

The **Methodist** Church 

# **CREATING SAFER SPACE**



**Foundation Module**

# CREATING SAFER SPACE

## Foundation Module

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# PLANNING FOR SAFETY

## The Four Ps

### PREMISES

- ◆ **Risk assessment**
  - appropriate for age & ability
  - well lit (inside & out)
  - chairs & tables
  - access to kitchen
  - toilets – access & supervision
  - plugs wire etc.
  - heating guards
  - entrances & exits secure – in & out
  
- ◆ **Maintenance**
  - process for repairs & cleaning

### PEOPLE

- ◆ **Recruitment**
  - application form
  - assessment/selection process
  - references/CRB/ISA
  
- ◆ **Job Description**
  
- ◆ **Supervision & Support**
  - training provision
  - accountability (who is in charge)
  - annual Review
  - handling complaints
  
- ◆ **Vigilance**
  - teamwork
  - personal safety

### POLICIES

- Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook**
- safeguarding children and young people
  - safeguarding vulnerable adults
  - practice guidelines on domestic abuse
  - model safeguarding policies
- And
- recruiting safely

### PRACTICE: examples

- registers
- consent
- incidents & record keeping
- confidentiality
- what happens if...
- number of leaders
- insurance
- emergency
- internet safety
- 'out of club' contact
- communication with parents/carers

# DEFINITIONS

## Children and young people

**Children and young people:** Any child or young person under the age of 18 years.

### Abuse and neglect of children and young people

“Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.”

(HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

### Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is understood by the Methodist Church as:

- protecting children from abuse and neglect
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

## Vulnerable Adults

**Vulnerable adults:** Any adult aged 18 or over, who by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

**Abuse of vulnerable adults:** “Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may be a single or repeated act. It may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial or discriminatory. Abuse can also involve neglect and a failure by the caregiver to respond adequately to the needs of the vulnerable person. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of an individual.”

(Department of Health and Home Office, *No Secrets*, 2000)

**Adult safeguarding is understood by the Methodist Church as:** the concepts of prevention, empowerment and protection to enable adults who are in circumstances that make them vulnerable to retain independence, wellbeing and choice, and to access their right to a life free from abuse and neglect.

.....

**Adult and child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children, young people and specific adults who are suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect. This is essential as part of promoting a safe Church.

**Abuse and neglect** may occur in a family, a community or an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child, young person or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

# PHYSICAL ABUSE

## Children & Young People

### Definition:

“Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.”

(HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

### Examples:

- children being hit
- babies being shaken
- children being bitten
- deliberate burning with a cigarette end
- dunking a child in very hot water.

### Possible indicators of physical abuse in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- bruising
  - in unusual places, eg around the mouth
  - in unusual patterns, eg symmetrical bruises indicating a child has been gripped
  - in particular shapes, eg fingertip bruising; belt marks
- burns/scalds, especially in significant shapes such as an iron or cigarette end
- adult human bite marks
- serious injury when there is a lack of, or an inconsistent, explanation
- untreated injuries
- unusual fracture.

Children may be:

- unusually fearful with adults
- unnaturally compliant with their parents/carers
- wearing clothes that cover up their arms and legs
- reluctant to talk about or refuse to discuss any injuries, or fearful of medical help
- aggressive towards others.

# PHYSICAL ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### Definition:

The non-accidental infliction of physical force, which results in pain, injury or impairment.

### Examples

- hitting
- slapping
- pushing
- pinching
- kicking
- hair-pulling
- punching
- forcing (including force-feeding)
- inappropriate application of techniques (eg control and restraint)
- the use of incorrect moving and handling techniques which are potentially dangerous and are known to cause distress
- isolation or confinement
- the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, health
- misuse of prescribed medication; overdosing or under-dosing.

### Possible indicators of physical abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other (non-abusive) explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- a history of unexplained falls, minor injuries or malnutrition
- injuries inconsistent with the lifestyle of the person
- unexplained bruises in various stages of healing
- injuries to the head, face or scalp
- untreated injuries in various stages of healing or not properly treated
- poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene
- dehydration and/or malnutrition without illness-related cause
- broken eyeglasses/frames, physical signs of being subjected to punishment, or signs of having been restrained
- loss of weight
- a vulnerable person telling you they have been hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- varicose ulcers, or pressure sores
- injuries reflecting the shape of an object
- unexplained burns, rope burns or cigarette burns.

# EMOTIONAL ABUSE

## Children & Young People

### Definition:

“Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.”

(HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

### Examples:

- parents who are emotionally unavailable to their children
- parents who see their children negatively and deserving of maltreatment
- parents who expect more of their children than they are can achieve developmentally
- children being exposed to domestic abuse
- adults not recognising a child's individuality
- adults grooming a child through persuasion, coercion and deceit for the adult's own ends eg sexual abuse
- bullying.

### Possible indicators of emotional abuse in children and young people:

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- behaviour extremes: children may be overactive or withdrawn
- lacking in confidence or self-worth
- lack of concentration
- physical symptoms without an apparent cause
- difficulty in trusting adults or very anxious to please adults
- reluctance to go home; fear of parents being contacted
- socially isolated
- behaviour that expresses anxiety, eg rocking, hair-twisting or thumb-sucking
- self-harming behaviour
- substance misuse
- sleep and/or eating disorders
- school non-attendance
- running away.

# EMOTIONAL ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### Definition:

Emotional or psychological abuse is behaviour that has a harmful effect on a vulnerable adult's emotional health and development. All abuse of vulnerable people has an emotional impact.

### Examples:

- scolding or treating like a child (infantilisation)
- making a person feel ashamed of involuntary behaviour
- blaming someone for attitudes or actions or events beyond their control
- use of silence
- humiliation
- bullying/harassment
- verbal abuse
- intimidation
- controlling or creating over dependence
- lack of privacy and dignity
- deprivation of social contact (eg deliberate isolation/denial of access to visitors)
- threats to withdraw help and support
- denying of cultural and spiritual needs
- denying of choice
- failing to respond adequately to emotional needs.

### Possible indicators of emotional abuse in vulnerable adults:

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- alteration in psychological state (eg the person appears to be withdrawn, agitated or anxious in general)
- the person appears to be frightened of making choices or expressing their wishes
- hesitation in speaking openly
- unexplained fear
- confusion or disorientation
- anger without apparent cause
- a vulnerable person telling you they are being verbally or emotionally abused
- tearfulness
- unusual behaviour (sucking, biting, or rocking)
- changes in sleep patterns.

## Children & Young People

### Definition:

“Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.”

(HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

### Examples:

- parents not providing adequate physical care
- parents not ensuring proper and timely medical attention
- adults not providing oversight of children to ensure they are not at risk of danger.

### Possible indicators of neglect in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- children whose personal hygiene and state of clothing is poor
- children who are constantly hungry and frequently tired
- developmental delay
- low self-esteem
- socially isolated
- poor skin tone and hair tone
- untreated medical problems
- failure to thrive with no medical reason
- poor concentration
- frequent accidents and/or accidental injuries
- eating disorders
- begging and stealing.

## Vulnerable Adults

### Definition:

Neglect is the repeated withholding of adequate care which results in the vulnerable adult's basic needs not being met. It can be intentional or unintentional and includes acts of omission.

### Examples:

- denial of educational, social and recreational needs
- lack of adequate heating/lighting
- lack of adequate food/fluids
- inappropriate medical care; inappropriate use of medication or over-medication
- lack of attention to hygiene
- lack of attention to toe and fingernails
- lack of attention to teeth (natural or false)
- denial of religious or cultural needs.

### Possible indicators of neglect in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- poor hygiene and cleanliness
- clothing which is inadequate or in poor condition
- dirt, faecal or urine smell, or other health and safety hazards in the vulnerable person's living environment
- persistent hunger
- dehydration
- weight loss
- the vulnerable person has an untreated medical condition
- poor physical condition; rashes, sores, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- evidence of failure to seek medical advice or summon assistance as required
- evidence of failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care.

# SEXUAL ABUSE

## Children & Young People

### Definition:

“Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.”

(HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

### Examples:

- showing a child pornographic images
- filming or taking photos of a child in sexual poses or acts
- touching a child's genitalia
- sexual assault
- forced marriage
- children trafficked for sexual exploitation.

### Possible indicators of sexual abuse in children and young people

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- Sexual knowledge which is inappropriate for the child's age
- Sexualised behaviour in young children
- Children hinting at sexual activity.
- Evidence of grooming activity by a significant adult.
- Soiling, wetting; constipation.
- Frequent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain.
- Unexpected pregnancy especially in very young girls.
- Lack of concentration, restlessness.
- The child or young person is socially withdrawn.
- The child or young person is overly compliant.
- The child or young person has poor trust in significant adults.
- Regressive behaviour, onset of wetting (after having been dry) – day or night
- Self-harming behaviour.
- Eating disorders.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Soreness in genitalia area, anus or mouth.

# SEXUAL ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### **Definition:**

Sexual abuse is the involvement of a vulnerable adult in sexual activities or relationships, without informed or valid consent.

### **Examples:**

- offensive or inappropriate language, including sexual innuendos and sexual teasing
- inappropriate looking
- inflicting pornography on an individual
- inappropriate touching
- masturbation
- indecent exposure
- coercion into an activity
- rape or sexual assault
- photography.

### **Possible indicators of sexual abuse in vulnerable adults**

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- unexplained changes in behaviour
- a significant change in sexual behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- bruises around the breasts or genital area
- unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- torn, stained or bloody underwear
- unexplained infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- hints about sexual abuse
- sleep disturbances
- self-harming
- a vulnerable person telling you they have been sexually assaulted or raped.

# FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### Definition:

Financial or material abuse is the denial of access of the individual to money, property, possessions, valuables or inheritance, or improper or unauthorised use of funds via omission, exploitation or extortion through threats.

### Examples:

- misuse, embezzlement or theft of a person's money, property or possessions
- refusing a person access to their own money, property or possessions
- pressure in connection with wills, testaments, property, inheritance etc
- extortion of money property or possessions through theft
- failing to account satisfactorily for the use of a person's money, property or possessions, fraudulent use of money
- misuse or misappropriation of property; possessions or benefits (eg personal income subsumed into household income)
- loans made to anyone if made under duress, threat or dishonestly extracted.

### Possible indicators of financial abuse in vulnerable adults

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- a disparity between assets and living conditions, reluctance to incur expenses when finances should not be a problem (eg little food in the house, wearing worn out clothes) – the natural thriftiness of some should be borne in mind
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle. Lack of amenities, such as personal grooming items, appropriate clothing, that the vulnerable person should be able to afford
- deliberate isolation of a vulnerable person by caregivers
- unexplained disappearance of items from a vulnerable person's house
- unexplained withdrawals from bank or building society accounts
- sudden inability to pay bills
- person managing finances is uncooperative
- carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- recent changes of deeds or title to property
- the sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to an older person's affairs or possessions.

# DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### **Definition:**

Discriminatory abuse, including racist and sexist abuse, exists when values, beliefs or culture result in the misuse of power that denies opportunities to some individuals or groups.

### **Examples:**

- unequal treatment
- inappropriate use of language: racist remarks, sexist remarks, derogatory remarks or verbal abuse
- humiliating behaviour
- lack of respect towards a person's culture
- comments about disability
- bullying or other forms of harassment
- deprivation of normal social contact and cultural identity
- deliberate exclusion.

### **Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse towards vulnerable adults**

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- lack of respect shown to people
- offensive comments which may be racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist
- withdrawal and social isolation
- poor self-esteem
- poor quality care
- the vulnerable person prefers not to be cared for by certain member(s) of staff/volunteers
- a staff member/volunteer may seem to avoid working with certain groups of people.

# INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

## Vulnerable Adults

### **Definition:**

Institutional abuse occurs when an organisation's priorities, policies and practices are more important than individuals' needs and wishes. It includes a failure to ensure that the necessary standards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care according to individual choice.

### **Examples:**

- authoritarian or rigid management
- lack of leadership or supervision and monitoring of staff or volunteers
- poor care standards
- lack of positive response to complex needs
- rigid routines
- inadequate staffing
- insufficient knowledge base within the service
- disrespectful attitudes among staff
- inappropriate use of physical interventions (control and restraint) by poorly trained staff
- poor practice in the provision of intimate care
- not taking account of individual's needs, culture, religion or ethnicity.

### **Possible indicators of institutional abuse towards vulnerable adults**

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

- lack of flexibility or choice for people using the service
- inadequate staffing levels
- inappropriate or poor care
- no opportunity for drinks or snacks
- failure to promote or support a person's spiritual or cultural beliefs
- a culture of treating 'everyone the same' which is different from treating everyone 'equally'
- dehumanising language
- absence of individual care.

# SPIRITUAL ABUSE

## Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults

Spiritual abuse is not a category of abuse recognised in statutory guidance. However the Methodist Church recognises its significance in its *Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (2010)* and its *Safeguarding Adults Policy (2010)*.

Spiritual abuse is the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice by:

- the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline
- oppressive teaching
- obtrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals
- the denial of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

### Examples:

It might be seen in a leader who is intimidating and imposes their will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. They may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or, more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

### Indicators

Indicators are given here as examples only. They may be present in different types of abuse. They do not tell you that abuse is occurring and can have other, non-abusive explanations. However they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

All abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults can lead to the crushing of people's spirit, damage their sense of identity, sense of self and personal confidence, consequently harming their spiritual development.

### Children and young people

Research for the Department for Education and Skills' *Child Abuse Linked to Accusations of 'Possession' and 'Witchcraft'* (Stobart, 2006) reported:

- From January 2000 to mid 2005, 38 cases were identified, involving 47 children where children had been accused of being evil, of being possessed by spirits or of having connections with witchcraft.
- Of these children, half had been born in the UK. Half were from Africa.
- Boys and girls were equally at risk. The majority were aged between 8 and 11.
- Children identified by their carers as being possessed exhibited a range of behaviours including bed wetting, physical or learning difficulties, nightmares and challenging behaviour.
- The children were abused in a range of ways, often in an attempt to rid them of evil spirits. 'Cures' ranged from enforced fasting, sleeping in the bath, beating, burning, cutting and the threat of abandonment.

# DOMESTIC ABUSE

## Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults

Domestic violence includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. (HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, London, Stationery Office, 2010)

Domestic violence is usually a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour through which an abuser seeks power over their partner or a family member. It is rarely a one-off incident. It occurs across all of society.

### **Domestic violence and children**

200,000 children (1.8%) in England live in homes where there is a known risk of violence or domestic violence (Laming, 2009).

There is a close link between parental violence and violence to children. Between 50% and 70% of children living with domestic violence are directly physically or sexually abused themselves. Nine out of ten young people who report neglect also report living with domestic violence. Children may suffer directly or indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic violence. Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious damaging impact on children's physical safety and emotional wellbeing and constitutes emotional abuse.

Children are at risk of physical injury during an incident of domestic violence either by accident or because they attempt to intervene. Exposure to violence, parental conflict and the distress of a caregiver is extremely anxiety-provoking for children.

Children may also suffer because domestic violence has an effect on parents' capacity to provide care for their children.

### **Domestic violence towards women**

Women are more likely to experience the most serious forms of domestic violence and are more likely to be killed or seriously injured by their partner, ex-partner or lover. However there are also male victims and domestic violence occurs in same sex relationships.

Teenage girls aged 16-19 are most at risk of domestic abuse (British Crime Survey, 2011). Thirteen percent are likely to experience violence from their partners or ex-partners.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## The abuse of children and young people

### The extent and impact of child abuse

Recent research (NSPCC,2011) set out to establish the extent of child abuse . It had previously carried out a survey ten years ago and aimed to see what had changed. Researchers asked 1,761 18-24 year olds about their childhood experiences and compared their replies with those given in the earlier survey.

- Around one in four 18-24 year olds reported experiences of severe physical violence, sexual abuse or neglect in childhood.
- The number of young adults experiencing severe violence, forced sex and prolonged verbal abuse during childhood has dropped over the last 30 years.
- Young adults from lower socio-economic groups and those with separated parents reported significantly higher levels of physical violence, coerced sexual acts, regular verbal aggression and parental lack of care and supervision during childhood.
- Almost 20% of 11-17 year-old children have been physically attacked by an adult, raped or sexually assaulted or severely neglected during their lives.
- Severely abused and neglected children were almost nine times more likely to attempt suicide, and almost five times more likely to self-harm, than children not severely abused and neglected.
- Children who suffered several types of maltreatment were significantly more likely to have with enduring physical, learning or psychiatric problems.

### Disabled children and abuse

Disabled children are more vulnerable to all forms of abuse because of: negative attitudes towards disability; a higher chance of their being bullied; isolation; a greater likelihood of being cared for outside the family for at least part of the week, and greater difficulty for disabled children in communicating their experiences.

### Who abuses?

The abuse of children can be by:

- parents
- other carers
- other children
- people employed, or volunteering, to work with them
- institutions.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

### **The safeguarding policies of the Methodist Church**

#### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults**

[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-4-1110-adults.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-4-1110-adults.pdf)

#### **Safeguarding Children and Young People**

[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-3-1110-childrenandyoungpeople.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-3-1110-childrenandyoungpeople.pdf)

#### **Recruiting safely - for work with children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable**

#### **Practice guidelines to support the report Domestic Abuse and the Methodist Church Taking Action**

[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-6-1110-domestic-abuse-guidelines.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-6-1110-domestic-abuse-guidelines.pdf)

#### **Model Safeguarding Policies**

[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-7-1110-model-church-policies.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/safe-update-7-1110-model-church-policies.pdf)

#### **Other useful websites**

[www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk): This is a website created by the Lucy Faithfull *Stop it Now!* campaign against child sexual abuse. It is designed for parents providing information, advice and guidance. However it would also be useful for workers and volunteers.

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk): many useful resources, including research studies and fact sheets

[www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org): a freephone confidential helpline for people with concerns about child sexual abuse which gives advice, support, information

[www.childrenandyoungpeople.org.uk](http://www.childrenandyoungpeople.org.uk): the Methodist Church children and youth web page

#### **Adults**

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk): useful resources including research studies and fact sheets

[www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk): This is the website for Action on Elder Abuse, an organisation which campaigns specifically against the abuse of older people. It contains useful resources and background information.

[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk): information and resources about people with learning difficulties

In local authorities what was once known as 'social services' is now generally divided into adult services and children and young people's services. Each local authority uses a different title for their departments and for the team which takes referrals.

## WHY PEOPLE MAY NOT RESPOND WELL

### **Why children may not tell: their reasons might include**

- not knowing it is wrong
- not being able to communicate
- feeling there is no one to talk to who will listen and can be trusted
- they have tried to tell before but not been heard
- feelings of shame and embarrassment
- being dependent on the perpetrator
- fear of not being listened to, understood, taken seriously or believed
- believing that nothing will change
- not wanting to burden others
- fear of getting themselves or someone else into trouble
- fear it will make things worse
- not knowing what can be done
- stigma of involvement with formal agencies.

### **Why adults may not tell: their reasons might include**

- not knowing it is wrong
- not being able to communicate
- feeling there is no one to talk to who will listen and can be trusted
- they have tried to tell before but not been heard
- feelings of shame and embarrassment
- being dependent on the perpetrator
- fear of not being listened to, understood, taken seriously or being believed
- believing that nothing will change
- not wanting to burden others
- fear of getting themselves or someone else into trouble
- fear it will make things worse
- not knowing what can be done
- stigma of involvement with formal agencies
- confusion about pastoral authority.

### **Why adults may not respond well: their reasons might include**

- fear they may be wrong
- doubts about the child's or vulnerable adult's truthfulness
- anger and distress
- the child asking them not to tell
- uncertainty about procedures and consequences
- unresolved feelings
- rationalising that there may be other reasons for the child or adult's behaviour
- not wanting to interfere in a family.

### **Why churches may not respond well: their reasons might include**

- they may not want to hear or it may be too hard to hear
- the person/family concerned is too well known and respected
- the limits of confidentiality/confession may not be well understood
- confusion about false allegations
- a desire to keep it within the church
- those with responsibility feeling they need to handle everything themselves
- not knowing who to consult with
- this doesn't happen in church, does it?

## HOW TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS

### **How to respond to concerns that a child has been/is being abused**

Children and young people do not often directly disclose that they have been or are being abused. More often you would become concerned by your observations of changes in the child's behaviour or physical appearance – or because of something another person has told you.

When responding to a child, young person or parent, who shares with you, remember these guidelines.

- NEVER promise to keep a secret.
- React calmly; be aware of your non-verbal messages.
- Don't stop a child or parent who is talking freely about what has happened.
- Don't ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child or parent they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Avoid making comments or judgements.
- Tell the child or parent what will happen next.
- Record using the child or parent's words.

Remember to follow Methodist Church guidelines.

Working in isolation is dangerous practice and does not safeguard children. Always share your concerns with a manager or senior colleague.

*Some of this is taken from the Methodist pocket guide - available from MPH sales (Ref: PE857) [www.mph.org.uk](http://www.mph.org.uk) – you may want to have this as well as this handout.*

# GUIDELINES ON TOUCH

## GUIDELINES ON TOUCH FOR PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Touch is very important for children and can be appropriate. It can be a non-verbal way of communicating care, concern and understanding. It might be a natural part of interaction with a child in your care. It could be because of your involvement in play or recreational activities. You might need to touch a child or young person to protect them from danger.

However some children who have been abused may misunderstand the message you intend to convey.

In order to ensure the well-being and safety of children, and to promote safer working, it is important that you have a sound appreciation of appropriate boundaries and how to use touch in a safe way.

### The following guidelines suggest ways of achieving this.

- Touch should always occur in public. Giving someone a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not yours. This requires you to be self-aware and sensitive to children's feelings.
- Care and concern can be expressed by a touch on the arm or shoulder or a sideways hug.
- Be sensitive to the child's reaction to touch. If a child is not happy with physical contact respect this. You might need to find other ways of conveying your concern for them.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker/volunteer.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Team members can helpfully monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should feel safe and confident to check out issues, discuss any concerns and to constructively challenge anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- As far as possible you need to be aware of the child's culture and the meaning that touch has for them.
- If you have concerns about abuse they should always be reported.

More detailed guidance can be found in sections 15 and 16 of

**Department for Children Schools and Families (2009) *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education settings (Updated from an original document produced by a DCSF network of Advisors)***

[www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/Guidance%20.pdf](http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/Guidance%20.pdf)



## **NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

**What have I learnt today?**

**What am I going to do now?**

