

**Youth Club Name**

**YOUTH CLUB**



**CHILD**

**PROTECTION POLICY**

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# -YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club Child Protection Policy

## Statement Policy

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### Child Protection Statement

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth club is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience. Where the welfare of the child/Young person is paramount, we do this by fostering an ethos of inclusion and equality for all children and young people: ensuring that all activities are managed in a safe manner: setting out a code of behaviour for volunteers and young people with regard to how they should behave, around each other.

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth club adheres to the procedures laid down in the Child Protection Guidelines of Youth Work Ireland and Children's First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, published by the Department of Health and Children 1999.

Volunteers will attend relevant Child Protection Training and will confirm that they have read, understand and will follow the policy and procedure in this document and abide by the Code of Behaviour of the YOUTH CLUB NAME.

### Child Protection Policy and Procedure

The policies in place that protect children and young people who attend our club include:

- Recruitment Procedure
- Volunteer Support Policy
- Training in Child Protection
- Complaints Procedure ( Children Young People and Parents/Guardians
- Anti Discrimination and Anti Bullying Policy (Children & Young People
- Health & Safety Procedures
- Procedure for Reporting Abuse or allegations of Abuse and welfare concerns.
- Code of Behaviour for Volunteers/members

## **Confidentiality Statement**

YOUTH CLUB NAME respect the privacy of all persons involved and its services by ensuring confidentiality in relation to child protection concerns, volunteers need to be clear that no undertaking of secrecy can be given to any person (adult or child) disclosing alleged abuse of a child or young person(Children's First .1995.2.3.) or where there is a child welfare concern, and that the sharing of information with those who have a "need to know" in order to safeguard a child or young person *is not* breach of confidentiality.

## **Volunteer Recruitment policy**

Volunteers undergo a rigorous selection process which includes Garda Vetting and obtaining of two references and the verification of all references. This is carried out by YOUTH CLUB NAME Ltd., on behalf of the Youth Club.

## **Safe Management of Volunteers**

Volunteers are obliged to sign a copy of this document to state that they have read and understand YOUTH CLUB NAME Child Protection Policy and Procedure and that they will adhere to this policy and procedure at all times. Appropriate training in child protection is offered and Volunteers are expected to attend

## **Code of Behaviour for Volunteers and Members**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club adheres to the Code of Behaviour as outlined in the Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Guidelines of Youth Work Ireland and FDYS Ltd,

This Code of Conduct makes clear what is expected from Volunteers and Young People as good Practice, Good Practice Guidelines helps to-

- Protect Children and Young People
- Protect Volunteers against false allegations
- Clarify for volunteers and young people how their expected to behave around each other and in cases of doubt, what is not acceptable behaviour

### **Volunteers and Members**

- Dress Appropriately for Youth club and Youth club Outings.
- Come to the club in a fit state i.e. not being under the influence of any substance, smelling of alcohol or hung over.
- Create and maintain a good relationship with other volunteers and members.
- Ensure that praise and encouragement are implicit in all their interactions with young people.
- Be sensitive and aware of the needs and rights of all to be heard.
- Ensure that all young people and volunteers are treated equally with respect, dignity and privacy.
- Encourage self esteem in young people.
- Understand that while physical contact is a valid means of providing comfort and reassurance when required, this is a valid means of providing comfort and reassurance when required, this should only take place when it is acceptable to the young person.
- Be aware of the need to respect personal space, safety and privacy of young people.
- Be aware that young people and volunteers have the right to complain and to have those complaints listened to and dealt with.
- Avoid Favouritisms
- Behave as a good role model at all times

### **YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club Volunteers and members should never:**

- Use cutting or snide remarks to young people or use any form of bullying.
- Swear or tell jokes of a sexual nature

- Use sexist or discriminatory language
- Physically punish or harm a Young Person or Volunteer.
- Allow a young person to use inappropriate language unchallenged,
- Allow bullying of any form
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a Volunteer or young person or engage in any other behaviour that could be misinterpreted.

### **Anti Discrimination Policy**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club undertakes to ensure that Volunteers children and Young people are not discriminated against, regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious or cultural beliefs, intellectual, sensory or physical **abilities**. All incidences of discrimination will be investigated and appropriate actions taken.

### **Anti Bullying Policy**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club work to maintain an environment where bullying behaviours amongst children and their impact are identified and actively challenged. All incidents of bullying will be investigated and actions taken to address them.

**FDYS –Designated Person – Joy Keyes 085-41005400**

**YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club -Child Protection Officer-**

### **Complaint Procedure**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club aims to respond to all complaints in a timely and appropriate manner.

***{Please note that all child protection concerns are to be dealt with under the child protection policy and procedures.}***

The following procedures are to be followed with regard to complaints, verbal and written.

- All complaints by children young people and parents are to be logged.
- When logging a complaint it is important that the following information is included, name of the person making the complaint, name of the person to whom the complaint was made, Date and Time, nature of complaint.
- The Child Protection Officer who logs the complaint then passes this on to the YOUTH CLUB NAME Designated person. Who will then direct it to the most appropriate person to deal with the complaint.
- The Youth Club Child Protection officer notifies the Youth Club Chairperson the name of the person that allegation has been made against (only- in order to fulfil the Youth Clubs Weekly rota **-Confidentiality**)
- All complaints to be responded to **immediately or nearest working day** after the complaint is received by the FDYS Designated person.
- Any actions taken as a result of the complaint to be recorded by the Youth Clubs Child Protection Officer and the FDYS Designated person.
- The YOUTH CLUB NAME Designated person asks – (both verbally and written) that the person against whom an allegation has been made, to stand down immediately as Leader/Helper pending an investigation.

The person to whom the complaint was originally made is to be kept informed as to progress and outcome. The complainant will be informed of the outcome.

The complainant will have the right to appeal if dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation of the complaint; this appeal will be dealt with by the FDYS Designated Person.

### **Accidents Procedure**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club has a policy on accident prevention and health and safety statement. All accidents are recorded in an incident book (helped by Youth Club Secretary) and parents are notified immediately of any injury to their child, where Volunteers are trained in First Aid, minor injuries will be treated on site Medical assistance will be sought for any more serious injuries. If possible from the child or young person's own GP. However in case of emergency the child or young person will be brought to the nearest doctor or to the A&E Department of Wexford General Hospital.

### **Fire Safety**

Appropriate fire safety equipment is installed in each premises, Volunteers receive training and perform regular fire drills and safety evacuation in their Youth Club and log to be kept, and have a clearly marked fire assembly outside the building.

## Recognising Child Abuse

Child Protection practices are guided by “Children First” National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

While the Children First document provides comprehensive guidelines for the recognition of young person abuse, definitions are outlined below for ease of access.

### **Definition of Neglect**

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the young person suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults and medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a young person. Whether it is significant is determined by his/her health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a young person of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a young person who suffers a series of minor injuries may not have his/her needs for supervision and safety adequately met. A young person whose ongoing failure to gain weight or whose height is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A young person who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the young person’s needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

## **Definition of Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a caregiver and a young person rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a young person's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples of emotional abuse if young people include:

- The imposition of negative attributes on young people, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a young person is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
- Emotional unavailability by the young person's parent/career;
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent, or inappropriate expectations of the young person;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the young person;
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the young person's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way.
- Under or over-protection of the young person;
- Failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the young person's cognitive and emotional development.
- Use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
- Exposure to domestic violence.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the young person's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include: 'anxious' attachment, non-organic failure to thrive, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the young person and the leader.

## **Definition of Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a young person. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking
- Use of excessive force in handling deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a young person.

## **Definition of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when a young person is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. Examples of young person sexual abuse include the following:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the young person;
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a young person whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- Masturbation in the presence of the young person or the involvement of the young person in an act of masturbation;
- Sexual intercourse with the young person whether, oral, vaginal or anal;
- Sexual exploitation of a young person includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a young person to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a young person is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to young people, which is often a feature of the "grooming" process by Perpetrators of abuse.
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years. This means, for example, that sexual intercourse between a 16 year-old girl and her 17 year-old boyfriend is illegal, although it might not be regarded as constituting child sexual abuse.

The decision to initiate child protection action in such cases is a matter for professional judgment and each case should be considered individually. The criminal aspects of the case will be dealt with by An Garda Síochána under the relevant legislation.

#### **FDYS PROCEDURE OF REPORTING ABUSE OR ALLEGATIONS TO THE HSE**

YOUTH CLUB NAME Youth Club acknowledges that the statutory Responsibility for the investigation and assessment of allegations or suspicions of child abuse rests with the HSE South East and An Garda Síochána. The role of the Child Protection Officer in the Youth Club is to report any suspicion of Child protection and/or welfare concerns, and this is achieved by alerting the FDYS Designated Person.

Volunteers who report child abuse or suspicions of child abuse to the Child Protection Officer in their club and then onto the YOUTH CLUB NAME Designated Person are protected by the provisions of the protection for persons reporting child abuse act,1998.

The Legislation provides that the person making report receives immunity from civil liability when the report is made `Reasonably and in good faith` to a Designated person, the HSE or any member of An Garda Síochána`.

The Guiding principles for reporting of child abuse and welfare concerns are summarized as firstly that the safety and well-being of the young person must take priority and secondly that reports to the HSE should be made without delay.

If a Volunteer witnesses or suspects that a child may have or is being abused or that there is a serious child welfare concern, they must report this immediately to child the protection officer, in turn the child protection officer must notify the FDYS Designated person that a concern has arisen . The FDYS Designated person should then make contact with the duty social worker without delay.

The standard report must be submitted to the HSE as soon as possible.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern.

- Disclosure by a child or young person.
- An account by a person who witnessed the abuse taking place

- Evidence ,such as an injury, which is consistent both with abuse an innocent explanation but here are corroborative indicators supporting the claim that there may have been abuse or evidence of a child welfare concern.
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child or young person is suffering from abuse.(children’s First 1999 page 38)

If a child or young person makes a disclosure, the volunteer should reassure the child or young person that he or she has done the right thing in telling the volunteer about the alleged abuse.

If a volunteer witness the abuse taking place they must take the appropriate and immediate steps to protect the child or young person involved.

In cases of emergency where the child is at immediate and serious risk and when a member of the social work department and HSE are not available then the club child protection officer through the FDYS Designated person will notify An Garda Siochana and then follow the reporting procedure to the HSE.

It is important to clearly establish the grounds for concern from the outset by obtaining as much information as possible. Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times and locations, context any other information which may be relevant.

The Child Protection Officer with the assistance of the FDYS Designated Person. Complete the standard Report form(HSE) in full and as soon as practicable.

The FDYS Designated Person should ensure that all relevant sections of the standard report form are filled out as thoroughly and comprehensibly as possible. In the event that the Designated Person does not wish to make a referral to the Sheathe must inform the child protection officer concerned that they have the right to go straight to the HSE directly and they also need to let them know the reason why they are making the referral. This information needs to be presented to the child protection officer in writing,

## Reporting Procedure in the case an Allegation of Abuse of a child or Young person by a volunteer

The Youth Club Child Protection Officer has a responsibility to report child protection concerns to the FDYS Designated Person. FDYS Designated Person and the Child protection officer have a dual responsibility to the volunteer against whom an allegation has been made. The FDYS Designated Person has Responsibility to report verbally and written any child protection concerns relating to all volunteers. The overall responsibility to ensure that this is complied rests with the Designated Person.

It is important to note that under the protection for persons reporting child abuse act 1998, that any person that reports abuse “in reasonable and good faith” is immune from civil liability. Taking this into account it is necessary that any volunteer that suspects another volunteer has or is abusing a child has a clear obligation to report this immediately to the child protection officer.

When the Youth club child protection officer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse Of a child or young person against the volunteer they must inform the FDYS Designated Person as to promptly initiate the following procedures,

1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child (see above) (Responsibility of Designated Person)
2. The procedure for dealing with the volunteer  
(Responsibility of Designated Person)

All parties liaise closely during the process

***The Reporting Procedure for dealings with a volunteer that an allegation has been made against them.***

***FDYS DESIGNATED PERSON:***

Shall inform the volunteer verbally and written within one week or before the next Youth Club Meeting.

- A. The fact an allegation has been made against him or her,***
- B. The nature of the allegation,***
- C. That he/she is suspended from the youth club pending the outcome of an investigation into allegation.***

*The volunteer has the opportunity to respond to the allegation in writing and the response noted and included in the report to the HSE,*

*All allegations will be addressed promptly and carefully, ensuring the youth club is protected,*

*The Youth club and its volunteers will cooperate in full with the HSE assessment and any subsequent Garda Síochána investigation.*

*When a formal notification to Garda Síochána is required or necessary, this should happen without delay and immediate meeting will be requested between the HSE, Garda Síochána to advise them of the allegation, to clarify roles and responsibilities and to determine how the assessment of the allegation will proceed and whether any criminal investigation may be implemented, (the meeting will be attended by the FDYS Designated person and the Youth Club Child protection officer.*

*The volunteer is to be kept up to date by written communication in relation to the allegation and any relevant information arising from the above meeting. (As agreed with the HSE and An Garda Síochána), This is the responsibility of the FDYS Designated person.*

*The youth club child protection office in consultation with FDYS Designated person shall ensure that all enquiries as agreed with the childcare manager, principal social worker or An Garda Síochána will be followed through.*

*In the event that a volunteer has been found responsible for perpetrating child abuse i.e. Where the young person's allegation has been confirmed by either HSE or AN Garda Síochána, the volunteer will not be permitted to have any future involvement in the Club.*

**DECLARATION OF READING AND AGREEING TO ABIDE BY**

**YOUTH CLUB NAME LTD CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT:

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and confirm that I understand my duty in relation to this child protection policy.

I have signed this policy and agree to abide by and to follow the procedures outlined therein.

Name (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed off by Child Protection Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

**When you sign this form you agree to abide by FDYS and your clubs Child Protection Policy.**

<b>No.</b>	<b>NAME of Volunteer/Leader</b>
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Please Copy as Required and return Signature`s to FDYS.  
Committee Members Please Ensure All Leaders/Parents Read and Sign this Form before Supervising in you Club.