

Purpose

This Policy sets out the YMCA's commitment to promoting best practice and ensuring that Children, Young People and Adults at Risk ("CYP/AAR") are free from harm and abuse. Where harm and abuse is recognised or suspected, the YMCA expects staff and volunteers to respond and refer in accordance with this Policy and operational procedures. The term "Adults at Risk" relates to adults at risk of abuse or neglect as provided by the Care Act 2014.

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- Employees, workers (this includes bank, casual, and sessional workers), agency workers, contractors, apprentices, students, secondees, volunteers, Trustees, and Directors (hereafter referred to as colleagues).
- All other persons supporting, providing or delivering services for or on behalf of the YMCA (hereafter referred to as partner organisations).

General Principles

The YMCA:

- is committed to checking the suitability of all those who work with CYP/AAR and anyone else covered under the scope of this Policy;
- recognises the importance of its work with CYP/AAR and its responsibility to protect and safeguard their welfare;
- seeks to serve the needs of CYP/AAR promoting holistic development. In doing so, the YMCA takes seriously the welfare of all CYP/AAR who come onto its premises or who are involved in any of its activities;
- aims to ensure that all CYP/AAR are welcomed into a safe and caring environment with a safe, positive and friendly atmosphere;
- recognises that it is the responsibility of everyone covered under the scope of this Policy to prevent all forms of abuse and neglect as defined in relevant legislation and to report any abuse discovered or suspected;
- recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to recognise, respond and refer to such abuse;
- is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with CYP/AAR and to provide ongoing support and supervision;
- is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory safeguarding authorities.

Our Commitment

The YMCA endeavours to safeguard CYP/AAR by:

- taking steps to ensure CYPV/AAR understand how to raise a concern;
- operating with a comprehensive safeguarding strategy;
- operating safe recruitment procedures to deter unsuitable people from applying for jobs;
- ensuring that positions are risk assessed to identify the levels of Disclosure and Barring Service checking required as well as addressing any further guidance provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- ensuring that it has procedures and systems in place to secure information held by those individuals covered by the scope of this Policy;

- providing a comprehensive portfolio of policies and procedures which cover those listed under the scope of this Policy;
- operating a safeguarding allegations and complaints procedure to ensure that there is a consistent and effective response to any concerns, allegations or disclosures of abuse;
- providing service users with a comprehensive complaints procedure;
- supporting staff in reporting and investigating incidents of abuse;
- enabling all those covered under this Policy to follow best practice in preventing abuse from occurring within the YMCA;
- ensuring staff have a knowledge and understanding about CYP/AAR protection and that they receive appropriate training on adhering to these procedures;
- prominently displaying contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) and referral methods at all premises and on the website in such a way so as to be accessible to CYP/AAR, colleagues and partners;
- establishing multi-agency relationships and approaches to counteracting abuse.

Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that:

- service users, clients, contractors and designated partnership workers adhere to this Policy.
- they inform Human Resources of any new offences, charges, cautions, reprimands or warnings against them.

The YMCA reserves the right to ask for someone to complete a new Disclosure and Barring Service Check as appropriate.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) and Human Resources Manager. The review of this Policy will also be prompted by changes to existing legislation and/or suggested best practice, or the introduction of new legislation/European directives prior to any review.

Disclosure Reviews

Copies of all Disclosure Forms will be retained securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act. Safeguarding activity will be reviewed quarterly by the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) and/or of Human Resources Manager to check the Policy is being followed correctly, to identify any areas of practice improvement and/or training needs for staff, and to monitor the outcomes of concerns raised.

Management and Departmental Responsibilities

Line Managers will:

- manage, operate and supervise their services with appropriately experienced and qualified staff, meeting the appropriate regulatory and governing body requirements;
- maintain risk assessments for each department/activity addressing safeguarding as well as other safety issues; these will be reviewed on a regular basis;
- maintain working links with external agencies and regulatory bodies with copies of the YMCA's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures being held by those bodies as required;
- establish a system whereby CYP/AAR may talk with an independent person;
- report cases where an allegation is made against a YMCA employee to the Local Authority Designated Officer within one working day of the allegation being made;

- regularly programme group and/or individual supervision of staff with opportunities to discuss observations and relationships with children, young people and adults at risk. These should include discussions of any member of staff or client behaviour patterns which may be of concern.

It is the Line Manager's responsibility to ensure that their colleagues and partner organisations adhere to this Policy.

The Chief Executive will:

- On behalf of the YMCA, appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) and ensure that all necessary training has taken place to ensure that such appointees are effective in any duties that flow from this Policy.

Planning

In planning YMCA activities:

- Staff will not plan to be alone with CYP/AAR in an environment where activities cannot be observed by others. This may mean leaving a door open or staying in a public area.
- Those covered under the scope of this Policy should not meet CYP/AAR outside of the YMCA's services or premises without a parent/carer or other member of staff being present; where this is not possible the meeting must take place in a public area with the prior consent of the line manager.
- There will be occasions where employees will engage with CYP/AAR outside of YMCA premises; eg. on outings arranged by the YMCA, taking vulnerable adults to professional appointments etc. In such instances, there will be appropriate departmental procedures covering these events and a comprehensive risk assessment will be in place.
- Ratios of staff to children/young people will be adhered to for appropriate age range; gender and/or specific need. A minimum of two adults are to be present with a group particularly when it is the only activity taking place on the YMCA's premises. A group of solely under 18's must never be taken off the premises with fewer than two adults.
- Unsupervised routes to and from premises must be appropriate for the safety of children and young people.
- A diary or daily log of activities, register of attendees (where practicable), staff present and any significant incidents must be kept for each service delivered.
- Children or young people being transported by car must wear seatbelts and should not normally be seated in the front seats. In minibuses, children/young people are able to sit in front seats and staff escorts should be seated in the rear if any rear seats are occupied. Where possible, there should be more than one child/young person on board at any one time.
- Children under the age of 11 cannot be allowed to leave services unless in the presence of adults with identifiable permission to collect them.
- Staff will consult with their line manager if they are unsure of the correct protocol.

Premises

It is recommended that when contemplating hiring out YMCA premises to groups / organisations whose work involves CYP/AAR that a suitable clause approved by a Director is incorporated into licenses or hire agreements that properly ensures that hirers are aware of their safeguarding duties and reporting responsibilities to the YMCA.

Line Managers should obtain a written undertaking from each and every group/organisation which works with children or young people and who wish to use YMCA premises, that they have read and understood the YMCA's operational safeguarding procedures and protocols for each service and that they will abide by them.

The use of any devices that can take / store pictures, video or other social media materials

The YMCA recognises that best practice is clear that individuals should not take images or videos on their privately owned devices without specific consent from the service user and their Line Manager. Photos taken under these circumstances are the property of the YMCA. Individuals having taken these images on behalf of the YMCA and with its consent, need to ensure that they are transferred to the YMCA's IT storage systems and its data protection procedures need to be followed as appropriate.

The Role of the Safeguarding Officer

Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) shall be appointed by the Chief Executive and s/he/they will be responsible for overseeing the Safeguarding Policy and the way it is put into practice. S/he/they will be responsible for ensuring that CYP/AAR issues are reported to the relevant authorities and for maintaining a proper record of any child protection / adult at risk referral, complaint or concern.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) will be a senior member of staff with appropriate experience and training in safeguarding procedures and in working with CYP/AAR. They will have a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness with the staff on issues relating to the welfare of CYP/AAR and the promotion of a safe environment for CYP/AAR within the YMCA.

The appointed person(s) will be ratified by the Trustee Board. The Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) will be accountable to the Chief Executive. S/he/they will be trained in child protection issues and inter-agency working and will be required to keep up to date with developments in child protection and safeguarding issues.

Where an individual may be implicated, the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) must ensure the case is reported in confidence to the Human Resources Manager in order for the necessary support and advice to be made available.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) shall ensure that his/her/their contact details are displayed in all appropriate operational sites of the YMCA.

Reporting concerns

Concerns should be raised via this Policy, departmental safeguarding procedures and/or following the arrangements set out in the Whistleblowing Policy.

If you have reason to believe an adult may be at risk of suffering abuse or neglect, you should contact:

Hertfordshire

- Children, young people and adults at risk – Health & Community Services by calling the customer services centre on 0300 123 4042
- Adults at risk(if you believe an adult is receiving mental health services) – by calling the Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust on 0300 777 0707

Central Bedfordshire

- Children and young people – by calling 0300 300 8585 (office hours) or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)
- Adults at risk – by calling 0300 300 8122 (office hours) or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)

Further Information

Further information and advice can be obtained from Human Resources.

Other Relevant Information

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the:

- Whistleblowing, Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies and Code of Conduct;
- Grievance, Disciplinary, Information Security, Lone Working, and service-specific Safeguarding Procedures;
- Adult protocols – Principles, definitions and possible indicator guidance notes used by Housing in relation to obligations pursuant to the Care Act 2014,
- Adult Safeguarding Board – policies and procedures for each area that the YMCA works in;
- Working together to safeguard children
- “No Secrets” – government adult protection guidance
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board procedure manuals – <http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com>
- Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board procedure manuals – <http://bedfordscb.proceduresonline.com>