

Chesterfield Child Contact Centre

CRITICAL INCIDENTS POLICY

NACCC would like its member Centres to focus on the safety (physical, sexual and emotional) of everyone at their Child Contact Centre. It therefore requests that Centres firstly acknowledge when a critical incident has taken place and secondly, record what has happened.

Definition of a critical incident:

Either –

- A one- off which caused fear and distress or constituted a threat to the safety of anyone at the Centre.

Or –

- An on-going problem, related to the contact visit, which has resulted in observed distress to the child(ren) and/or others.

Critical incidents might involve one or more of the following:

- Physical violence.
- Threats to kill themselves or others.
- Threatened violence.
- Sexual violence such as inappropriate touching, grooming for sexual abuse.
- Emotional abuse
- Abduction or threat of abduction.
- Aggressive verbal abuse.
- Child(ren) becoming distressed to a significant degree.

A critical incident is something more serious than the ordinary ebb and flow of events at a Child Contact Centre which may almost inevitably from time-to-time involve a raised voice or inappropriate language.

Procedure – What are the implications of a critical incident report being made?

- An individual or family's use of the Centre may be terminated.
- The report could be used as a way of giving an individual or family a final warning about their actions/behaviour.
- The report may give the Centre grounds to override the wishes of a parent who seems to be willing for the children to have contact despite the behaviour of the non-resident parent.
- It will assist Centres in deciding when a telephone call to Social Services is necessary for the protection of the child(ren).
In rare cases a volunteer/staff member may be called to give evidence in criminal or civil injunction proceedings. A critical incident report may avoid a volunteer/staff member actually having to attend court.

Centres should keep a copy of any critical incident report for their own records and indicate on it the name of the family involved.

Copies of critical incident reports should be sent to NACCC. They should not name anybody involved in an incident but instead make it possible for NACCC to identify matters of concern relating to the referral process and practice issues.