

Conwy Mind

Safeguarding Children Policy

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1 Introduction

1.1 Conwy Mind plays an important role in delivering front-line services for people experiencing mental health issues which may involve our staff and volunteers coming into contact with children. This policy sets out the legislative framework for ways of working should our staff and volunteers be concerned about the welfare of a child they come into contact with in the course of their work.

1.2 This policy applies to all staff including senior managers and the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, students and anyone working on behalf of the Conwy Mind

1.3 The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children who we may encounter whilst supporting our service users or children who are volunteering for or working with the Conwy Mind directly, for example Fundraising or Community Engagement.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

1.4 Safeguarding is a term which includes promoting the welfare of children and protecting them from harm (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2014). For the purposes of this document, the term 'child' or 'children' refers to any young person under the age of 18, including the unborn child, as defined in Working Together 2015.

1.5 This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Safeguarding Children Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Recruitment procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Information Management Policy
- Consent for Photography and Filming
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy Procedures and Guidance
- Children's Alleged Safeguarding Disclosure/Observation Recording Form

- Professional Boundaries in Service Provision Policy

2 Legal Framework

2.1 This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together under the Children Act 2004 (Wales)
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015

2.2 As outlined in the Children Act 2004 and strengthened in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, where a statutory person or body commissions the services of another agency or organisation to deliver on its behalf, there is a need to ensure that agency or organisation has suitable arrangements in place to safeguard the welfare of children.

2.3 The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Some children are more vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2.4 Our staff and volunteers who are responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns must be aware of their Local Authorities' Safeguarding Children Board procedures (England and Wales)

2.5 Conwy Mind is committed to:

- taking appropriate action to address any concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in partnership with other local agencies
- ensuring all staff and volunteers have knowledge of this policy and the Safeguarding Children procedures document

2.6 We will seek to keep children safe by:

- Providing effective management for our staff and volunteers through supervision, support, learning opportunities and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in line with appropriate HR procedures
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, parents, families and carers where appropriate and possible
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding with local children's safeguarding teams
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against our staff and volunteers appropriately
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children who volunteer by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

3 Definition of Abuse

3.1 For the purposes of this document child maltreatment includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing categories.

3.2 Definitions of child maltreatment are adopted in this document and correspond to those detailed in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

3.3 As it can be difficult to spot signs of abuse in children, the NSPCC has provided informative resources to support spotting the signs. These can be accessed via the NSPCC website - www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects.

4. Types of Abuse

4.1 Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which 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.

4.2 Emotional Abuse

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 a child 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 a 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.

4.3 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 (for example, 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.

4.4 Neglect

This is defined as 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, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

5.1 Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 amended the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 to introduce the legal duty for regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report to the police if:

- They are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM
- They observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18

5.2 Whilst it is mandatory for regulated services to report FGM, it is best practice that all our staff and volunteers are mindful of this and if you have any concerns to contact your line manager, the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Police.

6 Prevent and radicalisation

6.1 The main aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. At the heart of Prevent is safeguarding children and adults and providing early intervention to protect and divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

6.2 Prevent is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST and aims to provide support and re-direction to vulnerable individuals at risk of being groomed into terrorist activity before any crimes are committed. A Channel Panel has been set up to safeguard those at risk of being drawn into terrorism based on an assessment of their vulnerability of being at risk of radicalisation. The purpose of the panel is to:

- Assess the nature and extent of that risk; and

- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

6.3 The Channel panel is responsible for managing the safeguarding risk which is in line with other multi-agency panels where risk is managed. Local safeguarding structures have a role to play for those eligible for children's safeguarding.

7 Young Carers

7.1 The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 placed new duties on Local Authorities to offer an assessment if it appears that a child is involved with providing care. Whilst we work with adults, our staff and volunteers should be able to recognise when a child is providing care and signpost for support. The Children's Society provides very useful resource in these instances, visit their website – www.childrensociety.org.uk.

7.2 If our staff and volunteers encounter a situation where there is a young carer supporting an adult service user, and they also believe that that young carer is being abused or at risk of abuse (as indicated in this Safeguarding Children Policy), then the normal safeguarding children procedures need to be followed.

8 Details

Other contact information:

Designated Safeguarding Officer

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

9 References

Department of Health, Department of Education, Home Office (2016). Working together to safeguard children.

National Institute of Clinical Excellence (2009). When to suspect child maltreatment.

Welsh Assembly Government (2007). Safeguarding children – working together under the Children Act 2004. Cardiff: WAG.

Charity Commission for England and Wales. (2014, July 14). Safeguarding Children and Young People.

HM Government. (2015, March). Working Together to Safeguard Children; A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

10. Alleged Safeguarding Disclosure/Observation Recording Form

Alleged Safeguarding disclosure/observation contemporaneous notes:

Good quality written notes are essential as they may support any legal action required at a later date. All alleged safeguarding disclosures/observations must be recorded as soon as possible. Use quotation marks to highlight relevant words the person disclosing has said, do not quote the whole conversation in this manner, you are not taking a statement. The notes recorded must not be anonymised.

Alleged Safeguarding Disclosure Observation Recording Form	Details
Name of person recording	
Location of alleged observation or disclosure	
Date of alleged, observation/disclosure	
Name(s) of those involved	
Time of alleged observation/disclosure	
Body map attached? (Yes / No)	
Alleged Safeguarding Disclosure/Observation	

Detailed description of the observation/disclosure.	

Signature of person completing this form: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

This form must be attached to the Safeguarding report

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Change Log

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