmental delay
  - Changes in behaviour; neurotic, fear of mistakes, self harm
What is Abuse?

• Sexual
  – Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to what’s happening
  – Penetrative acts; rape, buggery, oral sex
  – Non-penetrative; fondling
  – Non contact – involving children in looking at pornographic material/ watching sexual acts or encouraging inappropriate behaviour.
Sexual

- Pain/itching/bleeding in genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking/sitting
- Pregnancy
- Changes in behaviour
What is Abuse?

• Neglect
  – Persistent failure to meet a child’s physical and/or psychological needs.
  – Lack of food, shelter, leaving a young child alone at home, not responding to medical needs

  – Hunger, dirty/smelly
  – Weight loss
  – Inappropriate dress
  – Changes in behaviour
Don’t Panic
Safe From Harm (1993)
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/harm/html

- Adopting a policy statement safeguarding the welfare of children
- Planning the work of the organisation to minimise situations where abuse may occur
- Agreed procedures for staff/vols to protect children
- Training staff
- Procedures for recruitment & selection of staff/vols
Child Protection Policy

- Policy Statement
- Good Practice
  - Description of Abuse
  - Code of Practice for working with children and vulnerable people
  - Recruitment Procedures

Allegation Procedure
Planning Activities

• Devise activities so that staff do not work in a one to one capacity with children where possible

• First Aid
• Risk Assessments
The Golden Rules
(Code of Practice for working with young people)

- Respect
- Be a good example
- Be clear and open
  - Make sure there is more than one adult and you are within sight of other people
  - Right to privacy and views
  - Physical contact can be misinterpreted
  - Caution over sensitive issues
  - Challenge unacceptable behaviour
And.....

- Safeguard yourself
- Relationships with children
- Restraint
- Intimate Care
- Essential Physical Contact
- Anti-bullying
Photographs

- Always ensure you have parental permission.
- If not possible ensure that pictures are taken so that children are not recognisable.
- Do not include information which may make child vulnerable e.g. name and place together.
- Don’t use photographs that can be interpreted in a provocative manner.
Develop Good Event Management Practice

• Are leaders suitable?
• Are activities suitable?
• Size of event and child adult ratio
• Age of children - 1989 Children Act
• How the event is going to be organised
  – Who does what
  – Rules for children

  – Name badges
    • Can be used in a “closed” event. Not in a public event.
Recruitment of Volunteers

- Provide a job role
- Informal chat (interview)
- Application form
- Call references
- CRB check
- Training (on-going)

- All of above standard for youth organisations
Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure

• The new style police check. Takes information from:
  – Police National Computer
  – Department of Health
  – Department for Education and Employment
Who needs to do a Disclosure?

• Organisation must have the right to ask the “exempted question”
• Standard – for people who regularly work with children
• Enhanced – for people who are in sole charge of children

• Child – up to the age of 18
How do I get a Disclosure done?

- Become a registered body
- Go through an “Umbrella Body”

- Cost – free to volunteers – may be charged and admin fee
- £34 for paid staff

- Suggested they are done once every three years
But

- Bichard Review (following Soham)
  - Recent consultation to create a registration scheme of people who have been cleared to work with children from 2007
  - [www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk) newsletter no 27
Allegation Procedure

• Unlikely that one will be made, but must be prepared.
• Do not try and investigate
• Write it down
• Vol /staff must know who to talk to
• Confidentiality
• Call relevant authorities
Aftermath

• Who does what?
• Dealing with parents
• Supporting volunteers/ staff
Government Management of Child Protection

- Area Child Protection Committees
  - Co-ordinate local cp procedures

March 2005 Children’s Commissioner appointed, Al Aynsley-Green(Climbie) - independent of Government

A more holistic approach
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
Creation of Children’s Trusts across UK 2006-8

– Be healthy
– Stay safe
– Enjoy and achieve
– Make a positive contribution
– Achieve economic well-being

– Children's Trust pathfinders (pilots)
  • Sheffield, East Riding of Yorkshire, City of York, Barnsley, Calderdale, North Lincolnshire
  
  • Local Safeguarding Boards replacing Area Child Protection Committees
Opportunities for Museums

- Extended Schools – Museums mentioned
- Review of funding programmes for voluntary sector
Key Contacts

• Disclosure: www.d Disclosure.gov.uk
• Teachernet: www.teachernet.gov.uk
• Children’s Commissioner and Trusts: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
• NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
  – First Check
• Scouts: www.scoutbase.org.uk