

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

All children and vulnerable adults have the right for their safety and protection to be assured. This is the responsibility of every adult and agency working with them.

All staff and volunteers need to be aware of good practice to ensure their actions are appropriate and cannot be misinterpreted. This policy outlines how the staff and volunteers involved in Community Volunteering will be supported to ensure this is achieved.

Community Volunteering is committed to the welfare of vulnerable people and safety is the primary concern throughout the planning, delivery and review of volunteering activity. It recognises that all vulnerable people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse, and that everyone involved in the service has the responsibility to promote effective working practices at all times.

Duty of Care

All volunteers working with vulnerable people must exercise the same responsibility over them as would a reasonable parent.

Children and Young people should be supervised at all times. Break and lunch times require careful planning and supervision. Volunteers should organise rota systems so all get a break. Toilet visits by children/young people should always be carried out in pairs.

Responsibilities

Community Volunteering will:

- ✓ Accept the responsibility for the protection of young people by providing and implementing procedures to safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse. Incident and Accident Report Forms can be found in [appendix 4](#)
- ✓ Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of vulnerable people
- ✓ Adopt good practice in the recruitment, training and supervision of staff and volunteers
- ✓ Ensure employees and volunteers adopt good practice to safeguard and protect vulnerable people and animals from abuse and themselves against allegations
- ✓ Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.

Promoting Good Practice and Poor Practice

Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those affected. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with vulnerable people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with vulnerable people and be an important link in identifying cases where a vulnerable person needs protection.

Good Practice

All those working with vulnerable people should adopt a Best Practice Policy. Best practice ensures that vulnerable people are safeguarded and the potential for false allegations is minimised. A **Good Practice Guidelines sheet** can be found in the [appendix 1](#), outlining common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Poor Practice

Poor practice will place vulnerable people, and those working with them, in a vulnerable position. It is the responsibility of all those working with vulnerable people and animals to report incidents of poor practice in accordance with disciplinary practice. A **Poor Practice Guideline sheet** can be found in the [appendix 2](#) and examples should never be sanctioned.

Parental consent

If you are running your own project involving children, it is good practice that all parents complete and sign a consent form to ensure that every parent is aware that their children attend the sessions run by the Volunteering programme. This form should also highlight any relevant medical information of which you should be aware. There is evidence that some people have used children's events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. Permission should be gained from all parents / guardians prior to photographs being taken at events organised by the Volunteering programme.

Recognition of Abuse and Bullying

It is the responsibility of all those involved in the department to act if they have any concerns about the safety and protection of a vulnerable person. Such concern may relate to the behaviour of someone (an adult or a child) towards a vulnerable person, or the behaviour/ appearance of a vulnerable person. The concerns may relate to poor practice, neglect or abuse, or bullying. The department will encourage and expect an individual with concerns to discuss them immediately with the designated person ([see chart in appendix 3](#))

Neglect and Abuse

Somebody may abuse or neglect a vulnerable person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Vulnerable people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Definitions of neglect and abuse are set out below:

Neglect – where adults fail to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the vulnerable person's health or development (e.g. failure to provide adequate food, water, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment). It may also include refusal to give vulnerable people love, affection and attention. Neglect could include failing to ensure the safety of vulnerable people, exposing them to undue cold, heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Physical abuse – where people physically hurt or injure vulnerable people by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a person whom they are looking after e.g. Fictitious Illness by proxy or Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy.

Sexual abuse – where vulnerable people are abused by adults, and sometimes by children, to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing vulnerable people pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) is also a form of sexual abuse. Activities which involve physical contact with vulnerable people and animals could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed.

Emotional abuse – is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the vulnerable person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the vulnerable person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing vulnerable people to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the vulnerable person very nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a vulnerable person.

The above definitions are adapted from the Department of Health (1999) *Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*.

Indications that a vulnerable person may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The individual describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of a vulnerable person.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of people, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Has difficulty in making friends.
- Is prevented from socialising with other people.
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is **not** the responsibility of those volunteering to decide that abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to report any concerns.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It is important to recognise that in some cases the abuser or bully may be another vulnerable person.

Bullying can include:

- Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking and theft;

- Verbal: e.g. name-calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic taunts, threats, graffiti and gestures;
- Emotional: e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring;
- Sexual: e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.

There are a number of signs that may indicate that a vulnerable person is being bullied:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or sports club;
- A drop off in performance;
- Physical signs such as stomach ache, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol;
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations

All staff and volunteers involved in Community Volunteering have a responsibility to act if disclosure, suspicion or allegation about the safety and protection of young people occurs through their involvement in the programme.

The primary responsibility of the lead organisation and Community Volunteering to ensure that concerns and any relevant information are passed to the police or social services without delay. These organisations have the statutory responsibility to make enquiries to establish if a vulnerable person is at risk of harm

Action to take:

The staff or volunteer receiving the information should ensure they are aware of procedure and pass the information on to the designated person in the University.

Designated contact:

Laurence Barber (Assistant Director of Well Being) 02380 59 2229

If this person is not available refer your concerns to Social Services' or the police whilst continuing to try to establish contact with the designated contact.

Social Services reception and assessment team managers:

023 8083 3336

NSPCC 24 hour helpline

0808 800 5000

Hampshire Police

0845 045 4545

Disclosure

Disclosure occurs where a vulnerable person provides information to another person that they have been/are being abused.

The person receiving information concerning disclosure should take the following action:

- stay calm so as not to frighten the vulnerable person;
- tell the vulnerable person that he/she is not to blame and it is right to tell you;

- take what the vulnerable person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a vulnerable person who has a speech disability and/or differences in language;
- say little but give the vulnerable person time to talk;
- keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- make a full record of what has been said (including where the disclosure took place and who was present), or what has been heard, using the Incident Report Form in [appendix 4](#)
- pass the information on to the designated person for safeguarding in Student Services

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- panic;
- allow their shock or distaste to show;
- probe for more information than is offered;
- speculate or make assumptions;
- make negative comments about the alleged abuser;
- approach the alleged abuser;
- make promises or agree to keep secrets.

Suspicion

When abuse is suspected there are a number of ways in which this suspicion may arise, including:

- an allegation is made by a child or adult;
- a vulnerable person approaches the coach, official etc and makes an allegation;
- a member of staff notices a change in the vulnerable person's behaviour;
- a member of staff notices physical damage to a vulnerable person;
- a young person demonstrates inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age;
- an allegation is made by another agency e.g. a hosting local authority;
- a member of staff observes inappropriate behaviour by another member of staff.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of the Volunteering programme in a paid or voluntary capacity, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is **a responsibility to report concerns in order that appropriate agencies** can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person. The suspicions should be passed to the designated person without delay.

Sharing concerns with parents

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about vulnerable persons. In most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if there is a single sign of a vulnerable person seeming withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. He/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement.

When it is Not Appropriate to Share Concerns with Parents

There are circumstances in which a vulnerable person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse, or not be able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations (e.g. where there has been an accumulation of signs), or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the person in charge as soon as possible.

Procedures to Respond to Disclosure and Suspicion

Please read the Guide to Procedures in [appendix 3](#)

Recording the information

Information passed to Social Services or the Police must be as helpful as possible hence the necessity of making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure / concern.

Information should include:

- The nature of the allegation
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The vulnerable person's account, if it can be given, of what happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Witnesses to the incident
- Any times and dates
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

It is likely that a child will report information to a teacher or parent and these individuals should be aware of how to deal with a situation of suspicion of abuse.

Internal Enquiries

Student Services would make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse or serious poor practice is temporarily suspended (in line with constitutional powers) pending further Police and Social Services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police inquiries, Student Services would assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary procedure, to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff or volunteers. This may be a difficult decision particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Student Services would reach a decision based on the available information that could suggest, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children should always remain paramount.

Poor Practice

If, following considerations, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the designated person and Student Services will take appropriate action e.g. further training. Continued poor practice should be discussed with the Head of Well Being and will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

If allegations are about poor practice by the designated person, or the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be referred to the Head of Well Being. The Head of Well being and Student services will decide how to deal with allegations and whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Support to Deal with the Aftermath

Social Services will play a role in working with Student Services to consider what support may be appropriate to children, parents and members of staff. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the process.

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with vulnerable people). Where such an allegation is made, Community Volunteering will follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to Social Services. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

Action if Bullying is suspected

Those responsible for bullying (who may be suffering from abuse themselves), as well as those who are bullied, need prompt and effective intervention. Leaving vulnerable people to sort it out for themselves is rarely effective. In the interests of promoting the welfare of vulnerable people, early signs of distress should always be investigated by responsible adults.

Action to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all vulnerable people to speak and share their concerns.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no-one else.
- Keep records of what is said, what happened, by whom, when.
- Report any concerns to the appropriate person.

Action Towards the Bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of *borrowed* items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The implementation of the Safeguarding Policy for the Volunteering programme will be based on the following:

- Dissemination of the Safeguarding Policy so it reaches all paid staff and volunteers in Community Volunteering.
- Copies available to organisations, parents and participants on request;
- Operation of sound recruitment procedures for contracted staff and volunteers;
- Identification and delivery of appropriate training;
- Measure and monitor the impact of the policy on an annual basis;

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Designated contact:

Laurence Barber (Assistant Director of Well Being) 02380 59 2229

National:

The NSPCC 0207 825 2500
Helpline 0808 800 5000
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Child line UK

0800 1111
Website: www.childline.org.uk

Parent line plus

0808 800 2222
Website: www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Home-start

0116 233 9955
Website: www.home-start.org.uk

CRB 0870 90 90 811

Child Protection in Sport Unit 0116 234 7178

ScUK 0113 274 4802

Local:

Social Services reception and assessment team managers: 023 80 83 3336
Hampshire Police 0845 045 4545

1)

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour when in contact or working with vulnerable people. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

Good practice means:

- ✓ always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment (e.g. no secrets)
- ✓ treating all vulnerable people equally, and with respect and dignity
- ✓ always putting the welfare of each vulnerable person first, before winning or achieving goals
- ✓ maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with participants (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a vulnerable person or to share a room with them)
- ✓ building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers vulnerable people to share in the decision-making process
- ✓ making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- ✓ Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, vulnerable people and parents should always be consulted and written consent gained
- ✓ keeping up to date with the skills, qualifications and insurance
- ✓ Involving parents/carers wherever possible to take care of the vulnerable person in their care. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure volunteers work in pairs
- ✓ Ensuring that if mixed groups are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. (NB however, same gender abuse can also occur.)
- ✓ ensuring that adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms
- ✓ being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- ✓ giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- ✓ recognising the developmental needs and capacity of vulnerable people – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- ✓ keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- ✓ ensuring equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the vulnerable person
- ✓ ensuring that the use of photographic and filming equipment is appropriate and permission of parents, carers and participants has been sought
- ✓ ensuring high standards are maintained at all times

2)

Practice NEVER to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- ✓ Spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable people away from others
- ✓ take vulnerable people alone on car journeys
- ✓ engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- ✓ share a room with a vulnerable person
- ✓ allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- ✓ allow vulnerable people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- ✓ make sexually suggestive comments to a vulnerable person, even in fun
- ✓ reduce a vulnerable person to tears as a form of *control*
- ✓ allow allegations made by a vulnerable person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on
- ✓ do things of a personal nature for vulnerable people, that they can do for themselves
- ✓ invite or allow vulnerable people to be with you at your home unsupervised
- ✓ Constantly shout at and/or taunt a vulnerable person to `keep control`.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or a person with parental or carer responsibility for the vulnerable person.

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and make a written note of the event. Parents/carers should also be informed of the incident:

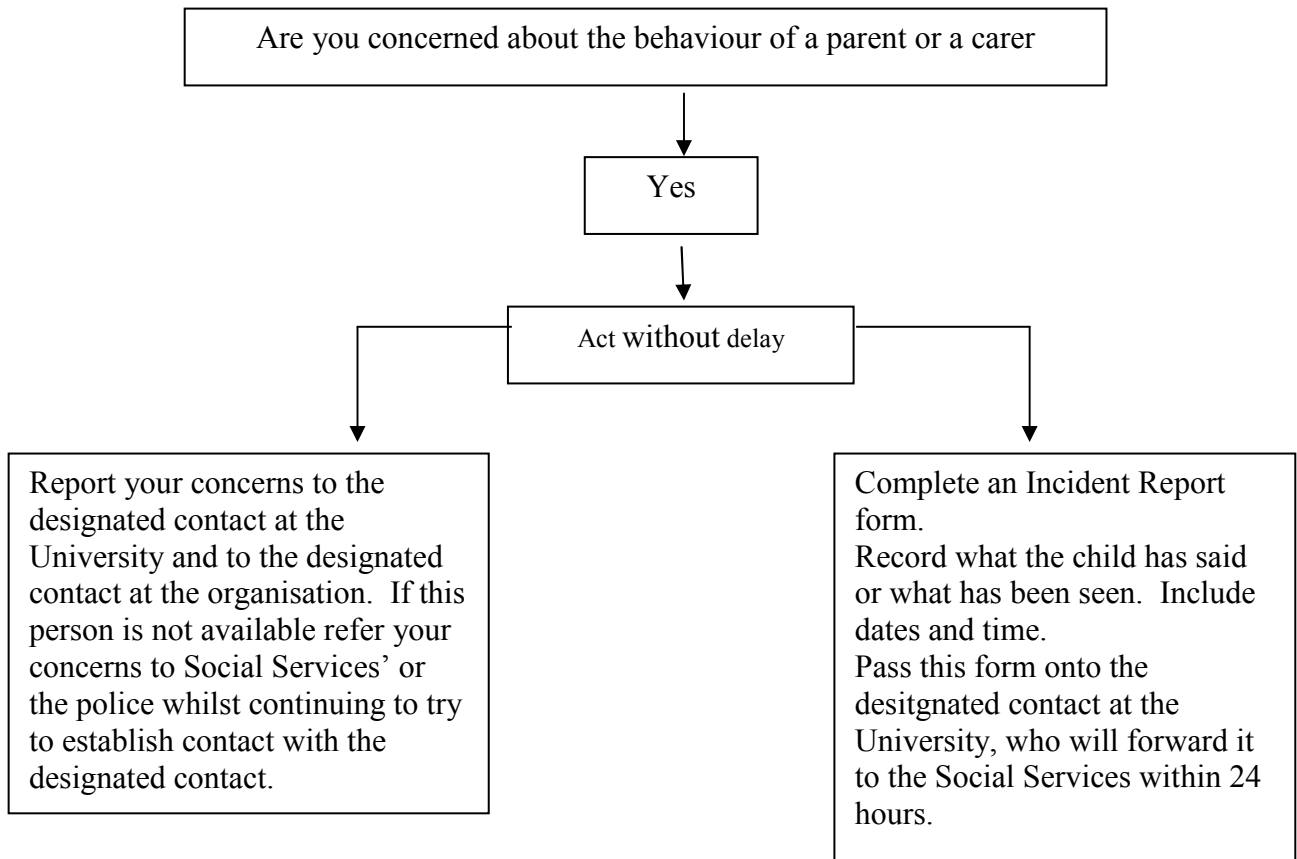
- ✓ if you accidentally hurt a participant
- ✓ if he/she seems distressed in any manner
- ✓ if a participant appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- ✓ if a participant misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Be Aware

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for vulnerable people, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the participants involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a vulnerable person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

3)

A guide to procedures if abuse is suspected



Remember:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Ensure the person in charge follows up with Social Services
- If the concerns are about somebody in sport (a coach, official etc), then the person must be followed up with the NGB organisation.
- Record 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.

It is acknowledged that the feelings generated by these circumstances will cause concern. The Volunteering programme assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone whom in good faith and without malicious intent reports his/her concerns about a young person or colleagues.

4)

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Your name:		Your position:	
Your address:		Your phone number/s:	
Vulnerable person or animal's name:		Vulnerable person or animal's address:	
Date of birth:			
Parents'/carers' names and address:			
Date and time of any incident:			
Your observations:			
Exactly what the vulnerable person said and what you said:			
Action taken so far:			
Alleged / suspected abusers:			
Name:			
Address:			
External agencies contacted (date & time)			
Police		If yes – which: Name and contact number:	

yes/no	Details of advice received:
Social Services yes/ no	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Local authority yes/no	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Other (e.g. NSPCC)	Which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:

Signature:	Print name:
Date:	

NB This form should be given to the designated contact in the University who will forward it to Social Services within 24 hrs. The incident must also be reported verbally to the designated person immediately.

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

Venue:	Location of accident:
Date of accident:	Time of accident:
Name of individual injured in accident:	Name of individual who dealt with accident:
Nature of accident:	
Details leading up to accident:	
Details of events after accident:	
First aid treatment given:	
Coach - Signed	Print
First aider – Signed	Print
Date	

5)

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERING ALONE

It is very rare in a volunteering environment you will be asked to volunteer alone. In all circumstances you should be present with another volunteer or member of staff. In the very unlikely event you are volunteering alone please note the following guidelines.

These guidelines are needed to reduce the risk of volunteering alone, and will be useful in any situation where you are on your own. Please also read the Volunteering Safety section in the Community Volunteering handbook.

- On the first occasion, try and volunteer with someone else, preferably your supervisor.
- Inform someone who will notice your absence. Tell them where you are going and your planned time of arrival back home. If this changes, let them know.
- Notify the placement provider about when you are going and how long you are there. Give them your mobile number or the contact of the place where you are going plus a second contact (your home number for example).
- If you have one, take your mobile phone with you.
- Make sure you know where the exits are in the building and where the nearest phone is.
- If someone asks you to do something that you do not feel comfortable with, or you have not been trained to do, you have the right to refuse.
- Make sure that you have been given all the information about the client/s and home/ surrounding that you need.
- If you are working with children, make sure that you have received child protection training and that you are never on your own with a child.
- If you are volunteering alone, try and do so in daylight hours.
- If you are working alone with someone, try to make sure that you are not shut in a room with them. Keep doors and access open.
- As a volunteer you are expected to abide by the equal opportunities policy at all times.
- Maintain boundaries. Remember that the people you are working with are clients- they are not your friends and you should not socialise out of work with them.
- Don't give your client personal information about yourself or other volunteers. Talk about yourself by all means, but be careful about the information you disclose.
- Don't work if you feel your functioning is impaired (i.e. if you feel ill etc). Let the placement provider know.
- Don't condone or participate in any behaviour which is illegal, unwise from a safety point of view or which is discriminating or oppressive to others.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS - if you are not feeling safe act upon it. For example, if a client shows any signs of distress or anger, call your placement provider/police and/or leave.