

CHESTERFIELD CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

We must have a safe environment for families, volunteers and staff. However, despite its importance, health and safety is often a neglected area because people do not know where to start. NACCC has attempted to overcome this problem by arranging for a health and safety consultant to visit and inspect a Child Contact Centre. Their findings and views about how Child Contact Centres should address and manage the issue of health and safety are reflected in what follows:

The legal position

- The Health and Safety Work Act 1974 covers the health and safety of employees and others using an organisation's premises and equipment – including the public, volunteers and committee members.
- The Occupiers Liability Act 1957 states that reasonable care must be taken to ensure that all those using the premises, with permission must be reasonably safe.
- Child Contact Centres can be pursued under Civil Law if it is felt that any injury or loss is wholly or partially a result of negligence.

NACCC is aware that many Child Contact Centres do not have written agreements relating to the use of their premises. Whilst NACCC accepts that the existence of such agreements may have an adverse effect upon the relationship and financial arrangements between a Centre and its landlord, their existence in the event of a claim being made against the Centre for any failings in relation to health and safety may be helpful in terms of determining liability.

Responsibilities

- The Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the running of the Child Contact Centre & must ensure it complies with health and safety legislation.
- Members of a Child Contact Centre's Management Committee are likely to be held responsible if the Centre fails to comply with health and safety legislation and an offence is committed.
- The Management Committee will appoint a Health & Safety Officer [see appendix]
- Every volunteer, member of staff or worker has a personal responsibility to themselves and others where the health and safety of anyone on the premises is concerned.
- Any volunteer/team leader identifying a Health & Safety problem should record this in the problem book in the team leaders file
- The Church is responsible for the premises, arranging fire inspections & inspections of fire extinguishers

The Health and Safety Officer

This person is responsible for:

- Carrying out regular checks of the Centre's premises and equipment using a check list [see appendix]
- Reporting any faults or hazards to the centres Management Committee and or the Property officer for the Church..
- Making Child Contact Centre volunteers/staff aware of basic health and safety procedures such as the action to take in the event of a fire.
- Arranging health and safety training for Child Contact Centre volunteers/staff.

- Keeping detailed, accurate and written records relating to all of the above.

When the Safety Officer is carrying out these tasks they will consider:

- What are the main risks?
- What is the probability of something happening?

They also need to remember that:

- “People do not always do what they are told to do.”

The Health and Safety Consultant who visited a Child Contact Centre has given NACCC the Health and Safety Policy and a number of the other documents that make up the rest of this section. Child Contact Centres would be well advised to read, copy and use them.

A Warning!

We live in an age where the numbers of people seeking redress through the courts for perceived or actual failings in relation to health and safety is steadily increasing. Although it will present them with extra work Child Contact Centres need to protect themselves by putting in place a system that in the event of a claim they can demonstrate that:

- They have done everything “reasonably practicable” to assess and reduce the risk of the event that has precipitated the claim.

What could happen if a Child Contact Centre has not got the necessary procedures in place for assessing risk, recording, reporting and solving any problems and training its volunteers in relation to health and safety? To quote the Health and Safety Consultant who visited a Child Contact Centre: “Open your cheque book and prepare for a massive rise in your insurance premium the following year!”. And finally- if any Child Contact Centre has any questions about health and safety in general or specific issues please contact either the NACCC office or the NACCC Skills and Development Officer for your area.

Food hygiene

Regardless of whether it is free or a source of revenue, anyone who serves food to the public has a duty to adhere to good hygiene practice.

Some basic guidelines:

- Sugar can be put in a bowl and biscuits on a plate but they must be stored in sealed containers when not in use.
- wash up using very hot water, washing up liquid and clean tea towel.
- Use the separate sink, soap and towel in the bathroom for hand washing..
- Throw away any made squash once a session has finished and don't sell or give away anything which has gone past its sell-by date.
- Don't carry hot water in open containers.
- Animals are not allowed in the Centre.

Guidelines for good health and hygiene practice

The risk of serious infections being passed at a Child Contact Centre is slight. However, it is good practice to always observe simple and reasonable precautions against the transmission of any kind of infection. Remember that the virus of Hepatitis B can live for up to one month on surfaces outside of the body, so be vigilant. It is best to treat every situation the same, regardless of whether there is infection or not. That way if you do have to deal with infection, it does not single the family out as everyone is treated the same. Some families may be unaware that they are infected and so good health and hygiene practice will make sure that further risk of infection is limited. If a child does cut themselves whilst at the Child Contact Centre, the parent is responsible for attending to the wound.

- For any blood spillage see 'Dealing with spills of blood'
- Dirty fabrics can be safely cleaned by a conventional hot wash cycle in a washing machine.
- Different cloths should be used for cleaning the kitchen and the toilets and for cleaning working surfaces and floors. Bleach diluted 10 parts water to 1 part bleach is satisfactory for cleaning surfaces as is household cleaning agents and hot water.
- It is important that all toys used in the Centres are cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Any cuts, grazes or other skin lesions (e.g. eczema, dermatitis) should be covered (especially if close physical contact is likely), as you are at high risk of picking up infection from contaminated blood. If it is possible to wear a waterproof dressing then do so as the contaminated blood could seep through an ordinary dressing.
- When dealing with any open wound or blood spillage, disposable gloves should always be worn.

Dealing with spills of blood

If not cleaned up these can present a small risk of infection to others. The key principles for safe removal are:

1 Protect yourself

- Cover any fresh cuts or abrasions with a waterproof plaster.
- Don't handle spills or body fluids if you have eczema or dermatitis on your hands until you have sought advice.
- Wear household rubber gloves and a disposable, plastic apron.

2 Don't spread the spill

- Work carefully and methodically
- Avoid splashing, especially into your eyes

3 Make the spill safe

- If you have any PreSept granules, pour these over the spill and leave for 5 minutes
- Failing that, hydrochlorite (bleach diluted 1 in 10) may be used
- Don't use either of these on soft fabrics because they will be bleached
- Be careful when using these chemicals as they can burn

4 Mop up and dispose safely

- Use paper towels to soak up as much of the spill as possible
- Dispose of the towels down the toilet
- Wash the area with detergent and water, rinse and allow to dry

5 when finished, dispose of the plastic apron, wash your gloved hands in hot, soapy water and leave to dry then wash your hands

fire

- On first attendance, centre users should be made aware of the fire procedure
- A map of the exits and a notice will be kept in the hall & will explain the fire procedures
- The treasurer is responsible for maintaining adequate insurance and ensuring the certificate is on the kitchen noticeboard
- The Church is responsible for ensuring fire service inspections and that the appropriate certificate is received
- The Church is responsible for ensuring the fire extinguishers are the correct sort, serviced annually & in working order
- Volunteers should be aware of where extinguishers are located & how to use them
- An accurate record will be kept of who is in the Centre & who leaves through out a contact session
- The Team leader is the named person to call the register in the event of fire & the evacuation of the centre
- All electrical items must be safe & will be tested in the previous 12 months

The building

- Will be kept clean, well lit and ventilated
- stairs will be fenced off when the centre is in use
- children are not allowed to open windows
- heaters will be well guarded & children kept away from them
- a volunteer will be in sight of the exit points all the time that the centre is open
- furniture will be free from rough edges & in a suitable state of repair
- the toilet & wash basin will be kept clean & easily accessible with a small step for a child to use
- protective caps will be kept over electrical sockets when not in use

- the kitchen will be kept clean & safe
- children will only be allowed in the tuck shop area of the kitchen
- all cleaning products & disinfectants will be kept in original containers out of sight & reach of children

Toys

- will be inspected periodically, cleaned & checked for sharp or pointed parts
- tricycles etc will be checked regularly

First Aid

- primary responsibility remains with the adult in whose care they are at the time of any incident
- volunteers should only handle or assist a child with the permission of this person
- a first aid kit will be kept in the kitchen drawer; it will be up to date and adequately stocked
- all volunteers will be given the opportunity to attend a first aid course
- phone numbers of hospital A & E department & NHS Direct will be kept in the team leaders file
- volunteers must wear disposable gloves when treating any open wound
- volunteers must not try to move anyone who is unconscious but should get medical assistance immediately

Accidents

- An approved accident book will be kept in the team leaders bag
- All incidents however minor should be recorded in that book
- Resident parents must be informed where their children have been involved in an accident and sign the book to acknowledge that they have been informed
- The recording must be done so that date, time & details of what happened and the action taken are all clear
- All volunteers will have access to a phone through out the time the centre is open though it will usually be the team leader who takes responsibility for its use

MODEL Health and Safety Policy Statement

1. Chesterfield Child Contact Centre is committed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its volunteers/staff and other persons who may be affected by our activities. We shall ensure that the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant statutory provisions are carried out so far as reasonably practicable. In particular we will so far as reasonably practicable, provide:
 - a. Premises which are well maintained in a safe condition.
 - b. Environments that are safe and without risk to health.
 - c. Equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risk to health.
 - d. Arrangements to identify and assess/minimise risk to volunteers/staff and others who may be affected by our activities.
 - e. Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the health and safety of volunteers/staff and others who may be affected by our activities.
 - f. Adequate facilities and arrangements to enable volunteers/staff and to be consulted on any matter relating to their health, safety and welfare whilst at work.
2. Ultimate responsibility for health and safety lies with the Committee who will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve the aims set out in this policy statement.
3. The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment from all volunteers/staff within the organisation. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care of his or her own health and safety, and the safety of other people who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions. In particular they must:
 - a. Comply with any rules or regulations in place.
 - b. Comply with safe systems of work.
 - c. Use equipment in accordance with instructions and training provided, and not intentionally damage or recklessly interfere with anything provided for the health and safety of themselves or others.
 - d. Report any situation that they consider poses a serious and imminent danger.
 - e. Report any situation where they consider the controls in place fail to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
4. The implementation of this policy will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are being achieved. The policy will also be reviewed and if necessary revised to reflect any changes in organisational or legislative requirements.

Discussed at the Management Committee on

Signed:..... Date:

Position:.....

SAMPLE Health and Safety Checklist



Name of Child Contact Centre:		
Person responsible for check:	Date:	
Fire	Yes	No
Are your Centre's fire and emergency procedures clearly displayed and are volunteers/staff and Centre users aware of them?		
Does your centre keep an accurate record of who is in the building and who leaves the building throughout a contact session?		
Is there a named person to call the register in the event of a fire and the building being evacuated?		
Are the fire extinguishes the correct sort and in good working condition?		
Are the fire extinguishers serviced annually?		
Are the fire exits clearly labelled, easily accessible and free from obstructions?		
Are volunteers aware of where fire extinguishers are located and how to use them?		
Have you carried out a fire drill for volunteers/staff in the 6 months?		
Are all electrical items safe and have they been tested in the last twelve months?		
The Building		
Is your centre clean, well lit, ventilated and kept at an adequate temperature?		
Are the furniture and furnishings within your centre in a suitable state of repair and safe?		
Do any of the floors have lifting/frayed carpets?		
Unless they are in use, are steps and stairs fenced off?		
Is it possible for children to open any of the windows?		
Are all heaters well-guarded and kept away from children?		
Are there protective caps covering all electrical outlets that are not in use?		
Is the kitchen and its equipment clean, safe and out of bounds to children?		
Will there be a volunteer positioned by or in sight of all exit points from the Centre whilst it is open?		

Are all cleaning products and disinfectants kept in their original containers and stored out of sight and reach of the children?		
	Yes	No
Are the Centre's toilets and washbasins clean and easily accessible?		
Is there safety glass in doors and are exposed windows guarded to an appropriate height?		
Toys		
Are they inspected regularly, cleaned and free from sharp edges or pointed parts?		
Are there soft areas adjacent to climbing frames and slides and is the equipment itself safe and free from rough edges or splinters?		
Are climbing frames and swings erected properly and are they secured to the ground where required?		
Have all of your bikes, tractors and pedal cars been serviced recently?		
First Aid		
It is important to remember that the primary responsibility for any child at a Child Contact Centre rests with the adult in whose care they are in at the time of any incident. Volunteers/staff should therefore only handle or assist a child with the permission and knowledge of this person.		
Do you have a First Aid Kit? (it should not contain any medicine!)		
Is it both up to date and well stocked?		
Does your Centre have one or more named first-aiders?		
Are volunteers/staff aware of where the first aid kit is located and the telephone number of the local hospital accident and emergency department?		
Are your volunteers/staff aware that they must wear disposable gloves when treating any kind of open wound?		
Accidents		
Does your Centre keep an Accident Book? (not a loose-leaf folder)		
Are all incidents, no matter how minor, recorded in this book?		
Are resident parents informed when their child(ren) have been involved in an accident and do they sign the accident book to acknowledge they have been informed?		
Is the recording done in such a way that date, time, details of what happened and the action taken are all clear?		
Do volunteers/staff have access to a phone throughout the time the Centre is open?		

Child Protection and Domestic Violence & Abuse	Yes	No
Does your Centre use the standard NACCC referral form for supported contact and the accompanying guidelines for referrers?		
Is your Centre always in possession of a properly completed referral form giving full details of both parties and any other people involved in the contact before a family is accepted?		
When it is open, does your Centre always have a minimum of three volunteers/staff?		
Have all your volunteers/staff had a Criminal Records check?		
Have your volunteers/staff received training in Child Protection and have they read your Child Protection Policy?		
Are volunteers/staff aware that parents should always accompany their child(ren) to the toilet?		
Are volunteers/staff aware that if this is not possible, two volunteers should accompany the child to the toilet?		
Have all your Centre's volunteers/staff been made aware of and received training in the area of Domestic Violence?		
General		
Does your Centre have an adequate, valid insurance policy and the appropriate certificate?		
Have your Centre's volunteers/staff received health and safety training?		
Has an accurate record been kept of your Centre's volunteers/staff training in relation to health and safety?		

I have completed the above check and will report/take corrective action for any faults found.

Signed: Date: