

## **CHESTERFIELD CHILD CONTACT CENTRE**

### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

This is a simplified version of the NACCC specimen policy

#### **Statement of Purpose**

1. All children have a right to be protected at all times.
2. Child abuse occurs in all religions, all cultures and all social classes.
3. Responsibility for a child or children using a Child Contact Centre always rests with their parents and not volunteers. Nevertheless, every volunteer is responsible for:
  - Preventing the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children whilst using their Child Contact Centre:
  - Listening to concerns expressed by parents or children and advising them how to report any abuse:
  - Reporting abuse themselves in certain circumstances.
4. Where there is an allegation of or suspected child abuse the interests and safety of the child / children involved must always come first. This means that if there is a conflict of interest between parent and a child, the interests of the child should always be put first.

#### **What to do when child abuse has been disclosed or alleged**

1. Act immediately but .....
2. Remain calm, sensitive and focused.
3. Take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the child/children involved.
4. Involve another volunteer at the earliest opportunity.
5. Listen carefully to what the child/children or adult/adults are telling them.
6. As the responsibility for investigating child abuse rests with the local Social Services department and it may jeopardise their enquiries, they must not ask the child or adult any leading or searching questions.
7. Write down what the child/children or adult/adults making the allegations is telling them. Only record the facts and avoid including personal opinions and judgements.

- 8 Report what has been said along with the names and addresses of the adults/children involved to the local Social Services department immediately. Anything said to a volunteer by a child regarding possible abuse should be noted and kept for 3 years in case it was required
- 9 Contact the police immediately if they feel that a child is at risk of harm once they leave your Child Contact Centre.
10. Whatever they say or do make sure that the child/children's welfare remains paramount.
11. Do not be afraid to share their feelings with somebody else and ask for help if the process of dealing with actual or alleged child abuse upsets or distresses them. (This is not a sign or weakness but rather that they are human!)

**How to behave towards a child who has disclosed some form of abuse**

- Look at them directly
- Accept what they are saying
- Be aware that they may have been threatened
- Tell them that they are not to blame
- Do not press for information
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- Reassure them that they are right to tell and that you believe them

**Useful Telephone Numbers**

|        |   |              |
|--------|---|--------------|
|        | <b><i>Rapid Response (Social Services outside office hours)</i></b> | 01773        |
| 728222 | Social Services Chesterfield  | 01246 347777 |
|        | Social Services Bolsover  | 01246 348400 |
|        | Social Services Clay Cross  | 01246 348888 |
|        | Social Services Eckington   | 01246 348600 |
|        | Police 'C' Division Beetwell Street Chesterfield                    | 01246 220100 |
|        | Police Staveley   | 01246 280101 |
|        | Police Family Unit (Child Protection and Domestic Violence)         | 01246 522011 |
|        | Probation Service Chesterfield                                      | 01246 276171 |