



STREET KIDS DIRECT
"until the last child"



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

FOR CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS

Revised August 2025

Street Kids Direct is a registered charity with the
Charity Commission, London. (number 1102894)

OUR COMMITMENT

Street Kids Direct acknowledges the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Street Kids Direct is firmly committed to the welfare and well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who use its facilities and services and protects them from harm.



VISION & MISSION

Our Vision

To see no more street-living children worldwide.

Our Mission

To reach street-living children worldwide, “until the last child.”

To prevent more children from taking the steps towards street life.

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PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that all children, young persons and vulnerable adults can participate in the activities of Street Kids Direct without fear of abuse or harassment.

To acknowledge that Street Kids Direct must protect and safeguard vulnerable individuals who are at risk of harm, whether on or away from Street Kids Direct premises.

The key objectives of the policy are to:

- Protect all children and young people by facilitating their ability to meet in a safe environment with people they can trust, or with people they can trust who visit them on the streets or wherever they may be.
- Ensure that all risks which children and young people could encounter are carefully assessed and that the necessary steps are taken to minimise and manage such risks.
- Recognise that Street Kids Direct has a responsibility to report to the relevant agency allegations of abuse of a child or young person.
- Provide ongoing support and safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children or young people.
- Ensure everyone knows what to do if they are concerned about someone's welfare and promote a culture where everyone can raise concerns without fear of recrimination.
- To regularly review the contents of this policy.



Legal Framework:

This policy incorporates best practices from:

- The Signs of Safety child protection framework.
- NSPCC, as recommended by The Charity Commission of England & Wales.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 statutory guidance.
- Save the Children UK Safeguarding Policy 2025.
- Relevant international standards & local legal obligations (including UK, Guatemala, & Honduras law).

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- Street Kids Direct has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and all our decisions.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

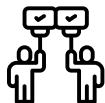
- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people and a deputy for safeguarding.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practices through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families through group work, mentoring and one-to-one discussions.
- Ensuring children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involve children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- We use our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and effectively addressing any bullying that may arise.
- We ensure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- Ensuring we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers. Building a culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families treat each other respectfully and are comfortable in sharing concerns.

For ease of reference, we have divided the contents of this safeguarding policy into the areas outlined in the following pages. Additional reference and context can be found where indicated at the rear of this policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Street Kids Direct is committed to providing caring, supportive, open and transparent care for the children that our linked projects work with. A separate Code of Ethics has been produced that covers all aspects of our Code of Conduct and is available for all our linked projects in Spanish. However, the following is included to help summarise our position on how adults relate to children.

The most effective way to prevent abuse is to be vigilant. All staff and volunteers who have roles with children are expected to interact in a mature, capable, safe, caring, and responsible manner, with a high level of accountability and transparency. All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in positions of trust. Therefore, workers must ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. All staff and volunteers are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others to maintain a high level of professionalism. Street Kids Direct adheres to the following guidelines as to how children and young people, and adults, interact with each other.



Visibility & Isolation

All work with children/adults at risk should be planned to minimise risks as far as possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working and talking with children/adults at risk. This can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at a time when different activities are occurring.

- » It is inappropriate to spend an excessive amount of time alone with children/adults at risk, especially where this blurs the boundaries between professional and personal/social contact.
- » Generally, at least two unrelated adults should be present when working with children/adults at risk. When this is not possible, reduce isolation by having a minimum of two children/adults at risk present, informing the parent/legal guardian/carer of the meeting, and doing it during a time and/or in a location where interaction with the person is visible to others.
- » Where confidentiality is essential, and a young person is being seen on their own, ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is nearby.



Accountability

- » Always be accountable to other adults regarding interactions with children/adults at risk.
- » Parents and/or supervisors must be notified beforehand of any special activities with children/adults at risk. Where the activity includes children and young people who live on the streets or who have no parents, then at least

two adults need to agree that the child or young person can attend the activity.

- » Two people should attend an emergency, or a second person should be notified of the action to be taken.

Technology

Technology should be used appropriately to protect children/adults at risk from abuse and exploitation. The points below are a summary; for the complete outline, please refer to the appendix section titled “Electronic Communication”:

- » Family safe filter/parental control programmes should be used to prevent downloading pornographic material (see Appendix 5) from the Internet, access to inappropriate emails, chat rooms, or films.
- » Instant messaging, texting, emails, chat rooms and other forms of social networking, including video/camcorder/live stream/photos between staff/volunteers and children, should be used wisely. Appropriate boundaries include not messaging with children between 8 pm and 8 am, unless there is an emergency or a specific reason (e.g., an event starting before 8 am). The purpose of the messaging should prioritise the child’s needs, focusing on arranging face-to-face time rather than relying on it as the primary form of communication.

Supervision

Supervision reduces risk. The child protection officer should periodically and randomly inspect areas where children/adults at risk are together.

Touch

Healthy, caring touch is valuable to children/adults at risk, but an unhealthy touch is abusive. Also, touch must be used in a culturally appropriate way. The following should be noted:

- Touch should be open rather than secretive. A hug in a group context is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should respond to the needs of the child/adult at risk and not the needs of the adult.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child/adult at risk rather than the adult. It should be with the person’s permission, and their resistance should be respected.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the child/adult at risk.
- Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children/adults at risk that they can do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, etc.
- Adults and other children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault a person in their care.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts:

- Verbal praise.
- Side hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate).
- Or for younger children, touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugging, or holding them when others are present.

The following behaviours between staff or volunteers and children are inappropriate and should not be engaged in:

- Touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs.
- Showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child.
- Sleeping in bed with a child.
- Inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development.
- Flirtatious or seductive looks or behaviour.
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child.
- Showing sexually suggestive videos or playing sexually suggestive games with any child.
- Any behaviour that could be interpreted as sexual.

Team members should monitor each other in physical contact, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.



Inappropriate Actions

It is inappropriate for anyone to:

- Develop physical/intimate/sexual relationships with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Develop a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, which could in any way be interpreted as exploitative or abusive.
- Engage in behaviours which could be regarded as grooming or controlling/coercive.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade people, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour a particular person or group of people to the exclusion of others.
- Consume alcohol or use any other substance on any premises utilised for activities with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Staff and volunteers will also refrain from consuming alcohol or any other substance before assuming responsibility for any child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Be alone with a child, young person, or vulnerable adult only with the express permission of the Director and/or a parent/legal guardian, unless it is part of the mentoring programme. (see Item 3)
- Take any child, young person or vulnerable adult to their home, unless already agreed and with another adult present.

- Make inappropriate contact with a child, young person, or vulnerable adult, e.g. develop relationships outside of work unless part of the ongoing care process agreed with the Director.
- Leave any child, young person, or vulnerable adult in their care unattended or with any person under 18 years unless agreed by the parent(s)/legal guardian or the under 18 is a related person, e.g., sibling/babysitter, who has responsibility for that person.
- Leave any child, young person or vulnerable adult in the presence of any person over the age of 18 years who has not had relevant criminal and background checks or has not received safeguarding training.

Child to Child Behaviour

Children and young people are curious about other children, the same or opposite sex, and/or may have experimented sexually. However, where a child has responsibility over another child (such as a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through engaging in sexual activity, this is likely to be regarded as abusive. The same applies when one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child. This is not mutual exploration. Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved because the effects on the child victim can be as significant.

The child protection agencies will investigate these instances in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right. Since sexually harmful behaviour can be addictive and other children could be victims now or in the future, it is essential to take the matter seriously, and Street Kids Direct will deal with this as they would any other allegation. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of it. Most adult sex offenders started abusing substances in their teens (or even younger).

Other factors considered in evaluating whether sexually harmful behaviour has occurred include differences in responsibility, trust, power, development, awareness and understanding, coercion, and threats, whether implied or verbal. In addition, the following actions must be prohibited: bullying, hazing, derogatory name-calling, ridicule or humiliation, or singling out a child for adverse treatment or exclusion.



SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Street Kids Direct

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Guatemala

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Honduras

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Steve Poulson (contact details above)

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STAFFING RATIOS

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations not in the education or early years sector. However, where we have sole charge of children/young people, Street Kids Direct will adhere to the recommended guidance provided by the NSPCC for adult-to-child/young person ratios.

Depending on the needs and abilities of the children and the nature of the activity, Street Kids Direct recognises that we may require more adults than the minimum, which will be reflected through a risk assessment.

Additionally, Street Kids Direct recommends that there should be at least two adults present with a group, preferably a male and a female. If young people are helping to supervise younger children, only people aged 18 years and over should be included as adults when calculating adult-to-child ratios.

CHILD / ADULT RATIOS

0-2 years 1 to 3

2-3 years 1 to 4

4-8 years 1 to 6

9-12 years 1 to 8

13-18 years 1 to 10

MENTORING



We define mentoring as a **therapeutic relationship that develops over time between two individuals**, a mentor and a mentee, which is more informal and where the mentee is encouraged to take the lead in shaping the relationship. For this relationship to grow, it is understood that the mentor will need to spend time alone with the mentee.

Mentors will need to follow the Safeguarding Policy of the local organisation. Still, the mentor will be allowed to be alone with a child under the defined guidance of the regional organisation and the specific training given to all new mentors.

The mentoring sessions are not formal meetings in an office, and as such, the mentor will need to identify safe public places where mentoring sessions can be held. It is not appropriate for the mentor to invite their mentee into their own home, for example, without the presence of another adult.



The informal nature of the relationship usually requires the mentor to get involved in activities, hobbies or interests that the mentee identifies as enjoyable. The focus is on what the mentee would like to do, with the mentor helping to create a session based on the proposed activity or experience. The mentor develops a unique relationship with the mentee, fostering trust and confidentiality through various activities over time.

It is often thought that mentoring is just about “hanging out” with a child or young person, and so is usually discarded as a serious therapeutic intervention in a child’s life that can bring about change. While we understand that mentoring focuses on spending time with a child or young person, in this case, it is based upon our proven methodology; it does require some study and reading, as it is intentionally PROACTIVE rather than PASSIVE. The mentoring session will require great patience, energy, planning and a purpose to help the mentee enjoy each session and make positive life choices.

By the very nature of the mentoring programme, Street Kids Direct understands that mentors being alone with a child or young person may cause some concerns. However, since this is part of that specific programme, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

- The mentor must keep a weekly journal of every session with their mentee and make it available to the designated safeguarding lead at any point upon request.
- Parental consent is obtained from those children and young persons involved in the mentoring programme before their participation. Careful consideration is given to whom the mentee will be matched with, and in every event, they will be of the same gender.
- Street Kids Direct only authorises mentoring sessions to take place in public places, the mentee’s home where other adults are present, and will usually define certain “safe” areas where mentors can meet their mentees. These parameters, if adhered to, will protect both the worker and the child/young person alike.
- Street Kids Direct recognises that a child or young person will become open and trusting of their mentor, which may lead to disclosures about their activities. The Fraser Guidelines help mentors to balance children’s rights and wishes with their responsibility to keep children safe from harm. Underage sexual activity should always be seen as a possible indicator of child sexual exploitation. Any such activity under the age of 13 should always result in a child protection referral. (See Appendix)

TRANSPORTATION

The following guidelines should apply to all staff and volunteers involved in the transportation of a child, young person or vulnerable adult:

- A staff member or volunteer must not transport any child, young person or vulnerable adult in a car or minibus without insurance (staff/volunteers should contact their respective insurance company for details)
- A staff member or volunteer must only transport a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a vehicle with a valid driving licence for the particular classification of vehicle used.
- All vehicles used must be in a roadworthy condition.
- An additional adult should accompany the transportation of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult, unless the Director and/or parent/legal guardian has agreed to this arrangement before the journey, or it is part of the mentoring programme.
- Street Kids Direct has a dedicated policy for trips and activities, along with protocols that partner projects are expected to review and accept. These protocols are designed to protect children during the event and transportation to and from the event.

THE REALITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

- In Guatemala, more than 14,000 young people are believed to be active in gangs, and over 400 gangs are operating nationwide.
- In Honduras, more than 150,000 children and adolescents are estimated to be out of school, a key risk factor for street and gang involvement.
- In both countries, youth aged 15–24 make up the largest share of homicide victims, most of them male, and many connected to gang violence.
- According to UNICEF, 1 in 2 children in Guatemala live in multidimensional poverty, lacking access to education, healthcare, and protection.



RECRUITMENT & TRAINING

Recruitment

- Street Kids Direct will ensure all paid and voluntary workers appointed will be trained, supported and supervised. All such persons from the age of 16 years will be requested to read the Safeguarding Policy via our website. A signed declaration of acceptance will be obtained from each individual to get their commitment to it. This will be completed before their work commences, a copy of which will be stored in the Street Kids Direct office.
- If the individual is travelling as part of a group, this recruitment process is expected to be carried out by the organisation sending the group (see Volunteer/visitor policy). If they do not have the means to do this, they can use the Street Kids Direct system.
- All staff and volunteers should complete an application form (see Appendix) supplying the following information:
 - * Personal details
 - * Previous experience
 - * Competencies and areas of interest
 - * Name of 2 independent referees
 - * Detail any Criminal Convictions
 - * Signature and date

Criminal Convictions

- All staff and volunteers aged 16 years and over who have a role that directly works with children, young people, or vulnerable adults should include an up-to-date report on any criminal convictions from their country of birth or the country where they usually reside (more information below).
- Street Kids Direct also utilises the skills of staff and volunteers in roles that are not directly in contact with children, young persons or vulnerable adults, e.g. administrative roles. These roles will be decided on a case-by-case basis as to whether a criminal convictions request is necessary.
- Street Kids Direct will keep a copy of all relevant records in a secure location, and these records will be disposed of one year after the staff member or volunteer leaves Street Kids Direct. Any staff member or volunteer can request a copy of any record kept about them at any time.
- All trustees are required to have an enhanced DBS Certificate.





Guatemalan Resident

A "Certificado RENAS" is required for all Guatemalan Residents. This can be easily obtained by going to the website: <http://www.mp.gob.gt>, clicking on the "Certificaciones RENAS" button and filling in the appropriate information. Once the certificate is received, a copy must be submitted to the child protection officer.

Honduran Resident

A "Judicial check" (antecedentes judiciales) must be obtained from the Judicial Building in La Granja, Tegucigalpa and a "Police Check" (antecedentes policiacos) from the DIC in La Kennedy, Tegucigalpa. These can only be obtained in person with the appropriate identification, e.g. ID Card, Residency Card and Passport.

Once these are obtained, they must be shown to the Child Protection Officer, where they will be verified and a copy taken and stored safely and securely.

UK Resident

A DBS Check is required for all UK residents. The process is facilitated by the company DBS Assist. Their website is www.dbsassist.co.uk, and all applications from UK residents must go through their process. The volunteer covers the cost and must be carried out before they can be accepted as a volunteer.

During the volunteer application process, Street Kids Direct will make a DBS application, and the volunteer must then follow the instructions on the DBS Assist website.

US Resident

A background check is required for all US Residents. Our partner, mobilizemyministry.com, facilitates the process. During the volunteer application process, Street Kids Direct will make a background check application, and the volunteer must then follow the instructions on the Mobilise My Ministry website.

Resident of another country

An individual resident in any other country not listed above will need to go through the appropriate channels in their country of residence and, if necessary, provide an accredited translated copy in English or Spanish.

All new volunteers must work alongside a fully vetted and trained staff member until references have been received and criminal checks completed.

Street Kids Direct will retain a copy of all the above records in a safe and secure place. The records will be disposed of one year after the staff member or volunteer leaves Street Kids Direct. A staff member or volunteer can request a copy or view any record held about them at any time.

As an organisation working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, we strive to operate and promote good working practices. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop healthy relationships, and minimise risks.

All staff and volunteers who work directly with children need to be fully trained in child protection, regardless of the length of their visit. For those who live in the country, the training must be renewed annually, and those who visit regularly need to renew their training before every visit.

The training for overseas visitors is provided online via the Protect My Ministry website, and the contents of this policy will be included in the induction process for all staff and volunteers. They must attend appropriate Child Protection training courses offered regularly by Street Kids Direct or other relevant agencies.

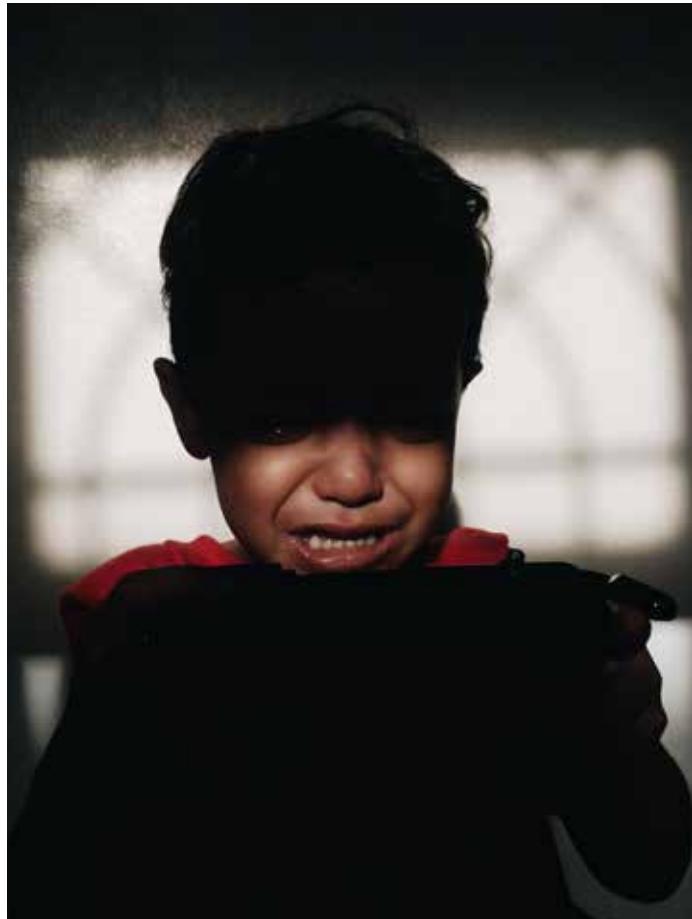
Street Kids Direct will insist on attending these sessions to help staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities and provide information on the identification of and appropriate response to child protection issues. Please refer to the table above for more details.



DEFINING ABUSE

To safeguard appropriately, Street Kids Direct adheres to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19, which states:

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms or prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*



In addition, Street Kids Direct acknowledges the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular, Article 5, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines a child and states: "Every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable, the child's majority is attained earlier."

Defining child abuse or abuse against a child or young person is a complex issue which incorporates harm inflicted or an omission to prevent damage. The full text and definitions below (apart from the final paragraph on spiritual abuse) come from the NSPCC as recommended by the UK Charity Commission.

General Definition

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes: all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocation.

It is also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. This is known as fabricated illness. An example would be a child receiving unnecessary medicine, which can make them unwell.

Neglect

Neglect is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, usually resulting in severe damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent's or carer's failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter.
- Supervise a child (including leaving them with an unsuitable carer) or keep them from harm or danger.
- Make sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care.
- Make sure the child receives a suitable education.
- Meet the child's basic emotional needs – parents may ignore their children when they are distressed or even when they are happy or excited. This is known as emotional neglect.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, online or in person. It doesn't necessarily involve violence, and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child and includes:

- Sexual touching of any part of the body, whether the child is wearing clothes or not.
- Rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus.
- Forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity.
- Making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.
- Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities.
- Encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- Not taking proper measures to prevent a child from being exposed to sexual activities by others.
- Showing pornography to a child.
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images.
- Allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- Persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves. This is sometimes referred to as sexting.
- Persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone.
- Having a sexual conversation with a child by text or online.
- Meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, videos or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped. Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child to gain trust for sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities. Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the Country for sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs, and can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Children and young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour harm themselves and others.

Harmful sexual behaviour can include:

- Using sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Full penetrative sex with other children or adults.

Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older, mainly if there is more than two years difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other child isn't. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent, and over time, it severely damages a child's emotional health and development.

It involves:

- Humiliating, putting down or constantly criticising a child.
- Shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names.
- Mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts.



- Constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault.
- Not allowing them to have friends or develop socially.
- Pushing a child too hard or failing to recognise their limitations can be detrimental.
- Manipulating a child.
- Exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse.
- Persistently ignore them.
- Being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child.
- Never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child and failing to praise their achievements and successes.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviours between two people who are or were in an intimate relationship. Many types of abusive behaviour can occur within intimate relationships, including emotional, sexual, financial, psychological and physical abuse. Domestic abuse can be underpinned by an ongoing pattern of psychologically abusive behaviour (coercive control) that one partner uses to control or intimidate the other partner.

In situations of domestic abuse, both males and females can be abused or be abusers. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity.

Children's exposure to domestic abuse between parents and carers is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. The development and behavioural impact of witnessing domestic abuse is similar to experiencing direct abuse.

Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period and can harm a child both physically and emotionally.

Bullying incidents include:

- Verbal abuse, such as name-calling.
- Non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring.
- Emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone.
- Exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone.
- Undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours.
- Controlling or manipulating someone.
- Racial, sexual or homophobic bullying.
- Physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing.
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying occurs online, it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying is also known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages.
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos.
- Trolling – sending menacing messages or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games.
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups.
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child.
- Encouraging young people to self-harm.
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll.
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the Country from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the Country to another.

Children are trafficked for:

- Child sexual exploitation.
- Forced marriage.
- Domestic servitude includes tasks such as cleaning, childcare, and cooking.
- Forced labour in factories or agriculture.
- Criminal exploitation such as drug cultivation, transporting drugs, selling drugs, theft, begging, selling counterfeit goods, etc.

Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them, and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect.

Traffickers trick, force or persuade children to leave their homes. They use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community.

Modern slavery is another term which may be used concerning child trafficking. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.

Spiritual Abuse

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing a child into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves.

A leader who is intimidating and imposes their will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed, might indicate spiritual abuse. They may say that God has revealed certain things to them, and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership become fearful of challenging or disagreeing, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously, God's) acceptance and approval. (Taken from Safe and Secure – the Manual)

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

Under no circumstances should a member of staff or a volunteer conduct an investigation into a suspicion of abuse. To deal with such an issue effectively, the following procedures will apply:

1. If abuse is suspected:

- Observations, conversations, or concerns will be documented, signed, and dated on the SKD referral form (appendix) by the staff member or volunteer and assigned to one of the safeguarding leads as soon as possible.
- The record will be retained in a secure location.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated and responsible for the safeguarding of children (see item 2), including the parent(s) of any child or young person.
- The designated safeguarding lead, in conjunction with another, will collate and clarify the information and disseminate it to statutory services as appropriate and by the adopted MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) guidance for referrals (see appendix).

2. If abuse is reported/alleged:

Under no circumstances should a member of staff or volunteer conduct their investigation into an allegation or report of abuse. To deal with such issues effectively, the following procedures will apply:

- The preservation of life is paramount, and medical attention will be sought as a priority (if relevant) if physical abuse is disclosed.
- In the event of sexual abuse, the disclosure must be brought to the immediate attention of a designated safeguarding lead to assist forensic recovery timescales if relevant. The timeframe in Guatemala is 72 hours, and in Honduras it is 48 hours.
- If the matter is regarded as critical, e.g. there is an immediate and/or safeguarding concern that requires action to ensure the safety of a child or young person (traffic light system red/amber/green/blue – a decision made by both CPO and DCPO – see appendix), this should be referred immediately and directly to the statutory agencies who have to investigate as soon as practicable.
- The staff member or volunteer in receipt of the information will report the disclosure to one of the safeguarding leads as soon as practicable, who are nominated to refer the matter to statutory agencies.
- The staff member or volunteer will complete the relevant safeguarding referral form, signed and dated by them.
- This document will be retained in a secure location. (see appendix)
- Allegations and reports must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated and responsible for the safeguarding of children (see item 2), including the parent(s) of any child/young person.
- All staff and volunteers are reminded that the child or young person making an allegation will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgment.
- It will be explained that, regarding Street Kids Direct's Confidentiality Policy, information may need to be shared with others in certain circumstances to safeguard a child or young person appropriately.
- The designated safeguarding lead will collate and clarify the information and disseminate it to statutory services as appropriate and in accordance with the adopted MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) guidance for referrals (see appendix)



ALLEGATIONS ABOUT STAFF

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people, including those in a voluntary capacity, is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides adequate protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. If any allegation or suspicions emerge regarding any staff member or volunteer, these should be reported to the designated Safeguarding lead, who will decide if further action is required. The following procedure will apply, during which all information relating to the allegation will remain confidential:

- A detailed factual record of the allegation will be recorded and retained by the person receiving a disclosure or raising suspicions.
- Information will be passed to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as practicable, who will ensure a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how and who followed up the allegation, and any resolution/conclusion is recorded.
- Consideration will be given to the suspension of the person involved, taking account of the risks to other children or young people and the staff member or volunteer concerned.
- If the allegation involves a child or young person, contact will be made with their parents as soon as possible if they are unaware. Parents should be advised of the process and progress.
- Relevant external bodies, including the police (if necessary or appropriate) will be advised.
- The designated safeguarding lead should keep the person subject to the allegation informed of the case's progress and consider what other support is appropriate.
- Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being considered or investigated.

- The fact that a staff member or volunteer tenders their resignation or ceases to provide services must not prevent an allegation from being followed up. This will include where the individual refuses or fails to cooperate.
- If the individual involved is the designated safeguarding lead or Deputy, then the report must go to the individual who is not allegedly involved.
- In the cases of suspected abuse and reported abuse, the safeguarding lead will assess the referral based on the Assessment of Need triangle in support of the SOS framework and practice. This includes the RAG system of RED/AMBER/GREEN/BLUE based on the MASH guidance (see Appendix). If no further action is required, e.g. the information has been assessed as blue, approval of a secondary safeguarding will be necessary to retain transparency and accurate recording of information.

Whistle-Blowing

All staff/volunteers are encouraged to report concerns about an individual's behaviour towards a child or young person. It is also recognised that individuals may not express concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal, or they may fear harassment or victimisation. In such cases, individuals may report suspicions to a trustee instead of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Trustees will protect any individual making a referral without fear of repercussion to ensure a culture of informing without reprisal/negative consequence, protecting their anonymity as far as possible, except where it could endanger another individual. Accurate records will be kept so any patterns in behaviour can be monitored, and any reported incidents will be thoroughly investigated regardless of how unlikely they seem.

Policy in cases of abuse

Anyone who is known or determined to have committed any abuse of a child at any time during their adult life is not eligible for employment/service and, if employed, will have their relationship with Street Kids Direct terminated, with no later opportunity to be used, serve long term, short term or as a volunteer.

Policy in cases involving persons under the age of 18 who have committed abuse of a child

The priority of Street Kids Direct is the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and we will seek to manage risk at all times. Disclosing offences against a child or young person may not prohibit their employment or voluntary position. Anyone who committed an offence against a child before the age of 18 will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering such factors as age, the seriousness of the offence, acknowledgement of responsibility and efficacy of treatment. The decision to continue to employ/accept voluntarily will be subject to a structured review by two safeguarding leads.

Any employee whose children (under the age of 18) have been determined to have committed sexual abuse or to have initiated inappropriate sexual behaviour with another child or any other form of abuse will be required to follow an action plan (see appendix section titled "personal action plan" for the template). Failure by the parent/s of that child to comply with the action plan for the child will lead to termination. This section is pertinent when the employee lives on-site with their family and is responsible for the actions of their underage children. Reapplication would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Guatemala

Ministerio Público: +502 2411 9191
PGN: +502 4987 2285
Missing Child Hotline: 1546
Police: 911
Duncan Dyason: +502 5522 3333

Honduras

Ministerio Público: +504 2221 3534
DNAF (Dirección de niñez, adolescencia y familia): +504 2239 9605
Police: 911
Steve Poulson: +504 9501 2522

United Kingdom

Bucks County Council: 01296 383962
Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS): 0303 0031 111
Police (non-emergency): 101
Police (Emergency): 999
NSPCC National Helpline: 0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually:

This policy was last reviewed by Duncan Dyason, Street Kids Direct, in August 2025

APPENDIX & REFERENCE

Item 1 – Referral Form “Denuncia” (the latest document is available to download from the website).

Item 2 – Fraser Guidelines

Gillick competency, more commonly known as the Fraser guidelines, refers to a legal case which looked specifically at whether doctors should be able to give contraceptive advice or treatment to under-16-year-olds without parental consent. These guidelines are now more widely used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions. This must be balanced against the child's rights and wishes, with the professional responsibility to keep children safe from harm. Assessing this will depend on the child's maturity and understanding, and the nature of the consent required. The child must be capable of reasonably evaluating the advantages and disadvantages.

Item 3 – Visitor/Volunteer Process (the latest document is available to download from the SKD website)

Item 4 – Recruitment Application (the latest document is available to download from the SKD website)

Item 5 – Defining Pornographic / Prohibited Images

What is meant by Pornographic? This is an objective test that the material was pornographic, which means it must reasonably be assumed to have been produced solely or principally for sexual arousal. This test should eliminate most works of art, news and mainstream documentary programmes and films.

What is a prohibited Image? For an image to be a ‘prohibited image’, three elements must be satisfied. An image must meet all three elements before falling foul of the offence. The elements are:

- 1) That the image is pornographic;
- 2) That the image is grossly offensive, disgusting, or otherwise of an obscene character; and
- 3) That the image focuses solely or principally on a child's genitals or anal region, or portrays any of the following acts:
 - a) the performance by a person of an act of intercourse or oral sex with or in the presence of a child;
 - b) an act of masturbation by, of, involving or in the presence of a child;
 - c) an act which involves penetration of the vagina or anus of a child with a part of a person's body or with anything else;
 - d) an act of penetration, in the presence of a child, of the vagina or anus of a person with a part of a person's body or with anything else;
 - e) the performance by a child of an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive or imaginary);
 - f) the performance by a person of an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive or imaginary) in the presence of a child.

This will include non-photographic pornographic images, such as cartoons or CGI.

(Taken from the Coroners and Justice Act 2009)

What is an Indecent Image?

The Criminal Justice Act defines indecent images of children into three categories;

- a) Images involving penetrative sexual activity, Images involving sexual activity with an animal, and Images involving sadism.
- b) Images involving non-penetrative sexual activity, e.g. between adult and child, child on child, or solo masturbation by a child
- c) Other indecent images do not fall into categories A or B, e.g. images depicting erotic posing with no sexual activity.

What is extreme pornography?

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act defines this as extreme adult violent images, including images of actual scenes of severe violence or realistic depictions of serious violence produced for sexual arousal. This also includes sexual images involving penetration of or by animals with adults.

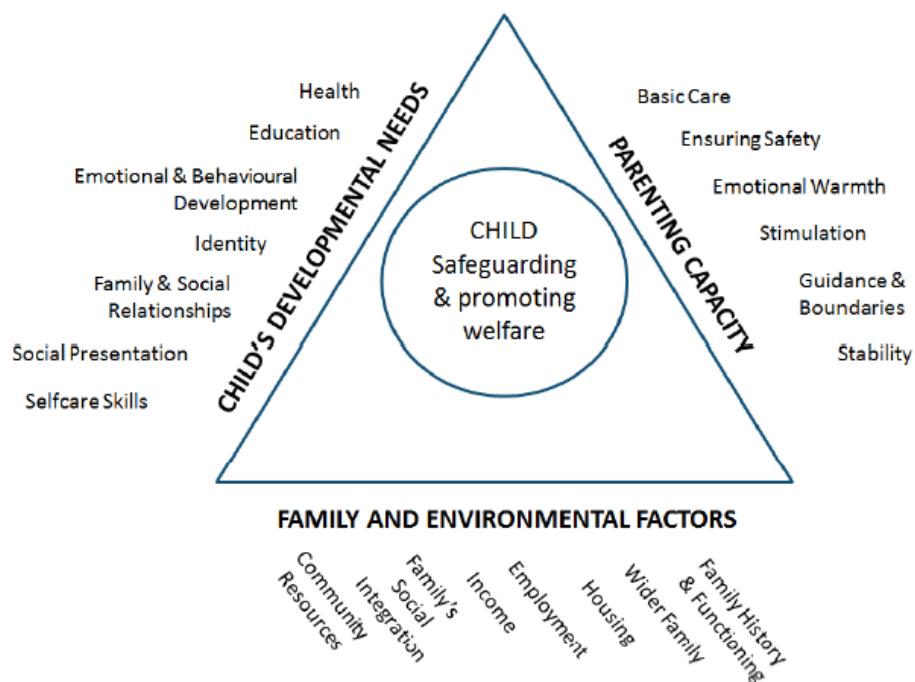
What is an Indicative/Borderline/Notable Image? This includes nudist–naked/semi-naked images in legitimate settings/sources and surreptitious photographs showing underwear/nakedness. This also includes photos of children that do not specifically fall into Category A but would appear to be from the same source, where the child is still dressed or partially dressed.

Item 6 - Considerations for making a referral

Guidance taken from the LCSB (Local Children's Safeguarding Board). Below is the Common Assessment Framework to assist in the decision-making process on whether a referral would be regarded as Red, Amber, Green or Blue.

Signs of Safety

Use the Common Assessment Framework triangle to support the SOS (Signs of Safety) framework and practice.



RED – High level of Risk. Where there is immediate and/or safeguarding concern requiring action to ensure the safety of the child/young person and to secure and preserve evidence. Action/referral within 4 hours

AMBER – There are significant concerns for a child/young person, but immediate action is not required to safeguard the child/young person. Action/referral within 24 hours

GREEN – Further Information is required to ascertain the level of intervention needed. Action/referral within 72 hours.

BLUE – No further information or intervention is required.

Factors to consider when considering whether to make a referral;

- What support or interventions can your organisation offer? Could this meet the needs of the child/young person and their family?
- What is life like for this child/young person and their family?
- What are the child or young person's wishes and feelings?
- What are the child/young person and family's strengths and protective factors? Can they help the situation?
- A child's/young person's behaviour, health, or disability must be understood in the context of the parenting they are experiencing.
- What support or intervention has been offered previously? Did this make a difference?
- Should we always consider the bigger picture?
- Consideration of historical information.
- What are the worries for this child or these children?
- Are you clear about the signs and symptoms of neglect?
- Can you recognise risk?
- Have you considered the child's development?
- Have you considered family and environmental factors?
- Have you considered the capacity of parents?

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) RAG system



Consideration can also be given as to what additional support external agencies, charities and organisations can provide.

Item 7 - Electronic Communication

Areas of Concern:

The following are areas of concern where specific guidelines will need to be introduced:

- Confidentiality
- Keeping records
- Challenging 'online' behaviour
- Time and place of communication
- Initiation of contact
- 'Who am I talking to?'
- Webcam/Video/Voice messages
- Uploading/downloading images

Taking these issues in turn, we will now outline some specific guidelines for youth workers concerning online communication.

Confidentiality

As with most Safeguarding policies, confidentiality is an essential aspect of the youth workers' role concerning young people. It is built on trust. That same level of trust must be maintained in an online conversation. This means taking steps such as:

- Closing down conversations so they are not left up on the screen for all to see.
- Know who else can access your emails, Facebook (FB) messages, etc.
- When forwarding messages, change/delete names and email addresses, etc.

NB. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to a young person before disclosure, as per standard Safeguarding guidelines.

Keeping Records

Again, as with most CP guidelines, keeping a written account of what is being said is essential. In some ways, this is easier online because messages sent via email, etc., are automatically saved. FB Chat automatically saves conversations to your message folder.

Records should be available for your line manager, child-protection officer or appropriate church leadership to see upon request. They should also be open to parents to see upon request. Make sure that your communication is such that, in principle, it would not embarrass you for it to be seen by the young person's parents or church officials.

Challenging Online Behaviour

This area is a little more difficult for three main reasons: Firstly, because the level of behaviour found acceptable will change from youth worker to youth worker. Secondly, there is the removal of the ability to build up a level of telling off, i.e. through a glance, through a tone of voice, through the raising of the voice. And lastly, because of the

ease with which comments can be misunderstood when written and read. Below are some general guidelines:

- Do not put up with behaviour online, such as swearing or coarse joking, that you would not find acceptable in person. Just because you are not in a youth club or school setting does not mean it is any more acceptable. NB- ignoring it by going offline is not an easy way out!
- Be clear in any challenge you make as to why you are making it, so that there is no room for misunderstanding.
- Where possible, when you next see the young person, speak to them about their online behaviour, so it is not all done over the internet.

Time and Place of Communication

This will again follow general CP guidelines; however, the internet's 24/7 potential for conversations and communication requires careful monitoring. Wisdom also needs to be applied as to how well you know the young people involved, and as to whether or not they are the same sex as you. As a general rule, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Do not communicate 'live' (i.e. FB Chat, text message) to young people later than 10.00 pm or before 7.00 am.
- If communication occurs during school hours, be aware of the reasons behind it and the school's guidelines on mobile phones in school.
- If it is your day off, it is best to avoid checking email, signing into Facebook, or replying to Text messages (unless there's an apparent emergency). It may be helpful to have a work mobile that is only on during certain hours of the day.

Initiation and type of Contact

- Avoid being the person who adds or invites young people to be your friend or contact. Let the initiation come from them. If they ask you to initiate, explain why you want to keep a record of not being an adult who adds young people (particularly applicable to social networking sites such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook)
- If you need to talk to young people, start a conversation by sending the initial message. But be aware of why you are sending it; is it to pass on information, to check how they are, or is it out of boredom or a need for friendship/communication?
- As a rule, keep any messages open on public pages/groups. If you need to send someone a personal message, try to keep it brief, i.e., Meeting time/date/venue. Do not be drawn into significant pastoral issues online; instead, suggest meeting up in a public place to discuss the problem.

Who am I Talking to?

One of the dangers of online conversations is the uncertainty of who you are talking to, especially when they claim to be someone they're not. This uncertainty also applies to young people, who can't be sure of who they're talking to. To be clear, do not allow contact with young people you do not know well or know well enough to recognise their traits in writing, etc. This can be particularly difficult for school workers whom many young people know, but the worker will not know as many names and personalities.

Webcam/Video/Voice Messages

This is again a problematic area which may only get more complex with further technological advances. Remember, if it is just you at the computer and just a young person at the other end, it can be a very isolated conversation/experience. As such, never accept an invitation for webcam viewing from a young person, and likewise, never offer for them to see you through a webcam. Likewise, with voice messaging services such as Skype and FaceTime, these should only be used if cleared in advance with your line manager with specific parameters in place. If you need to talk to the young person, then ring the home phone number to remove a level of privacy and to include parents if they answer.

In the area of videos, there are more dimensions to the problem. The following are some issues and guidelines:

- If you have video footage of young people from a youth club, drama, sports competition, etc., then do not upload this to any website without express parental permission.
- Do not store such footage on your personal computer, even if not uploaded for public viewing, without express parental permission.
- If young people are posting videos under the label of your youth club/event, consider asking them to add a disclaimer or remove the name of the youth club/event from the video description.

Uploading/Downloading Images

This will follow very much from what has been written above regarding video content. NB. When referring to downloading images, this has negative connotations; clearly, any images downloaded should be Appropriate, and ii. Of your young people, not of those from other youth groups, etc.

- If you have images of young people from clubs, etc., do not put them on the internet without parental permission.
- Do not put the names of young people next to photos.
- Try to avoid single images of young people, but instead go for group images.
- Try as much as possible to protect the photos uploaded so that it is not easy for people to copy and paste them into their files.
- If you are downloading images of young people, be very clear as to the reason why you are doing this, and be happy to answer if asked.
- Tell your line manager/church leadership what you are doing and why.
- Do not keep images of young people longer than is necessary

Item 8 - PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Name:

Location:

Date Action Plan (AP) to start:

Date AP will finish:

The nature of your unsatisfactory performance is as follows:

The performance improvement required is as follows:

The actions that you are required to undertake to improve your performance are:

(Actions should be 'SMART' - see chart below)

To be achieved by

Actions to be undertaken by the line manager (or others) to assist you in achieving this action plan within the target dates for achievement are:

To be achieved by

Evidence of additional support / reasonable adjustments (if applicable):

Review dates

(These must be diarised at appropriate intervals to monitor your progress against the actions and to provide you with feedback on your performance/attendance)

The line manager must clarify that failure to meet the required standard will result in further management action or formal action.

Signed..... Date

(Line Manager)

Signed, Date

(Employee/Volunteer)

*I confirm that this action plan has been satisfactorily completed within the agreed timescale.
Your performance/attendance will continue to be monitored and any failure to maintain an acceptable standard may lead to formal action being taken.

*This action plan has not been completed within the agreed timescale for the following reasons:

*This action plan has not been satisfactorily completed and I will be taking further action as follows:

Signed Date

Line Manager

* *delete if not applicable*

NOTES ON COMPLETION OF THE ACTION PLAN

This personal action plan template will assist employees/volunteers and their line managers during the informal stages of the unsatisfactory performance/attendance process.

It is designed to ensure that both the manager and the employee/volunteer concerned have the same understanding of the particular aspects of their performance or attendance that require improvement and that the standards of performance/ attendance expected are clearly stated.

The actions that the employee/volunteer is required to undertake to achieve the performance improvement required must be SMART, i.e.

- **Specific** – with an exact description of what the employee/volunteer is required to do.
- **Measurable** – with clearly defined measures or indicators of success (usually in terms of quantity, quality, time or costs) – so both parties know whether the objectives have been achieved.
- **Achievable** – capable of being achieved within the agreed timescales.
- **Relevant** – and easily linked to the employees'/volunteers' role, responsibilities and codes of conduct
- **Time-limited** – with dates for achievement.

For the duration of this action plan, the individual may require support from their line manager or someone else to assist in achieving the requirements of the action plan. However, the individual must take responsibility for these actions to show the required improvements within the agreed timescales.

Review dates are important. The review meetings will enable the line manager to verify that the individual is receiving the agreed support and to offer feedback on progress regarding the actions.





STREET KIDS DIRECT

"until the last child"

Street Kids Direct is a registered charity with the
Charity Commission, London. (number 1102894)