CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

and

PROCEDURES

(Updated March 2025)

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Child Protection Policy Statement

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 introduces new laws and measures aimed at ending the discrimination faced by many people with disabilities.

Staff and volunteers in the NI Youth Forum (NIYF) are committed to practice that promotes the welfare of children and young people and protects them from harm. We aim to create a culture where children are valued, their right to be safe is respected and where we strive to minimise the risk of harm.

The protection and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a national and international requirement. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child upholds the best interests of children. It stipulates that "children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. They must be kept safe from harm. They must be given proper care by those looking after them."

The Children (NI) Order 1995 asserts that children and young people are best looked after within their own families and communities and there is a clear commitment to putting the interest of the child first and providing support or intervention based on those interests. The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003) enhances the arrangements for safeguarding children by providing a legislative basis for pre-employment checking those who work with children and young people. A new system for pre-employment checking called Access NI came into operation on 1st April 2008. Access NI was established by a joint programme between the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Access NI is part of central government and operates under the provisions of Part V of the Police Act 1997. The NIYF are registered to access this system which offers three levels of checks, however NIYF will be accessing the 'Enhanced' check for all those being offered a regulated position.

The NIYF are committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and implement the following procedures as part of this goal. We will do this through:

- Robust recruitment and selection policies
- Effective management of staff and volunteers
- Provision of child protection training and vetting of staff and volunteers
- Designating a senior member of staff to take a lead role in ensuring that the procedures adopted are fully implemented, reviewed, recorded and updated when necessary
- Robust procedures for reporting concerns
- Codes of behaviour for staff, volunteers, children, and young people
- Effective procedures for sharing information with relevant parties
- General safety and management of activities

Recruitment and Selection

The NIYF is committed to effective recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.

All jobs/roles have a clearly defined role description and are circulated as widely as possible. Application forms are sent out together with a declaration form. Two references are taken up and two forms of ID (one photographic) are checked against the written application.

Shortlisting takes place prior to interviews and those invited for interview are assessed against essential (and sometimes desirable) criteria, which have been matched to the job. Where possible, we will involve young people in every recruitment and selection process. A panel of at least two people will interview all the candidates who meet the criteria.

A Protection of Children (NI) process will be carried out with all staff and volunteers who are being offered a post/role within the NIYF. All appointments are subject to a satisfactory check being received.

Effective Management of Staff and Volunteers

Comprehensive induction training is provided to all workers on appointment. This includes information on organisational policies, procedures, guidelines, activities and ethos.

All appointments are conditional on a satisfactory, agreed, period of work. At the end of this probationary/trial period a review takes place after which the post is confirmed in writing if appropriate.

Child protection training is provided for all staff and volunteers, and this is reviewed and updated regularly in line with changing legislation. This training will be provided by an accredited child protection trainer and will include an awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the different types of abuse.

A regular and appropriate support and supervision system is in place for all staff.

Reporting Concerns

The Lead Designated Officer for the NIYF is:

Paul Dynes CEO who can be contacted at: The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 68 Berry Street, BELFAST BT1 1FJ. Tel: 028 9033 1990.
Email- Paul.dynes@niyf.org

The Deputy Designated officers for the NIYF are:

Natalie Corbett, Assistant Director, who can be contacted at: The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 68 Berry Street, BELFAST BT1 1FJ.
Tel: 028 9033 1990. Mob: 07528792535 e-mail: natalie.corbett@niyf.org

Amanda Stewart, Assistant Director, who can be contacted at: The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 68 Berry Street, BELFAST BT1 1FJ.
Tel: 028 9033 1990. Mob: 07718481719 e-mail: amanda.stewart@niyf.org

Louisa Ward, Senior Youth Work Manager, who can be contacted at: The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 68 Berry Street, BELFAST BT1 1FJ.
Tel: 028 9033 1990. Mob: 07591206575 e-mail: louisa.ward@niyf.org

Marty Kelly, Senior Youth Work Manager, who can be contacted at: The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 68 Berry Street, BELFAST BT1 1FJ.
Tel: 028 9033 1990. Mob:0751622747. e-mail: martin.kelly@niyf.org

Although important, the consideration of confidentiality should not override the legal principle that "the welfare of the child is paramount" (Children (NI) Order 1995). The right of the child/young person to be protected from harm should take precedence.

It is the role of the designated officer to liaise with social services and other agencies as appropriate. **It is not the role of staff/volunteers to investigate or decide if abuse has or has not taken place**. **Their role is to observe (any changes in behaviour, or incidents), record (facts only) and report (to the designated officer). Records should be kept using the Cause for Concern forms (Appendix 1) and locked away at all times.**

Procedure for dealing with Complaints of Child Abuse
There are two elements under this section, those where allegations of child abuse have been made against staff and those where workers become aware of or suspect a case of child abuse.

Flow chart 1.1 deals with Procedures relating to allegations made against staff.

Flow chart 1.2 deals with guidance on disclosure of abuse or where a member of staff is aware of or suspects a case of child abuse.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

There are several different categories of abuse officially defined in government guidance and these are central to the statutory child protection system.
All staff and volunteers should be aware that essentially, "child abuse" occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than a child causes harm.
The common denominator of all forms of child abuse is that it makes children feel bad and worthless. Because children can be abused in a number of ways the harm caused cannot always be easily categorised, but five broad definitions can be identified.

Neglect - the actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation.

Physical - actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Sexual - actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend.

Emotional - actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill treatment or rejection, resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, and engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Although ‘exploitation’ is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or a combination of these forms of abuse.

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or where it has already taken place. It is unlikely that staff will be experts and it should be stressed that in accordance with the Children (N.I.) Order 1995, the Health and Social Services have a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of a child.

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is unlikely that staff will be experts and it should be stressed that in accordance with the Children (NI) Order 1995, the Health and Social Services have a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of a child.
The onus of NIYF is to provide a safe environment by employing people who are suitable for working with or to have contact with children and by having effective and

clear procedures for reporting any suspicions through their own structures to the relevant Health and Social Services.

2. INDICATIONS THAT A CHILD MAY BE ABUSED INCLUDE:

• unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.

• an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.

• the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her;

• someone else -a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child;

• unexplained changes in behaviour over time e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper; inappropriate sexual awareness;

• engagement in sexually explicit behaviour in games;

• distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected;

• difficulty in making friends;

• prevented from socializing with other children;

• displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite, loss of weight for no apparent reason

• increasing dirty or unkempt appearance.

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 stressed, however, that it is not the responsibility of staff to prove that abuse is taking place but is their responsibility to act upon any concerns, by reporting these to the Designated Officer.

Specific Types of Abuse

In addition to the types of abuse described above there are also some specific types of abuse that we in NIYF are aware of and have therefore included in our policy.

Grooming of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation, or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation

(CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared. Those working or volunteering with children or young people should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming and take early action in line with their child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs. Practitioners should be aware that those involved in grooming may themselves be children or young people and be acting under the coercion or influence of adults. Such young people must be considered victims of those holding power over them. Careful consideration should always be given to any punitive approach or 'criminalising' young people who may, themselves, still be victims and/or acting under duress, control, threat, the fear of, or actual violence. In consultation with the PSNI and where necessary the PPS, HSC professionals must consider whether children used to groom others should be considered a child in need or requiring protection from significant harm

If the staff in NIYF become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the NIYF's child protection policies and procedures.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017).

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE. Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited.

CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males. While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, **the majority of CSE victims are living at home**.

Statutory Responsibilities

CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring will follow NIYF child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows: -

Domestic Violence and Abuse:
'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.'

Sexual Violence and Abuse
'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).' Please note that coercive, exploitative, and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

If it comes to the attention of NIYF staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a young person this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Officer who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, staff have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in this policy.

Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Contact can be made directly to the Sexual Referral Unit (based within the Public Protection Unit) at 028 9025 9299. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in NIYF we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person the Designated Officer should be informed immediately, and all policies and procedures will be followed.

Young People Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. At NIYF we support children and young people, through the Personal Development work we do, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Staff are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It must also be borne in mind that sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. It is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'. Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention; however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a youth setting. Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the Lead Designated CP Officer must always be sought in the first instance The DO will advise if additional advice from PSNI or Social Services is required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or
- The perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim
- Harmful sexualised behaviour can include: Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and we will follow the procedures in the child protection policy.

E Safety/Internet Abuse

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in NIYF and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content Risks**: the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks**: the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct Risks**: the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer to peer exchange.
- **Commercial Risks**: the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in NIYF have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of young people accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in supporting young people to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, young people will have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

Sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile or over the internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

1/Sexting between Individuals in a Relationship
Young people need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases we may contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from Gateway on these matters.

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

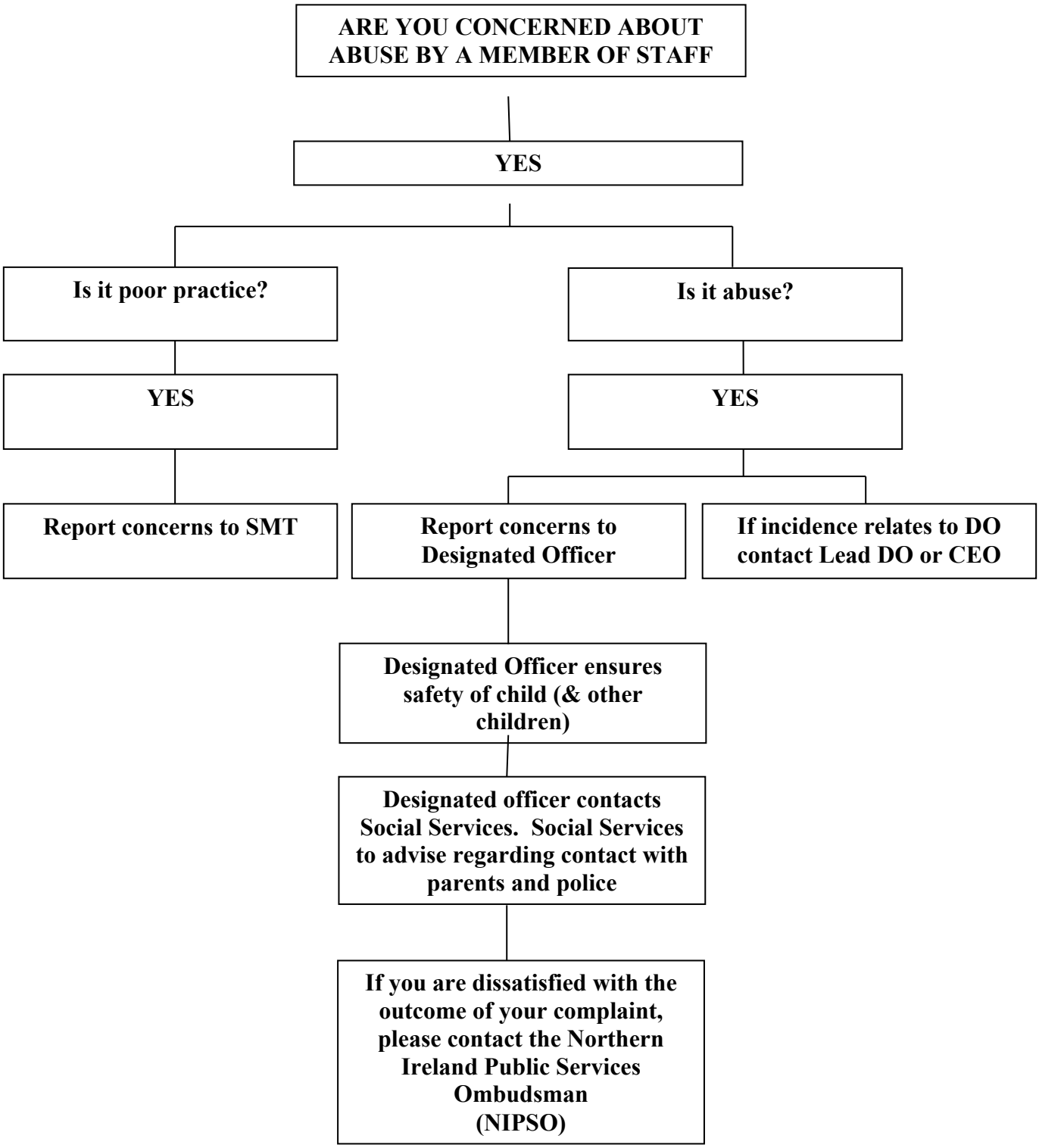
2/Sharing an Inappropriate Image with an Intent to Cause Distress

If a young person has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. NIYF are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individuals consent. For further information see: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures of NIYF will be followed.

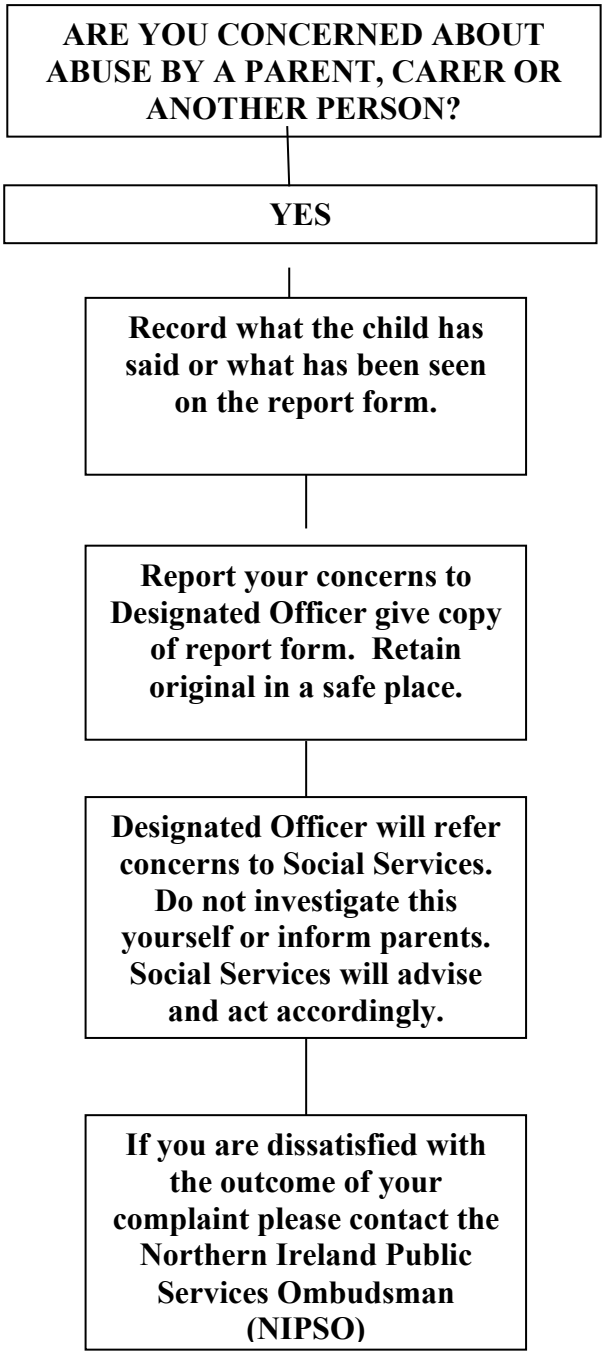
Flow chart 1.1

ACTION TO TAKE IF YOU SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE



Flow chart 1.2

ACTION TO TAKE IF YOU SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE


ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT ABUSE BY A PARENT, CARER OR ANOTHER PERSON?
YES
Record what the child has said or what has been seen on the report form.
Report your concerns to Designated Officer give copy of report form. Retain original in a safe place.
Designated Officer will refer concerns to Social Services. Do not investigate this yourself or inform parents. Social Services will advise and act accordingly.
If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint please contact the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

The following key points should guide the actions of staff/volunteers that are told of abuse:

Do		**Don't**
Stay calm **Listen** and Hear Give time to the person to say what they want. **Reassure** that they have done the right thing in telling. **Record** in writing what was said as soon as possible. **Report** to the designated officer. **Record** your report.		Do not panic Do not ask leading questions Do not promise to keep secrets Do not make a child repeat the story unnecessarily

The member of staff/volunteer should pass this report immediately to the designated officer. The designated officer will then liaise with Social Services and other agencies, as appropriate.

PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2016

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)
If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO). The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about NIYFs in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction. A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response. You must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Sharing Information

Children/young people and their parents/guardians will receive a copy of the child protection policy and procedures and grievance procedures (Appendix 2).

All confidential records are stored in secure premises. In keeping with Data Protection principles these are only shared when necessary, with relevant parties.

As stated, staff and volunteers receive information through the induction process and training.

Confidentiality

Information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis with appropriate organisations and/or individuals.

All information of a personal nature relating to children and young people connected to any work with the NIYF will be stored securely within the Northern Ireland Youth Forum premises.

Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

This code of behaviour is being developed to ensure that all workers know what is expected and what is unacceptable. It will be drawn up in consultation with all staff and volunteers and adapted to align with the Code of Behaviour for Children and Young People. (Appendix 3)

Code of Behaviour for Children and Young People

Staff/leaders should ensure that a contract or agreement with every group is drawn up at the beginning of each piece of work, as good practice. This should include some of the health and safety and child protection matters as a point of importance.

Anti-bullying Policy

The NIYF is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children and young people. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our group. An anti-bullying policy has been developed. (Summary Available in Appendix 4)

General Safety and Management of Activities

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for young people's health and safety lies with the leader in charge of the programme.

Within the boundaries of confidentiality, the leader in charge of the programme should immediately be made aware of all incidents, accidents and allegations of abuse: except where the leader in charge is the subject of the allegation.

Health and safety issues need to be discussed and agreed with the young people both in the planning and delivery of programmes.

Supervision

There should be adequate supervision by a leader at all times. This will vary depending on the needs of the group, age, vulnerability, gender breakdown and the nature of the activities involved. The standard recommended ratios are:

8 years and over	2 members of staff (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children & young people

There should be one additional staff member for every 10 extra children and/or young people.

The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the needs of the individual child. (Our Duty to Care: 2007).

First Aid

If at all possible, it is useful to have someone with a First Aid qualification. The NIYF has currently 15 trained staff within the team with the First Aid at Work Qualification.

Leaders should be aware of any medical needs children and young people have and any medication they are currently taking. This should also include information concerning allergies and reaction to foods i.e. peanuts.

Staff/leaders should keep copies of medical consent forms with them on any activities outside of the normal setting.

An accessible first aid kit should be available at all activities. A first aid kit should also be taken on activities outside of the staff/leaders normal setting.

Safety of Equipment

Equipment should be safe and used for the purpose for which it was intended. It should be checked regularly. All members of staff/volunteers should check equipment before use.

Children and young people should be made aware of the safe use of equipment to minimise misuse where harm could occur.

Competency and Qualification of Leaders

Leaders should be competent to undertake the activities they are leading. Where activities have to be led by qualified leaders, such as specialist activities, qualifications should be up to date and verifiable. The leader bringing the groups to these activities is responsible to ensure this is so.

Transport

Any transport used should be roadworthy, fit for purpose and covered by the appropriate insurance. It is the responsibility of the worker arranging the transport to ensure this is so (for example, seatbelt laws).

Emergencies

Do not hesitate to seek advice from you Line Manager or other senior members of staff in dealing with emergency situations.

Record details of all accidents or injuries using the accident/incident record form (Appendix 5) and give a copy to your line manager.

Risk Assessment

It is good practice to carry out a Risk Assessment before youth work activities to judge whether it is a high or low risk activity and as a result ensure proper controls are in place to reduce risk (Appendix 6).

Appendix 1

Cause for Concern Form
Staff Details

Name _____

Position _____

Young person's details

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No _____

Name of Project/Group _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Any other relevant details?

Give details of your 'Cause for Concern'
Why do you suspect abuse? How did you get this information? What exactly did the young person say and do? Is there any other relevant information?

Any medical attention required? Give details. Who was consulted?

What future action do you believe is required?

Have the parents been contacted? If so, what was said?

Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?

Has anyone else been consulted? If so, give details.

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix 2

Grievance Procedure

This procedure is to provide a parent/guardian or young person who considers that she/he has a grievance, with the opportunity to have it examined quickly and effectively, and where a grievance is deemed to exist, to have it resolved, if possible, at the earliest practical time.

Stage 1

When a parent/guardian or young person feels aggrieved on any matter she/he should discuss the problem initially with the worker responsible for the programme. They will attempt to resolve the issue, consulting where necessary the other members of management. The worker should reply to the grievance as soon as possible, and in any case, within three working days from the time the grievance was first raised.

Stage 2 – Involvement of Line Manager

If the parent/guardian or young person with the grievance is not satisfied with the reply from the worker, or has not received a reply within three working days she/he may request that the matter is raised with the Worker's line manager.

On receipt of such a request the Line Manager shall make arrangements to hear the grievance. It is the responsibility of the Line Manger to make arrangements for the hearing to be held within ten working days of the grievance being raised with him/her.

Stage 3 – Involvement of the CEO

If the parent/guardian or young person with the grievance is not satisfied with the reply from the worker's Line Manager or has not received a reply within three working days she/he may request that the matter be raised with the CEO.

The CEO, on receipt of such a request shall make arrangements to hear the grievance. It is the responsibility of the Director to make arrangements for the hearing to be held within ten working days of the grievance being raised with him/her.

Reference to the CEO is the final stage of the grievance.

Appendix 3

Code of Behaviour for Staff & Volunteers

Staff should:

- Be inclusive of ALL children or young people and encourage the participation of those with access requirements or those that do not normally engage
- Be aware of children or young people's needs and seek specialist / parental advice where necessary
- Be open minded, respect children or young people's personal space, their rights to privacy and having their own ideas and opinions
- Ensure children or young people are aware and understand expectations and boundaries of appropriate behaviour
- Ensure that programmes are attractive, engaging and relevant to the needs of children or young people
- Be punctual
- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people away from others
- Avoid situations where you are required to provide intimate care on your own
- Never engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Never make sexually suggestive remarks, gestures or comments about or to a child - even in fun
- Never allow the use of inappropriate language, attitudes or behaviour to go on unchallenged
- Never let allegations that a child or young person makes go unrecorded
- Ensure appropriate recording of any incidents or accidents
- Only share information about children and young people that is relevant and on a need to know basis

Appendix 4

Anti-bullying Policy Summary

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children and young people. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all children and young people should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We will do this through -

- Clearly defined procedures for addressing bullying
- Awareness raising of what bullying is for staff/volunteers/young people/management committee
- Sanctions for bullying behaviour
- Support systems for those who have been bullied
- Code of behaviour
- Support for those who bully to change their behaviour

What is bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and can be -

Emotional

- Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)

Physical

- Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist

- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual

- Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic

- Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal

- Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing**Cyber**

- All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse; mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls; misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to leaders
- Incidents will be recorded by the leader
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the children/young people will be reconciled
- After the incident/s have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

Appendix 5

Accident/Incident Record Form

Name of Group _____

Name of group Leader _____

Date, Time and location of incident _____

_____

Name and address(es) of witness(es)

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

Please state in your own words what happened including details of names and status of those involved.

Describe what action was taken, for example, e.g. details of first-aid, police or medical involvement.

Signed _____ Date _____

Role _____

Appendix 6

Risk Assessment Process

Risk assessment must be undertaken for any day event or residential involving children and young people. The process of risk assessment identifies the hazards and then assesses the risk. Note that a hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. Risk is the likelihood of harm from the hazard being realised.

Probability of occurrence	Score	Consequence of outcome
Highly unlikely to ever occur	**1**	Slight inconvenience
May occur but very rarely	**2**	Minor injury requiring first-aid
Does occur but only rarely	**3**	Medical attention required
Occurs from time to time	**4**	Major injury leading to hospitalisation
Likely to occur often	**5**	Fatality or serious injury leading to disability

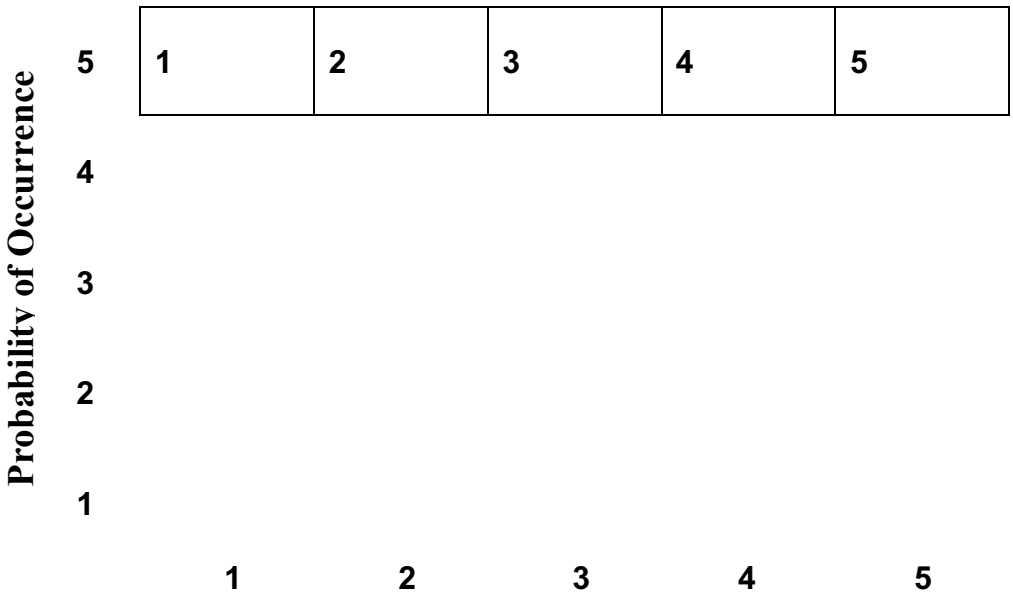
Risk = Probability of occurrence x Consequence of outcome

The level of risk can be calculated by multiplying probability by consequence, so providing a theoretical maximum score of 25. If the resulting score totals 10 or more then active management of the risk is required.

The vital issue is whether risks can be managed. Risk assessment is based on the professional judgment, experience, skills and knowledge of the group leader/s. If there are doubts that the risk is manageable, then it is advisable to change the activity and or the location. In a high-risk situation, it is better to abandon and redesign the Programme than to expose children and young people to uncertainty.

Group leaders must fully record their risk management decisions on the following forms. Individual forms should be used for example transport, venue, activity etc.

5	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**
4	**8**	**12**	**16**	**20**
3	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**
2	**4**	**6**	**8**	**10**



HIGH RISK	Significant measures required to bring within acceptable levels of risk i.e. Low. Programme may have to be abandoned or redesigned.
MEDIUM RISK	Some measures may be required to allow the programme to continue as planned.
LOW RISK	Level of risk is acceptable to continue with the planned programme.