

Safeguarding Policy

Written By: Sarah Lungley	Date: 13/09/2022
Signed and agreed by the trustees:	Date: 14/09/2022
Review Due: July 2025	

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Highlight the responsibilities of all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who engage with Suffolk Rape Crisis and, in particular, to protect them from harm.
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

All safeguarding concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult might be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you should tell the designated safeguarding officer.

SRC is committed to practices that protect vulnerable adults from harm. Staff, volunteers and management committee members recognise and accept responsibilities to develop awareness of issues surrounding working with child and vulnerable adults.

The term 'staff' is used to describe anyone engaged by Suffolk Rape Crisis whether on a paid or voluntary basis.

SRC will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Adopting a Child Safeguarding policy.
- Working to raise awareness of sexual abuse, to prevent the mistreatment of children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that the Disclosure and Barring Service, in accordance with their guidelines, checks staff, volunteers and management committee members before they join the organisation.
- Making all members of SRC aware of our safeguarding policy.
- Accessing training/resources where and when this is needed in order to enhance and increase our awareness and recognition of the issues involved in working with children and vulnerable adults.
- Being aware of where to go for help, advice and support.

The named overall lead for safeguarding is the Senior Outreach Worker, Natasha Cobb.

N.Cobb@srchelp.org.uk or call 07716638052

In the event that an individual has a safeguarding concern involving the CEO, then this should be reported directly Claire Sims who can be contacted on Claire@srchelp.org.uk.

1. Definitions

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 14.2 of the Care Act 2015:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Abuse is harm caused to a vulnerable person by an act, or failure to act on the part of another person (AIMS 1998). It is a violation of a person's human and civil rights.

The main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Institutional abuse

Context

Safeguarding is underpinned by a range of legislation and government guidance:

Local Safeguarding Board
Care Act 2014
Mental Capacity Act 2005
Children Act 2004
Working together to Safeguard children 2015
Public Interest Act 1998

Additional guidance and resources can be found here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/protecting-adults-at-risk-of-abuse/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/>

Expectations

All successful (following interview) applicants will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check whether or not they are directly delivering services. Staff and volunteers are selected on their suitability to meet the job/role-related requirements and responsibilities and their ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

We expect all staff to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them
- Taking disclosures seriously, discussing them with the SAFEGUARDING LEAD and recording them appropriately
- Reporting all concerns as soon as possible to the SAFEGUARDING LEAD
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving service users (and parents) appropriately
- Recording any accidents or incidents involving children or young people that occur while they are accessing SRC appropriately
- Sharing information about safeguarding with service users, staff and volunteers
- Following SRC procedures and making clear to all service users when we must break confidentiality and share information
- Supporting and empowering all women accessing SRC to make their own decisions

We do not expect staff to:

- **Make the final decision about whether a situation should be referred on – this decision will be made by the Safeguarding Lead.**

The Safeguarding Lead, CEO and trustees will

- Ensure that all staff are introduced to, and confident in the implementation of, this policy as part of their induction process
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training and this is updated every 3 years
- Provide follow through support and guidance following any safeguarding issues
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks will be made
- Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through high quality supervision
- be proactive in informing employees about the importance of good safeguarding practice
- be committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Confidentiality and the Helpline

Our helpline and email support services maintain a policy of strict organisational confidentiality. We do not know names, addresses or other personal information about our service users. This means we do not have a legal obligation to report cases of abuse of vulnerable adults as we do not have the personal identifying information needed to do this. As with all our service users, when we receive a helpline call or email from a vulnerable adult who discloses that she is currently experiencing abuse, the helpline or email worker should provide safety and confidentiality, giving the caller space to talk through her options and empowering

her to make her own choices. Where appropriate, this policy can be explained to callers. If you have any doubts or concerns, raise this with the safeguarding lead.

Should a caller disclose her full name and address, is aged under 18 and who is currently experiencing abuse, then the helpline volunteer should contact the Safeguarding Lead in line with this policy.

Confidentiality and the Counselling Service

The legal duty of SRC to disclose ongoing abuse is not absolute and therefore, working within the remit of the Data Protection, Confidentiality and Sharing Information Policy, clients who remain in abusive environments will not face disclosure to external agencies without their consent unless it is felt there is significant risk to the client or to the welfare of a child or another vulnerable adult. In these circumstances, any sharing of information will be discussed and explored with the service user prior to the disclosure of such information to external agencies. The matter will, however, be dealt with as swiftly as possible for the safety of those concerned.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, so be clear with service user about where boundaries lie.

Vulnerable adults can be reassured that no information can be disclosed without their consent, **unless related to a significant risk to their life, the lives of others or the welfare of a child.**

If confidentiality cannot be maintained, the information will only be shared with relevant people and, outside of these people, will remain subject to the Data Protection, Confidentiality and Sharing Information Policy. The service user will be informed and supported appropriately.

Any circumstances where confidentiality may be breached must be taken to the Safeguarding Lead in the first instance before any disclosure is made.

Dealing with a disclosure or concern from a vulnerable adult service user

In the event that a vulnerable adult service user makes an allegation, disclosure or gives you concern about their safety, it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour;
- Let them know that you take what they are saying seriously;
- Do not attempt to question or interview them yourself;
- Let them know that you have to pass on this information and ask for their permission to do so;
- Inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible;

- Take notes and make a written record of the incident or events. Notes should be accurate and use the service user's exact words if they disclosed the information to you, not your own.

Sometimes you may just feel concerned about a vulnerable adult but do not know whether to share your concerns or not. In this situation you should always raise your concerns with your designated safeguarding lead, who will help you to decide what to do and will make the final decision about whether or not to pass this information on.

Dealing with a disclosure or concern from a child

In the event that a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour;
- Let them know that you take what they are saying seriously;
- Do not attempt to question or interview them yourself;
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else in order to help them. Do not promise to keep what they tell you secret;
- Inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible;
- Take notes and make a written record of the incident or events. Notes should be accurate and use the child's exact words if they disclosed the information to you, not your own.

Sometimes you may just feel concerned about a child but do not know whether to share your concerns or not. In this situation you should always raise your concerns with your designated safeguarding lead, who will help you to decide what to do and will make the final decision about whether or not to pass this information on.

Dealing with a disclosure or concern from an adult service user about a child

In the event that an adult service user makes an allegation, disclosure or raises a concern about the safety of a child, it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour;
- Let them know that you take what they are saying seriously;
- Do not attempt to question or interview them yourself;
- Let them know that you have to pass on this information and explain what will happen next;
- Inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible;
- Take notes and make a written record of the incident or events. Notes should be accurate and use the service user's exact words if they disclosed the information to you, not your own.

Workers making direct referrals

The safeguarding lead will make any safeguarding referrals, except where the safeguarding concern has been raised by the following staff:

- Outreach workers
- Volunteer and Helpline Coordinator
- Senior Counsellor

In this case these workers should complete their own safeguarding referrals using the process below. When making safeguarding referrals these workers must ensure that they consult with the Safeguarding Lead (unless the concern is an emergency).

These workers should have had additional 'completing safeguarding referrals' training before undertaking any safeguarding referrals and must have set up a safeguarding hub account to ensure that they can complete referrals in a timely manner.

Register for a safeguarding hub account: <https://adultcareportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/ll-openid-provider/web/oidc-auth?loginAction=true&newAccount=true&CSFR=ZGY1NzAwYTAAtODc4OS00NzUzLWFjZmEtZDhjYmYzNjVjNjg3>

Links to online safeguarding referral forms

Adult safeguarding referral form:

<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/adultsa#h1>

Safeguarding children referral form: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/children-and-young-peoples-portals/children-and-young-peoples-portal/#Children%20and%20Young%20Peoples%20Portal>

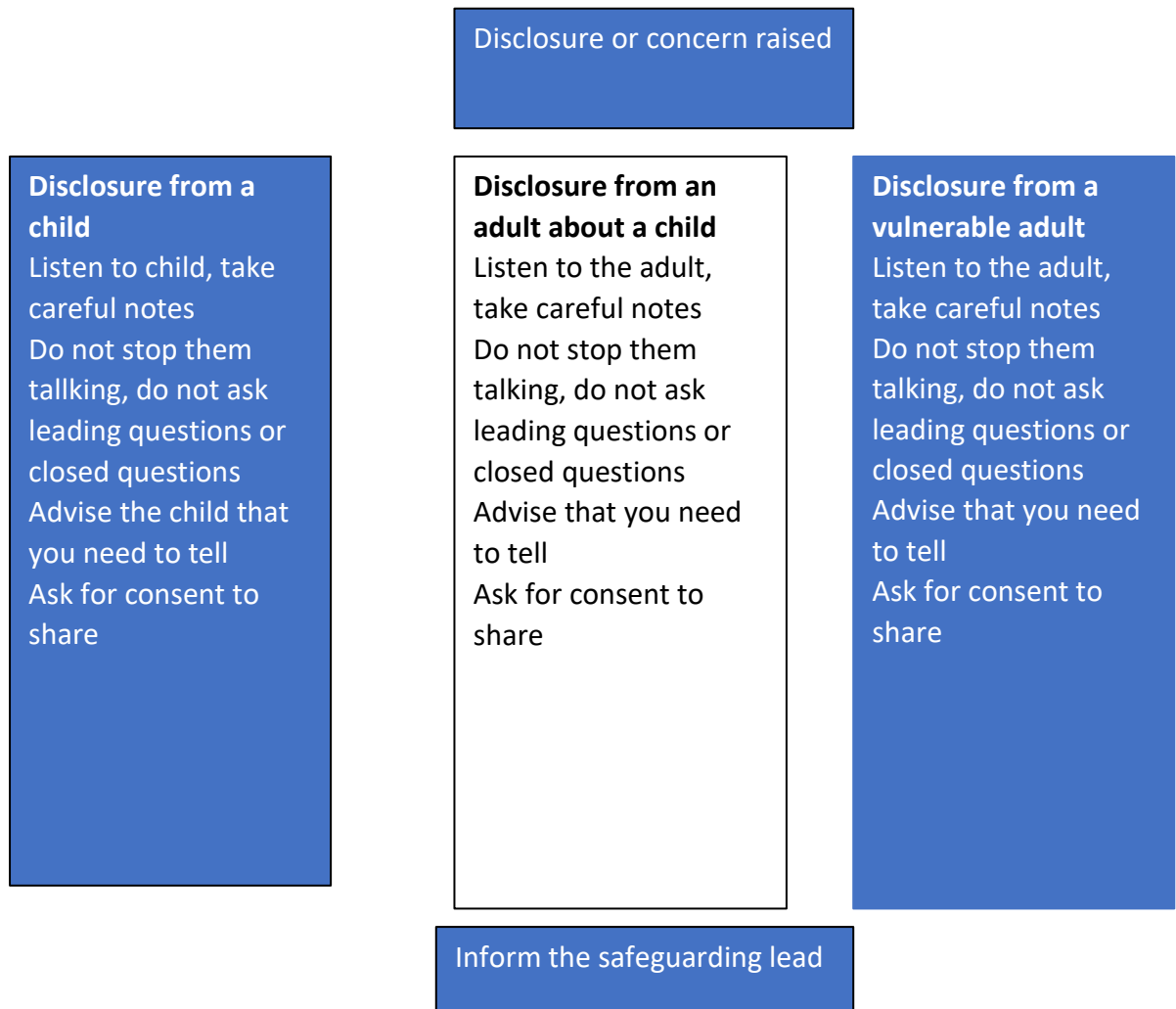
Recording Safeguarding concerns and Safeguarding log

To ensure accurate and appropriate records of safeguarding concerns and any actions taken, the staff member or counsellor raising the concern must complete the following:

- A Safeguarding form: [Safeguarding form TEMPLATE 2022.docx](#) to be saved as an attachment to the clients file on DPMS
- Enter details into the Safeguarding log: [Safeguarding Log 2022.xlsx](#)
- Let the safeguarding lead know

It is important that the form and log are completed for any concern, even if a referral is not made.

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding procedure Following a Disclosure



Continued



For Senior Counsellor and Outreach workers:

If the safeguarding lead agrees that a safeguarding referral should be made, the worker will follow the appropriate referrals as follows.

**For other members of staff/
volunteers:**

If the safeguarding lead agrees that a safeguarding referral should be made, the safeguarding lead will follow the appropriate referrals as follows.

Call MASH on 0345 606 1499 to discuss the case

Complete the online referral form (links are provided in this policy) and securely save a copy of the referral form to DPMS and record activity.

Update the Safeguarding lead/ worker, and update the child/ adult.

Complete a safeguarding form (as linked in this policy) and attach to clients DPMS file. The safeguarding concern form should be completed EVEN if no referral is made, and should be completed by the member of staff who raised the concern (if necessary, staff/ volunteers can complete the form with the safeguarding lead or supervisor on volunteer shift) In addition enter details into Safeguarding Log (as linked in the policy above)

Check situation after 24 hours