

**POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING AND  
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ADULTS AT RISK  
AND STAFF**



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## Section 1: Introduction



Rutledge aims to provide a secure, happy and caring environment where children and adults at risk can develop their skills fully and where each individual can grow and develop to his or her full potential creating a sense of personal worth and mutual respect. Rutledge recognises that the protection of children and adults at risk is everybody's responsibility and is committed to supporting parents and families. It is also committed to nurturing, protecting and safeguarding children and adults at risk.

All Rutledge staff must ensure that:

- the welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount;
- all children and adults at risk, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- all staff (paid/unpaid) working in Rutledge have a responsibility to report concerns to the Senior (Tracey Eisen) / Designated (Branch Managers) Child Protection Officer;
- Individuals working with children and adults at risk in Rutledge will be made aware of good practice in order to ensure that they are not placed in situations where allegations could be made.

Staff are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

## **Section 2: Aim of the Policy**

The aim of the Policy is to promote good practice whilst doing the following:

- providing children and adults at risk with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Rutledge;
- Allowing all staff to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

The Senior Designated Officer nominated with responsibility for the protection of children and adults at risk is Operations Director - Tracey Eisen.

## **Section 3: Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- Where it is important and appropriate for you to be alone with a child and adults at risk never have the door locked and try to maintain a gap between you and the child or adults at risk;
- Treating all children and adults at risk equally, and with respect and dignity;
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals;
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children and adults at risk (e.g., it is not appropriate for staff to have an intimate relationship with a child or adult at risk or to share a room with them);
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and adults at risk to share in the decision-making process;
- Ensuring that at residential events, adults should not enter a child or adults at risk adult's rooms or invite them into their rooms;
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children or adults at risk;
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and adults at risk;
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given;
- Requesting written parental consent if Rutledge staff are required to transport children or adults at risk in their cars;
- If another member of staff is seen to behave inappropriately with a child or adult at risk then you must not ignore it. Tell your Designated Child Protection Officer.

It is the responsibility of Senior Designated / Designated Officer to decide when to make referral to Social Services or the PSNI. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a discussion to refer to Social Services is made. To ensure you cannot be accused of bullying a child or adult at risk in your care you must follow the guidelines below.

Good practice helps reduce possible situations in which abuse can occur and protect staff when working with children and adult at risk.

### **Practices to be Avoided**

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of a manager or the child/adult at risk's parents. For example, a child or adult at risk sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child/adult at risk up at the end of a training session:

- avoid spending time alone with children and adult at risk away from others;
- avoid taking or dropping off a child or adult at risk adult to an event or activity.

### **Practices Never to be Sanctioned**

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- share a room with a child or adult at risk;
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- allow children or adults at risk to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child or adult at risk, even in fun;
- reduce a child or adult at risk to tears as a form of control;
- fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child or adult at risk;
- do things of a personal nature for children or adults at risk, that they can do for themselves;
- invite or allow children or adults at risk to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

## **Section 4: Recruitment and Training of Staff**

Rutledge recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children or adults at risk in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working them. Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record;
- Staff will be have an enhanced disclosure check carried out by AccessNI;
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving license with photo).

## Interview and induction

All employees will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:

- Their qualifications should be substantiated;
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified as outlined in their job description and key performance indicators;
- Child / Adults at Risk protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified;
- The Child /Adults at Risk Protection Policy is provided.

## Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff to understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk within the context of this policy and to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made;
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse;
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or adult at risk;
- Work safely and effectively with children and adults at risk.

Rutledge requires staff that are in contact with children and adults at risk to attend 3-hour training session every 2 years to ensure their knowledge and awareness of basic child /adults at risk protection is kept updated.

## **Section 5: Recognising Abuse**

Abuse is a powerful and emotive term. It is a term used to describe ways in which children and adults at risk are harmed, usually by individuals and often by those they know and trust. All staff at Rutledge should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse.

There are four categories:

Emotional Abuse: this occurs when individuals persistently fail to show children and adults at risk due love, care or affection. Where a child or adult at risk may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, or be subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. The child or adult at risk may lose self -confidence and may become withdrawn and nervous. Other signs of emotional abuse include decline in concentration levels, emotional immaturity and extremes of behaviour.

Abuse by neglect: this occurs when a child or adult at risk's essential needs for food, warmth and care fail to be met. Failing to or refusing to provide love and affection could also be deemed as neglect. Signs of neglect include constant hunger and tiredness, poor hygiene, low self esteem and poor peer relationships.

Physical abuse: this occurs when individuals, including some young people, deliberately inflict injuries on a child or adult at risk, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes injuries caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or excessive force. Signs of physical abuse include current unexplained injuries, inappropriate excuses to explain injury, and fear of returning home.

Sexual abuse: this is when children and adults at risk are abused by adults both male and female who use them to meet their own sexual needs. Examples include forcing a child or adult at risk to take part in any sexual activity. Signs of sexual abuse may include unexplained changes in behaviour, inappropriate sexual awareness, engaging in sexually explicit behaviour, distrust of adults and inappropriate language.

It is also vital for employees to look out for signs of bullying among children and adults at risk. There are three main types of bullying – physical, verbal and emotional. All of these will include deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim, a victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies and an outcome, which is always painful and distressing for the individual.

## **Section 6: Responding to a Disclosure**

Talking: the employer may be the first person the child or adult at risk has discussed the abuse with. The workers response to the allegation at this stage is crucial. It is important to tell the child or adult at risk that you will do something about it. They should also be assured that the worker would support them in getting information and help to stop the abuse.

- Stay calm and do not rush into inappropriate action. React calmly in order not to alarm the child or adult at risk;
- Reassure the child or adult at risk that they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide;
- Listen sympathetically;
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions to clarify. Do not ask any leading questions;
- Ensure you clearly understand what the child or adult at risk has said in order that the information can be passed on to the appropriate agencies.

**Do Not:**

- Panic;
- Make the child or adult at risk repeat the story unnecessarily;
- Delay;
- Speculate or make assumptions;
- Approach the alleged abuser;
- Take sole responsibility.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Rutledge, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the Senior/Designated Child Protection officer or the appropriate authorities.

**Section 7: Reporting Concerns about Poor Practice**

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is about poor practice by the Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the CEO who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

**Section 8: Reporting Concerns about Suspected Abuse**

Rutledge will assure all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation;
- a child / adult at risk protection investigation;
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child / adults at risk protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Any suspicion that a child or adult at risk has been abused by a member of staff should be reported to the Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other child / adult who may be at risk.

The Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police.

The parents or carers of the child / adult at risk will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

If the Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the CEO (Jonathan Doherty) who will investigate.

### **Section 9: Safeguarding on the Employer's Premises**

Staff must ensure that all employers who are working in partnership with Rutledge will receive and be aware of the Safeguarding Policy. This will be provided to and discussed with employers at the initial visit.

### **Section 10: Confidentiality**

Workers should never indicate to a child or adult at risk that they would keep secrets. They must state clearly that they have to inform the manager but this will be done in confidence.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a **need-to-know** basis only. This includes the following people:

- the Senior / Designated Officer;
- the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused;
- the person making the allegation;
- social services/police.

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child/adult at risk).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g., that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

### **Section 11: Internal Enquiries and Possible Suspension**

The Senior Designated Child Protection Officer in conjunction with the HR Manager will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the HR Manager in conjunction with the Senior Designated Officer will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the HR Manager must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child or adult at risk should remain of paramount importance throughout.

### **Section 12: Support to Deal with the Aftermath of Abuse**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children/adults at risk, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help-lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

### **Section 13: 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 children/adults at risk).

Where such an allegation is made, staff should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the Senior/Designated Child Protection Officer who will report it to the social services or the police. This is because other children or adults at risk, either within or outside Rutledge, 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 and adults at risk. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1989.

### **Section 14: Providing Information to Police or Social Services**

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. It should include the following:

- The child /adult at risk's name, age and date of birth of the child;
- The child / adult at risk's home address and telephone number;
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else;
- The nature of the allegation including dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information;
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay;
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes;
- Details of witnesses to the incidents;
- The child or adult at risk's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred;

- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details;
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details;
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

### **Section 15: Record Keeping**

Information passed to external agencies must be as helpful as possible. It will be necessary to make a detailed report at the time of disclosure. The report should contain the following information:

- The child or adult at risk's name, address and date of birth;
- Nature of the allegation;
- A description of any injuries;
- Times, location and dates;
- The child or adults at risk's account in their own words of what has happened signed and dated.

It is essential to report the disclosure as soon as possible to the Senior/Designated Child/ Adult at Risk Protection Officer.

Written information should be passed onto management. The manager will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of children and adults at risk are kept separate from other files and are stored securely. Information will be shown on a strictly need to know basis.

### **Section 16: Designated Officers**

All Branch Managers are trained as Designated Officers. Job descriptions are available for each Designated Officer, which can be found in Appendix 1.

### **Section 17 Covid-19 arrangements**

Safeguarding and Child protection Regulations remain applicable during Covid-19 arrangements. The current national health concerns relating to Covid-19 creates uncertainty in the lives of children and young people. It is important that staff responsible for Safeguarding be particularly vigilant to new and additional safeguarding concerns. The Designated Officers are to act immediately on any Safeguarding concerns.

## Section 18: Useful Links

- Co-Operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Mar 2016) <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/pdf/Department-of-health-social-services-and-public-safety-co-operating-safeguard-children-young-people-ni.pdf>
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/25/enacted/data.pdf>
- Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/apni/1968/34/data.pdf>
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/made/data.pdf>
- The Protection of Children (NI) Order 1978 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1047/data.pdf>
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child [https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC\\_united\\_nations\\_convention\\_on\\_the\\_rights\\_of\\_the\\_child.pdf](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf)
- Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011 <http://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/Ministerial%20Direction%20to%20undertake%20Thematic%20Review.pdf>
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland <http://www.safeguardingni.org/>

The Operations Director will conduct an Annual Risk Assessment of Safeguarding and a Safeguarding Report on an annual basis (April).

Revised: August 2021

To be reviewed: August 2022

**Rutledge Recruitment and Training**

**Job Description**

**Designated Officer for Child / Adults at Risk Protection (Branch Managers)**

1. Inform the Senior Designated Officer regarding all incidents / concerns.
2. Receive and act upon any reported concerns.
3. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the setting when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
4. Ensure all staff is familiar with and adhere to the settings Child/Adults at Risk Protection Policy.
5. Ensure all staff in direct contact with children/adults at risk and suitably trained and aware of the policies and procedures surrounding disclosures.
6. Contribute to the implementation and annual review of the Child/Adults at Risk Protection Policy.
7. Represent the setting to Social Services and PSNI during and following any investigations.
8. Ensure that detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals or concerns are kept on record.
9. Keep self abreast of any regulatory changes in child protection including an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the area of Child/Adults at Risk Protection, which may require attending appropriate training.
10. Ensure parents see copies of the Child/Adults at Risk Protection Policy, which alerts them to that fact that referrals may be made, and the role of the setting in this, to avoid conflict later.
11. Ensure there is a Code of Conduct for staff, ratified by the Senior Management team.
12. Present a record of Complaints made against staff to the Senior Designated Officer / HR Manager.
13. Promote best safe guarding practice within the setting.

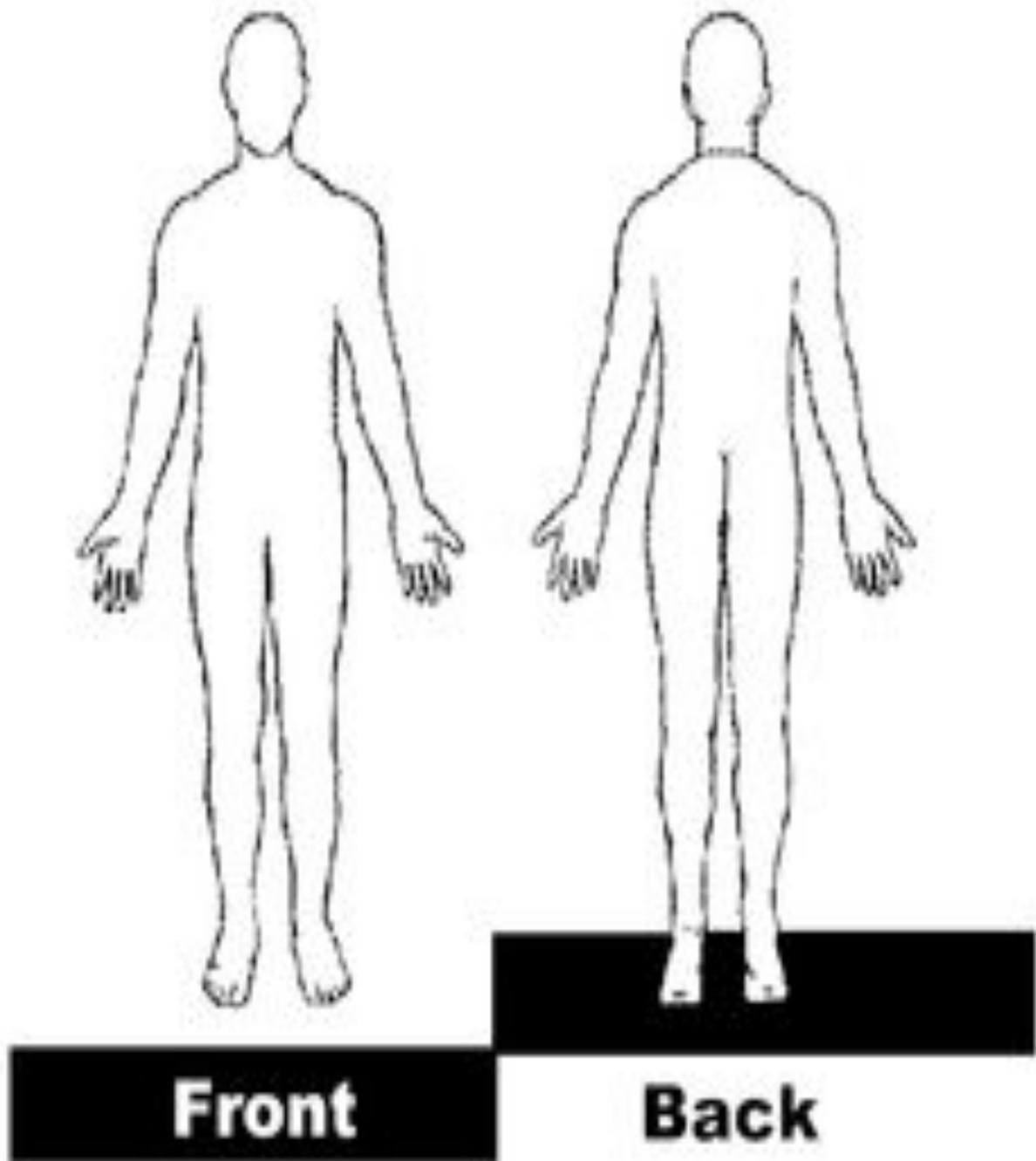
Appendix 2 CPP

**RECORDING SAFEGUARDING OBSERVATIONS / CONCERNS**

Date	The date the practitioner made the observation or when the disclosure was made.
Time	The time of the observation or disclosure.
Child/Adult at Risk's name	The child/adult at risk's name in full, including any other names he/she may be known by
Details of concern	
Clearly describe any injury that the child/adult at risk has sustained:  Location of injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size</li> <li>• Colour</li> <li>• Shape</li> </ul> <p>Clearly describe the location on the body. A body map can be used to support the description. For example where about on the child/adult at risk's left arm is the bruise.</p>
Conversation with child/adult at risk	Provide an accurate dialogue: (attached separate sheet if required)
Conversation with the parent/carer	Provide an accurate dialogue with the parent or carer:

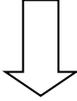
Further action	Give details of any action taken. This could include urgent medical attention or making a referral to social care or the police – record the name of the person/s that you made the referral to. Signature and witness signature:
Information shared with parent	If a referral is made, then record when you and how you informed the child/adult at risk's parent/carer. If this information was not shared then record your reason for not doing so.
Senior / Designated Officer	Record who and when you shared the information with your Senior/Designated Officer.
Named Senior Officer (Tracey Eisen)	Record who and when you shared your concerns with your named Senior Officer.
External Agency(s)	Record who and when you spoke to (external agency such as PSNI, Trust, Gateway Team)
Witnesses	Record the name/s of any witnesses:
Signatures	Sign, print and date the record:

**BODY MAP**

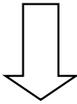


**Child and Adults at Risk Protection Team**

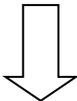
Child/Adults at Risk Protection  
Management Committee  
(Board of Directors)



Child/Adults at Risk Protection  
Senior Designated Officer  
(Operations Director)

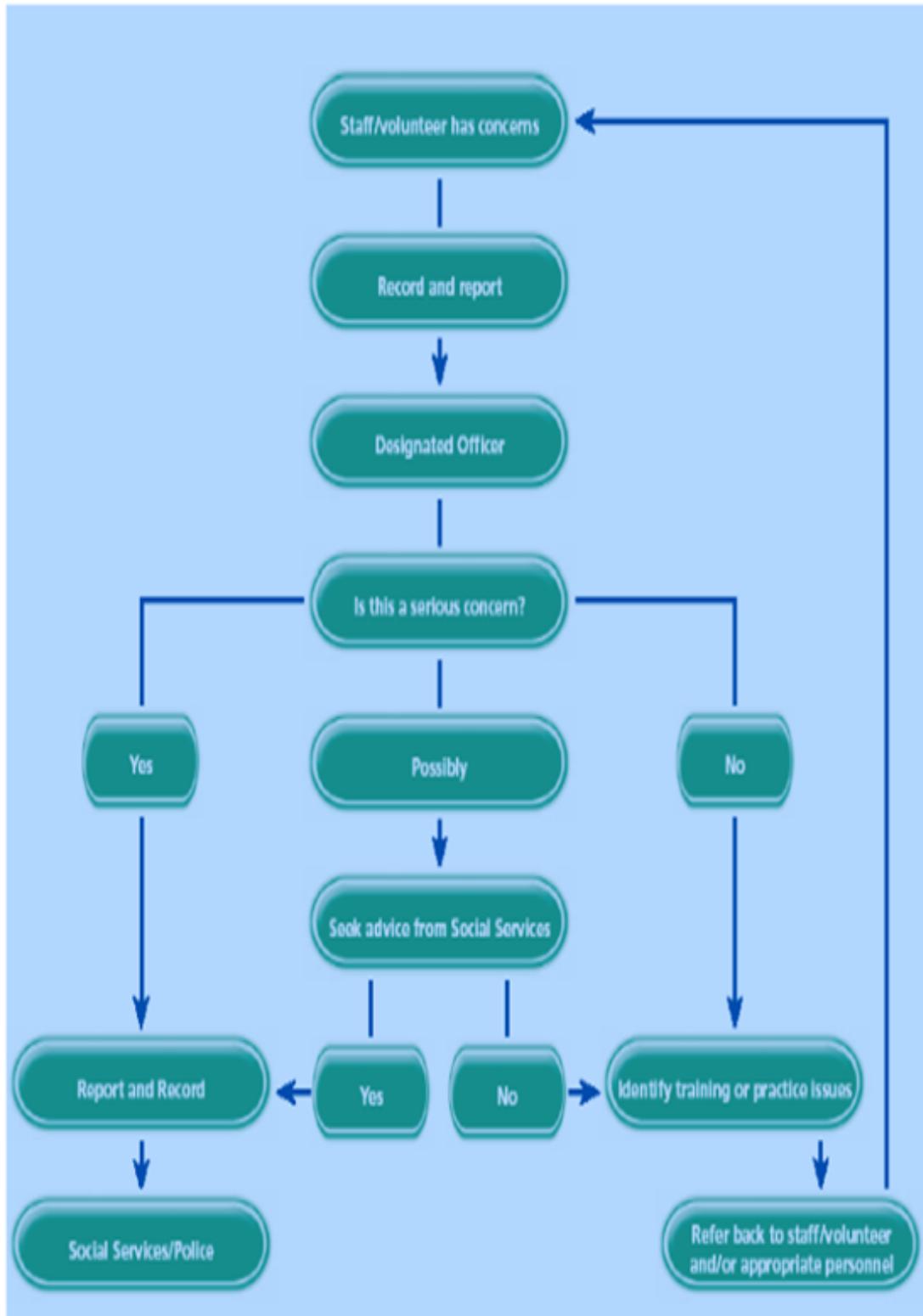


Child/Adults at Risk Protection  
Designated Officer  
(Branch Managers)



Child/Adults at Risk Protection  
Officers  
(Student Advisors)

**FLOW CHART detailing Action to be taken by a Designated Officer**



## TELEPHONE AND WEB SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Who Can Help?	What do they do?	What topics can they help with?	How can they be contacted?
Anna Freud National Centre	Supporting young people's mental health during periods of disruption	Anxiety Mental Health	<a href="http://www.annafreud.org">www.annafreud.org</a>
Lifeline	Crisis response line for people in distress and despair	Depression Mental health Suicidal thoughts Text phone users(for deaf and hard of hearing )	0808 808 8000  180010808 808 8000
Childline	Childline provides support and guidance on multiple topics including:	Bullying You and your body Home and Family Relationships Sex School	0800 1111  <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a> 1-2-1 counsellor chat
The Mix	Crisis messenger service	Alcohol Homeless Suicidal thoughts General Advice Mental health Sex/relationships	0808 808 4994
NSPCC	Advice on safeguarding and child protections issues and somewhere to report concerns Web support for teenagers	Safeguarding Child Abuse Child Protection	0808 800 5000  <a href="http://www.there4me.com">www.there4me.com</a>
Aware	Aware is mental health charity working exclusively for those with depression and mental health concerns	Depression Bipolar disorder	02890 357820
Frank	Confidential advice on drugs	Alcohol Drugs	0300 123 6600
Simon Community	Support for individuals and families who are at risk of becoming homeless	Homelessness housing	0800 171 2222

Informing Choices NI	Advice on sexual health	Sexual health Pregnancy Contraception STDs Access to family planning	0345 122 8697  Monday – Friday 9 – 5
Common Youth Clinics	Clinics, advice @ guidance on sexual health	Emergency contraception Pregnancy testing Counselling	02890 328 886
Domestic and sexual Violence helpline	Advice & guidance on sexual health	Domestic violence Sexual violence	0808 802 1414
The Migrant Centre Ni	Financial Health and Well Being		<a href="mailto:euss@migrantcentreni.org">euss@migrantcentreni.org</a>
Cara- Friend /LGBT switchboard NI	Support and counselling for the Gay. Lesbian and Transgender communities	LGBTQ+ advice Sex and relationship advice	0808 8000 390
Women's Aid	Specialist services for women, children and young people who have experienced domestic and sexual violence	Domestic Violence Sexual violence Relationships	0808 802 1414
Family Support Ni	Website to access support in our area for a wide range of issues		<a href="http://www.family-supportni.gov.uk">www.family-supportni.gov.uk</a>
Young Minds			<a href="https://youngminds.org.uk">https://youngminds.org.uk</a>