

Guidelines for Child Protection

Every adult working in the arts has a responsibility to safeguard and protect the children and vulnerable adults (VA) they come into contact with from harm. It ensures that children and VA can enjoy and benefit from great arts experiences in a supportive, respectful and safe environment, as well as giving a framework for best practice to adults working in the arts, safeguarding them against false allegation.

Definitions

A child includes a person up to and including the age of 18. The term 'young person' is not a legal term and refers to the age ranges of the official definition of a child. There is no standard definition of 'vulnerable adult' in law, but the GAC has adopted the following definition in line with the Arts Council of England:

"Vulnerable adults are people who are or may be in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation."

Does my organisation or project need a child protection policy?

YES, if...

- We will be working **with** children or VA to produce the work.
- We will be supervising children or VA with or without their parents or guardians present.
- We will be running workshops which children or VA will be invited to attend.

Some examples...

- A group of visual artists creating and painting a mural with teenagers.
- Your show requires child actors or dancers to perform in it.
- You are organising a gig showcasing young bands (under 18).

NO, if...

- We will not come into contact with children or VA at all.
- We will be creating work **for** children or VA to enjoy (please give the content of this work due consideration if this is the case)

Some examples...

- There will be children in the audience but not performing onstage.
- You are commissioned to make a piece for a day centre for adults with disabilities.

What should be in a Child Protection Policy?

A Child Protection Policy does not have to be a complicated, lengthy document. It needs to tell you and your organisation **what** to look for, **who** to contact with your concerns and **how** to record your concerns. Your policy should include:

- Aims of the policy.

- Name a Child Protection Officer within your organisation.
- Indicators of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect)
- What to do if a child or VA discloses something to you or you suspect abuse.
- Who to contact with any disclosures, concerns or questions.
- How to record your concerns.

You might also decide to include a Code of Conduct to be followed by anyone working with children and VA and a set of dos and don'ts for best practice.

What does a Child Protection Officer do?

Your CPO is responsible for making sure your policy is implemented. They are the person you go to with any concerns or disclosures and the person that keeps written records of these. They will then refer to Services for Children and Young People, or the Police. **It is not the responsibility of the CPO to investigate concerns, disclosures or allegations.** In addition, the CPO is responsible for the annual review of your policy.

What to do now

Guernsey Police Enhanced Disclosures.

If you are an organisation needing to undertake a large number of checks you will need to become a registered organisation with Guernsey Police in order to request checks and received information pertaining to the checks requested. This is a simple procedure and will require you to fill out a form. If you are an individual you can approach the GAC to carry out the check on your behalf. In this instance information pertaining to the checks will come to the GAC as well as to the individual. **Satisfactory enhanced disclosures must be in place before the commencement of any work with children or VA. Please note that checks take a minimum of 8 weeks to be completed.**

Child Protection Policy

The GAC will be running a series of child protection training events during 2010 to help organisations develop and implement their child protection policies.

The NSPCC website (www.nspcc.org.uk) contains a wealth of information regarding the safeguarding of children and is a useful resource.

I'm still not sure...

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact Laura Simpson, the GAC's Child Protection Officer on laura@arts.gg or 749262.

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