

Safeguarding children and adults at risk procedure for dealing with concerns

Standard:

- The welfare and safety of children and young people is paramount.
- Failing to respond to information is not an acceptable option.
- Never assume that someone else will respond or has responded, unless this has clearly been established.
- Even though it may not be the responsibility of the person receiving the report or information to manage or investigate a concern, it is their responsibility, as a minimum, to pass the information on to an appropriate person.
- Delays in responding can increase the risks to a vulnerable person

Reporting a safeguarding concern/issue

- All concerns and allegations must be taken seriously and without judgement.
- In circumstances where information is disclosed about abuse, colleagues must listen to the vulnerable person without questioning.
- The information must be recorded and passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity, within 24 hours.
- Incidents may occur where the alleged perpetrator may be a young person. This must be referred to the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Lead who will contact the appropriate agency to ensure support for both the victim and alleged perpetrator.
- A 'Safeguarding Report Form' must be completed and passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Lead at the earliest opportunity, within 24 hours.
- It is the Safeguarding Officer/ Lead's responsibility to decide what further action is required, and to ensure this is carried out.
- If neither the Safeguarding Officer, Lead nor a deputy is available, advice should be sought from Child Protection Support Unit (CPSU), local Children's Services (e.g. Social Services) or Police, about an appropriate response. In this instance, the Safeguarding Officer should be fully informed at the earliest opportunity, and the completed Safeguarding Report Form passed on.
- Reporting to the Police or Social/Children's Services should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.
- Referrals telephoned to the social services department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours (usually by the Safeguarding Officer).
- A record should also be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Whistleblowing

If a concern is raised about a staff member, mentor, volunteer or associate of Circus Central from another employee of the organisation, then the Circus Central Whistleblowing policy should be referred to. If the concern relates to safeguarding, the steps in this policy will then take effect.

Types of Safeguarding concerns

The types of concerns that Circus Central staff and volunteers may come across that require reporting to the Safeguarding Officer may include allegations or suspicions about:

- Concerns over the general health and welfare of a vulnerable person
- Welfare issues raised directly to a staff member or volunteer.
- Poor practice (either serious or lower level) from a staff member, either Circus Central or network organisation.
- Bullying, hazing and harassment (physical, verbal or emotional) by adults or young people
- Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect - by adults or young people) occurring within a sports context or outside
- Worrying behaviour of an adult (for example someone acting suspiciously at a venue or similar organisation)
- Historical abuse (allegations dating back several years)
- Extremist views or risks around radicalisation

Reports relating to these concerns may:

- Relate to children and young people's experiences within Circus Central's activities and programmes (e.g. behaviour of mentors or volunteers), or outside (e.g. experiences at home or school)
- Be produced as a result of a Disclosure and Barring Service check, disclosing information relating to that staff member or volunteer.
- Be very specific and contain clear details
- Be more general and less detailed
- Be from identified sources or anonymous
- Seem insignificant in isolation - this information may constitute an important part of a much wider picture of abuse or harm

Tips On Handling Disclosures

The following guidance is designed to help you be clear about what action to take if a child, young person or adult at risk discloses information to you that you are concerned about or if you consider them to be at risk.

- 1. Remain calm and in control** – don't panic.
- 2. Find a safe space** – take the individual to one side so they cannot be overheard but so that you are both visible to other staff or adult practitioners.
- 3. Listen carefully to what is being said** – you need to remember as much as you can.
- 4. Don't give your own view or opinions** – actively listen but do not comment even if what they are saying is shocking or difficult to hear, try not to show this.
- 5. Only ask questions if you don't understand what is being said** – perhaps they said something very quietly, perhaps you didn't understand a word they used.
- 6. Don't promise to keep a secret** – often an individual begins by saying "please don't tell anyone". You cannot keep this secret. You do not need their consent to share the information but it is best practice. Reassure them that you will only tell the Safeguarding Lead / Officer to support their safety. Information

should be handled and disseminated on a “need to know basis” only and always in the best interests of the child or young person..

7. Reassure them that they have done the right thing – you could say something like “you did the right thing to tell me this.”

8. Make notes straight after your meeting with the child or young person - use their words. Write it up accurately and clearly as possible recording the date and time. All documentation relating to disclosures must be passed to the Safeguarding Officer/ Lead to be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with Data Protection Laws

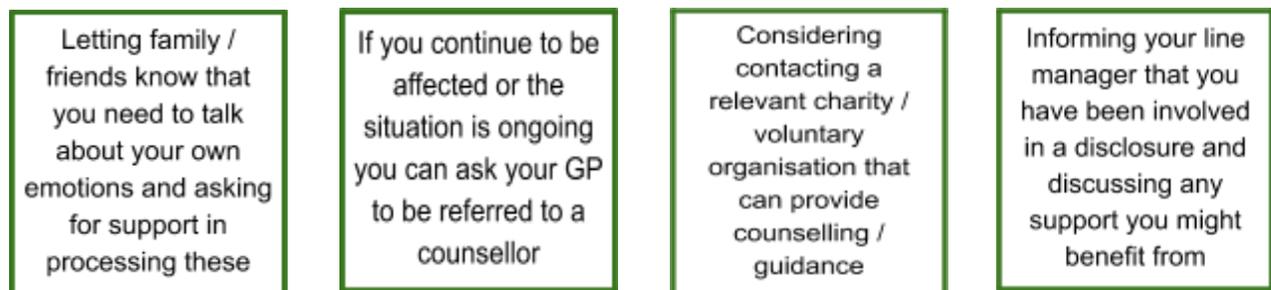
9. Report it - as soon as possible (within 24 hours) to the Safeguarding Lead / Officer. It is not your job to notify the police or social services unless it is urgent and the Safeguarding Lead / Officer cannot be contacted. If it is urgent and the Safeguarding Lead/ Officer are unavailable contact the Police or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

10. Do not contact the alleged perpetrator -this may jeopardise an investigation.

11. Seek medical attention if needed, do not examine the vulnerable person yourself.

12. Seek advice – when you cannot reach the Safeguarding Lead / Officer or if you are not sure if it is a child protection concern you can call the **NSPCC** on **0808 800 5000** (available 24 hours / 7 days a week). The first question you will be asked is “do you have a concern about a child?” If you say yes, your call will be transferred to a safeguarding professional.

13. Request support – safeguarding disclosures are difficult. Support your own wellbeing:



You can take all these steps whilst maintaining the confidentiality of the individual(s) involved by not disclosing any of the facts e.g. name, location or anything that might identify them.

Please follow this procedure if you have safeguarding concerns about a child, young person or adult at risk.

If the individual is in **immediate danger** call the police - **999**

You may need to raise a concern because you have observed a situation or because of a disclosure made to you



Listen carefully and do not comment on the information



Do not promise confidentiality, **reassure** the individual that you will only tell **Shirley Mills** as Safeguarding Lead or **Claire Harvey**, Safeguarding Officer



Make a written **record** of the factual information immediately



Ask the individual for their **consent** to pass the information on to the Safeguarding Lead



Phone the Safeguarding Lead / Officer **immediately** and email the record as soon as possible and **always within 24 hours**

Claire Harvey 07738 089921

**Shirley Mills 07986 977647
0191 281 2115**

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Be prepared to leave a message should the call go to voicemail: "This is [name] from Circus Central. I need to raise a safeguarding concern. Please could you call me back on [number]"



When you have confirmation that the report has been received. Remove the record from your email by ensuring it is deleted from your sent and deleted items. The record will be stored securely by the Safeguarding Lead / Officer.

If your concern is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Officer you should report immediately to the Trustee Lead or Chair of Trustees.