

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Throughout this document, FBMF is used to represent

The From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation

It is the policy of The From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation to safeguard the welfare of all young people by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. FBMF is dedicated to providing the best service that it can to the young people in our care in order to help them achieve their greatest potential. Accordingly, FBMF have drawn up this child protection policy.

Within FBMF, the person with responsibility for child protection is Eileen Siley, but any member of staff can be approached in order to highlight concerns, the matter may then be passed to their line manager.

All members of staff have a duty to ensure the safety and protection of the children in their care and to inform others if they feel that any young person has been subject to abuse of any kind. The manner in which they act should be in accordance with this document. It is FBMF's responsibility to ensure that all members of staff are informed of all policies and other documentation pertaining to the safety and welfare of the young people in our care.

The theme of the information contained in this policy shall be relayed to the children regularly by means of spoken word, poster and leaflet.

It is important that all young people are under our protection when taking part in activities of every kind that we conduct, whether this be in the classroom, on the internet or on outings off of our premises. FBMF have a duty and responsibility of care and supervision in accordance with the Children Act 1989. We aim to provide activities that are well-planned, well thought out and appropriate to the age range and abilities of any group of young people.

These policies and procedures apply to all young people, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion.

Associated Procedures

- A. Identifying forms of abuse and how to recognise them.
- B. Guidelines on how to respond to abuse or suspicions of abuse.
- C. Confidential records of concern.
- D. Contact names and details for other agencies and resources.
- E. Safe recruitment procedures
- F. Requirements for staff including training, monitoring and supervision.
- G. Code of behaviour.
- H. Complaints procedure

A.

Identifying forms of abuse and how to recognise them.

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (see Appendix A).

Four Forms of Abuse

a. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child. Physical abuse can be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

b. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

c. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

d. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It is often helpful to go one step beyond these definitions to outline the symptoms of abuse. In other words, how can one recognise a particular type of abuse? **Appendix C** includes a number of ways to recognise abuse.

B.

Guidelines on how to respond to abuse or suspicions of abuse.

If you suspect a child is being abused:

1. immediately tell your line manager, remember that information must be kept confidential
2. record the facts as you know them and give a copy to your line manager – this is confidential information
3. ensure that the child has access to an independent adult
4. ensure that no situation arises which could cause any further concern, and that information is secure.

If a child tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
3. advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on

same steps as 1-4 as in suspecting a child is being abused

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

1. immediately tell your line manager
2. record the facts as you know them and give a copy to your line manager
3. try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
4. *You must refer; you must not investigate*

Example Guidelines for Responding to Abuse or Suspicion of Abuse

DO

- Do* treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do* tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do* reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do* be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do* tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do* take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do* write down everything said and what was done (see notes on recording).

- ☐ *Do* seek medical attention if necessary.
- ☐ *Do* inform parents/carers unless there is suspicion of their involvement.

DON'T

- ☐ *Don't* make promises you can't keep.
- ☐ *Don't* interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- ☐ *Don't* cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- ☐ *Don't* say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- ☐ *Don't* Do Nothing – make sure you tell your nominated child protection person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

C. Confidential Records of Concern

Establish Confidential Records of Concern

When a child protection concern arises, it is essential that someone records what is said or seen and what action was taken. These records are extremely sensitive, and should be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer. Access should be limited to only the nominated child protection representative and the project leader or manager.

The record may be shown to the police or social services and could possibly be used in court, although this is rare. The young person concerned can be shown this document but discretion should be used. If the young person is old enough, their permission should be obtained before showing to the parent/carers.

Concerns may include additional information, the following box contains a list of items that should be included as far as possible:

Items to be included in a Record of Concern

- Name of child
- Child's address
- Name of parent/carer(s)
- Phone numbers for parent/carer(s) and child
- What is said to have happened or what was seen?
- When and where did it occur?
- Who else, if anyone, was involved and how?
- What was said by those involved?
- Were there any obvious signs e.g., bruising, bleeding changed behaviour?
- Was the child able to say what happened, if so, how did they describe it?
- Who has been told about it and when?
- Do the parents know?
- Signature of person filing the record
- Date of record

D.

Contact names and details for other agencies and resources.

There are a number of agencies that can provide guidance on child protection. None of those listed below work specifically with voluntary and community groups.

Outside Agencies and Resources on Child Protection

☐ *Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC)*: These are inter-agency forums made up of the main agencies and professionals working with children in each Local Authority area. They are responsible for making sure that child protection arrangements work effectively in each area and co-ordinating child protection across agencies. Your group should be aware of the local ACPC and the way it operates. If you have concerns about the abuse of a child, these will need to be reported to the ACPC by your nominated representative.

☐ Social Services Departments, Education Departments, Police, Schools, Healthcare providers, Probation services and voluntary agencies all have a role in identifying, reporting and in some cases investigating allegations of abuse. Your group should seek to make links with relevant agencies in their area.

☐ National voluntary organisations and their local branches (e.g. NSPCC, Barnardo's, NCH Action for Children) may all have expertise in this field and may be of assistance in promoting the issue of child protection.

☐ *OFSTED/ Early Years Development and Early Years Child Care Partnerships (EYDCP)*: Many groups providing childcare services are required to register with OFSTED. A requirement of the registration process is that groups have a child protection policy. Local EYDCPs have a statutory responsibility to support groups through their OFSTED registration process, including developing child protection policies, procedures and practices.

☐ *Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)*: Since April 2002, the CRB carries out checks on the suitability of paid staff and volunteers to work with children and young people. More information about CRB checks is provided in the section

E.

Safe recruitment procedures

Determined abusers have often managed to gain access to children and young people. Your policy and procedures are important safeguards to stop this happening. They will be understood by good applicants and will put ill intentioned people off. It is best practice that all volunteers and staff, including temporary workers and helpers when possible, should be subject to a careful selection and vetting process that includes the following:

- Completion of an application form
- Checking the person's identity by their birth certificate or passport, preferably by something that has their photograph
- Taking up references, which are seen before the interview and verified by a follow up phone call
- An interview preferably by two people
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment or inconsistencies
- Obtain full disclosure through checks from Criminal Records Bureau (see *box below for details*)
- Allowing no unsupervised access to children and young people until this has been completed (e.g., no appointment until references have been reviewed)
- Seeking advice about recruiting someone with a criminal record or other types of offences if you are concerned
- A supervised probationary period for new people to the project and a comprehensive induction period that includes your child protection procedures

Criminal Records Checks and Vetting

Checks should be carried out on all people applying to work with children, including volunteers. This service has recently been taken over by the Criminal Records Bureau. The CRB will provide checks of:

- Police criminal records via the Police National Computer
- PoCA list (The Protection of Children Act List) and List 99 – lists of people who are disqualified from working with children and young people.

You will need to check if your project workers or volunteers meet the criteria to be checked.

Information on this along with general information on the CRB is available at www.crb.gov.uk. In most cases, an application for a check will need to be put through a local 'Umbrella Body' registered with the CRB. For information on local agencies that act as 'Umbrella Bodies' provider, contact SCCF or go to www.disclosure.gov.uk. There is likely to be a small administrative fee to the agency carrying out the checks.

F. Requirements for staff including training, monitoring and supervision.

General Training

All groups working with young people should run or arrange for basic training and induction for current and new workers and volunteers. Training should cover:

- Basic definitions of abuse
- Signs of abuse
- Behaviour of abusers
- What to do if someone tells you they are being abused
- What to do if you suspect abuse

After the training, you need to make sure that all project workers and volunteers understand the forms of abuse and agree to report any concerns to the nominated person.

Training for Nominated Child Protection Representative

In addition, it is very important that the nominated child protection representative receive special training because he/she is the person with the responsibility for making sure any child protection issues are responded to properly.

In particular, the representative should:

- Be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau
- Know about signs and symptoms of abuse
- Know about how abusers (perpetrators) behave. Ask about training if you don't know these things.
- Know about your Local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidelines on dealing with concerns about abuse. Ask your local council's principal officer for child protection for a copy of the guidelines and about any training available from the ACPC
- Know who to contact in Social Services so that you can either:
 - Ask for advice when you are not sure what to do
 - Refer a case without delay where there are child protection concerns
- Make sure the children and young people using the project know:
 - About the child protection policy and procedures
 - Who to speak to if they have any concerns
 - Who to speak to if that member of staff is not there
- Make sure staff and volunteers know how to respond if a child or young person talks to them about abuse
- Make sure they have a copy of the project's code of behaviour and guidelines and have understood them
- Provide information about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people.

☐ Make sure you are aware of factors that cause children to be vulnerable to abuse. For example, research has demonstrated that disabled children can be particularly vulnerable to abuse for several different reasons.

Reasons include:

☐ a dependency on others for their primary needs such as feeding, clothing and intimate care

☐ different communication methods or lack of appropriate vocabulary might provide a

barrier for a child wanting to communicate about their concerns

☐ isolation within a residential setting

☐ Ensure an environment in which staff have the opportunity to raise any child protection concerns. Fear of retribution can be a powerful silencer.

☐ Recognise that racism has demonstrated that children and families from minority ethnic groups often fail to receive an appropriate service from the statutory authorities when concerns are raised about a child's welfare. Over-action and inaction have both been shown to be based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural patterns, which have led to failing to meet children's needs. More overt racist attitudes and behaviours also play a part in this process.

Monitoring and Supervision

Finally, all groups should establish monitoring and supervision measures for paid workers and volunteers. These measures should ensure that workers and volunteers:

☐ understand the group's child protection policy and procedures

☐ adhere to the group's code of behaviour (see next step)

☐ remain vigilant and responsive.

These arrangements can be implemented through discussions and meetings with workers and volunteers. Staff evaluations may include child protection issues. It is important that your group not only monitors but also *supports* workers and volunteers in child protection issues. Staff should be encouraged to ask questions and talk to the nominated child protection representative about any concerns related to child protection.

G. Code of behaviour.

To encourage safety of staff and young people, this code should be followed.

Code of behaviour

Do put the 'Young People First' guidance into practice

Do treat everyone with respect

Do provide an example you wish others to follow

Do plan activities, which involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight or hearing of others

Do respect a young person's right to personal privacy

Do provide access for young people to talk about any concerns they may have

Do encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like

Do avoid situations that compromise your relationship with young people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust

Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned

Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse

Do NOT permit abusive peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying)

Do NOT play physical contact games with young people

Do NOT have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others

Do NOT jump to conclusions about others without checking facts

Do NOT allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes

Do NOT show favouritism to any individual

Do NOT make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun

Do NOT let suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse, go unrecorded or unreported

Do NOT rely on just your good name to protect you

Do NOT believe "it could never happen to me"

H.
Complaints procedure

APPENDIX A:

SPECIAL CASES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

a) Trips away from home

Children need to be kept safe when taking trips away from home. It is therefore important

that rigorous child protection policies and procedures are in place, in addition to health and safety procedures, adequate insurance, etc. In putting together a trip away from home, some procedures to follow include:

General

- Ensuring children know how to behave, e.g. through a behaviour policy.
- Getting written consent from parents and, if necessary, holding a meeting for parents to give them a briefing on the outing.
- Asking parents about any special needs or requirements for their children.

Using activity centres and other external providers

- Using reputable organisations which have in place any licences or accreditation required (some adventure activities require specific licences).
- If possible, visiting the centre beforehand.
- Getting agreement on the activities to be undertaken if using an adventure activity provider.
- Ensuring external providers have proper safety procedures in place (e.g. insurance, maintenance of equipment/ transport, health and safety policies, recruitment of staff to work with children, Child Protection policies etc.).
- Ensuring the accommodation is suitable.

Staff/volunteers

- Having a person trained in first aid and suitable equipment.
- Have adequate staff ratios. These will depend on the age of the young people and the activity being planned, but DFES guidance on a typical school trip to a museum or historical site are:

- 1 adult to 6 pupils for under-eights (more adults if under-fives).
- 1 adult to 10-15 pupils for eight to eleven-year olds.
- 1 adult to 15-20 pupils for over-elevens.

- Ensure all those attending are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure staff/ volunteers are competent to lead children in activities.

Even greater care should be taken over trips abroad.

Two publications in particular provide more detailed information on planning trips away are:

- *Safe Sport Away*, produced jointly by the Amateur Swimming Association and the NSPCC.
- *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*, published by the Department for Education and Skills, available free or to download from www.dfes.gov.uk.

b) Working with children with disabilities

For a number of reasons, children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than others. For example children with disabilities may be more dependent on others for intimate care and may be less able to tell people about any abuse they experience. For these reasons, it is essential that rigorous child protection procedures are in place, especially with regard to recruitment checks on volunteers and paid workers, whistle blowing policies, and having clear guidelines setting out acceptable behaviour by those working with children with disabilities.

c) Groups of parents and children.

In some cases, the volunteers on a project may consist solely of parents or carers looking after their own children. It is recommended that the group still have a policy to cover the activity, as the group and its trustees are still accountable for the project. However, the policy and procedures might be adapted, e.g. to focus more on a code of conduct for parents and children whilst using the project and how parents might deal with the reporting of an allegation of abuse by a child.

d) Working with older teenagers, e.g. 16+

Given that child protection legislation covers all children and young people up to the age of 18, groups working with older children are still required to have a child protection policy and procedures. The policy is likely to cover the same ground as a standard policy, but the section on acceptable behaviour might reflect the age of the young people.

e) Children only groups (projects only involving children and young people)

In reality, few projects are likely to be made up solely of young people. In most cases, adults will have some responsibilities (e.g. as management committee members), or will come into contact in some way with the children on the project. In addition, children can abuse each other (e.g., bullying). It is therefore likely that a policy for such a group would cover the same ground as a standard child protection policy.

f) Capital projects (e.g. where group is to provide facilities for other groups)

Some projects simply aim to provide facilities for other groups or young people to use, e.g., a skate park or playground, or a hall for use by other groups. On the face of it, it may seem that a group like this does not come into contact with young people and does not need a child protection policy. In reality, this is unlikely. If a project has any involvement of volunteers, any involvement of young people, or holds meetings, consultation events or even uses a public site, a child protection policy would be extremely valuable. **Any contact with young people makes it necessary to have a child protection policy**, and obviously this policy can be adapted to suit the nature of your project. In addition, complete child protection may also include health and safety concerns and appropriate insurance measures, and either provision or guidelines for the use of the equipment or venue once your project has ended.

g) Use of the internet

The following procedures are recommended for community groups:

- Place the computer where everyone can use it and where everyone can see it, rather than out of sight in another room.
- Supervise use of the internet.
- Suggest sites that could be visited by children and young people, e.g. those connected with children's TV programmes
- Talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit.
- Ensure children are aware that chat sites are open to misuse and they should be as cautious of people they meet on the internet as adults they may meet in real life.
- Ensure that children and young people do not give out personal details over the internet, e.g. surname, address, phone number or e-mail address.
- Ensure children never arrange a face to face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the internet.
- Encourage children to report anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive.
- Limit the amount of time children spend online.
- Explore the use of filters which block access to certain sites (although remember that these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace proper supervision).
- In addition, groups should not publish recognisable photographs of children on their own websites

APPENDIX B:

CHILD PROTECTION, THE LAW, AND OTHER REFERENCES

a) Legal context

There are a number of recent acts of parliament relevant to the area of child protection. The Acts mentioned below provide the legal framework in which child protection takes place. As such, any child protection policy should explicitly refer to these Acts to show how the policy fits within this legal framework.

- *The Children's Act 1989*: This Act sets out how the welfare and developmental needs of children are of paramount importance and over-ride other considerations.

Two key

sections of the Act are:

Section 17, which sets out the rights of children to have an assessment of their needs and

the role of statutory bodies in ensuring these rights are met.

Section 47 which sets out a local authority's responsibility to investigate if it believes that

a child is suffering is likely to suffer significant harm.

- *The Protection of Children Act 1999*: This Act sets out the framework to enable employers to check on the suitability of employees seeking to work with children. Groups defined specifically as 'childcare organisations' must apply the provisions of the

Act, whilst other organisations working with children are encouraged to do so. The Act

builds on the Police Act (1997) which set up the Criminal Records Bureau. Child care organisations are defined as an organisation 'which is concerned with the provision of accommodation, social services or health care services to children or the supervision of

children'.

- *The Human Rights Act 1998*: This Act sets out the rights of children and families and

reflects principles in international agreements. The Act gives the public the right to challenge what they perceive as an infringement of their human rights.

- *Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2000*: This Act introduced the concept of abuse of

trust, whereby adults could commit an offence in engaging in sexual activity with someone younger than them if they are seen to be in a position of trust, even if the younger person is above the age of consent (e.g. teachers and pupils).

- *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*: This includes a young people's charter,

setting out how all children should have access to basic human rights. The Convention on

the Rights of the Child outlines in 41 articles the human rights to be respected and protected for every child under the age of 18 years and requires that these rights are implemented in the light of the Convention's guiding principles.

As a result of the Victoria Climbié enquiry and the Laming Report (2003), the government is reviewing the law regarding Child Protection, and the responsibilities of all agencies that care for Children and Young People. You should always make sure that you have the most up-to date policies on which to base your work and procedures.

b) Government Publications

In addition to the laws in this area, government departments have produced a number of publications which give guidance on how the provisions or principles of the Acts are to be put in place. The main publications are as follows:

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999)*: This sets out the way in which all organisations working with children should seek to work together and have clear procedures on child protection, in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures. (Home Office, Department of Health, Department of Education and Employment) <http://www.doh.gov.uk/quality5.htm>

- *Safe from Harm (1993)*: This is a code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children aimed at voluntary organisations. It sets out procedures which voluntary groups should consider adopting to safeguard children. Available from Home Office, Publication enquiries, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT; www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/harm.htm

- *Caring for the young and vulnerable (2000)*: This is Home Office guidance on the need to ensure appropriate boundaries between volunteers or paid workers and young people. If these boundaries are broken, the volunteer or paid worker would be subject to prosecution and having the details recorded by the Criminal Records Bureau. Can be downloaded from the Home Office: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/cpd/sou/young.htm>

c) Additional Resources

- Educare Home Study Programme (NSPCC). For further information, telephone the NSPCC National Training Centre on 0116 234 0804 or http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/CH_Training.asp £26.44 inc VAT

- First check: a step by step guide for organisations to safeguard children (NSPCC) Available from NSPCC, telephone 0116 234 0804 or http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/CH_Training.asp. £ 21.50

- Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (DFES). Available from the Department of Education and Skills, telephone 0808 100 50 60 or http://www.dfes.gov.uk/h_s_ev/. (free of cost)

- Health and Safety in Youth and Community Work: A pocket guide (Doug Nicholls), Health and Safety in Youth and Community Work: A resource manual (Doug Nicholls)

Both available from Russell House Publishing Ltd, 4 St Georges House, Uplyme Road

Business Park, Lyme Regis, DT7 3LS)

- Safeguarding Children – Everybody’s Business – video training pack (NSPCC)
Available from NSPCC , telephone 020 7825 2775. £80.25

- Safe Sport Away (Amateur Swimming Association & NSPCC). Available from NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit, Tel 0116 234 7278.

- Working with Young People: Legal Responsibility & Liability, 5th Edition.
Available

from: The Children and young people’s legal centre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex, C94 3SQ, 01206 872466

APPENDIX C:

WAYS TO RECOGNISE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT⁴

From *Recognising Child Abuse: a handbook for those who have the care of children and*

young people, East Sussex County Council. Approved by the East Sussex Area Child Protection Committee, 11 September 2001.

a) Physical Abuse

Visible Signs:

- Injuries to any part of the body
- Children who find it painful to walk, sit down, to move their jaws or are in some other kind of pain
- Injuries which are not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with children's activities
- The regular occurrence of unexplained injuries
- The child who is frequently injured, where even apparently reasonable explanations are given

Behavioural Signs:

- Furtive, secretive behaviour
- Uncharacteristic aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Compulsive eating or sudden loss of appetite
- The child who suddenly becomes ill co-ordinated
- The child who finds it difficult to stay awake
- The child who is repeatedly absent

What to listen for:

- Listen for confused or conflicting explanations of how the injuries were sustained
- Evaluate carefully what is said and preferably document it verbatim
- Consider if the explanation is in keeping with the nature, age and site of injury

Consider:

- What do you know about the family
- Is there a history of known or suspected abuse
- Has the family been under stress recently
- Do you have concerns about the family

b) Emotional Abuse

The recognition of emotional abuse is based on observations over time of the quality of relationships between parent/carer and the child

Watch for parent/carer behaviours

- Poor attachment relationship with the child
- Unresponsive or neglectful behaviour towards child's emotional or psychological needs
- Persistent negative comments about the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations of the child
- Parental problems that supersede the needs of the child
- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence

Watch for child behaviours:

- Emotional indicators such as low self esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
- Behavioural indicators such as attention seeking, opposing, withdrawn, insecure
- Physical indicators such as failure to thrive/faltering growth, delay in achieving developmental, cognitive or educational milestones

c) Sexual Abuse

There may be no recognisable signs of sexual abuse but the following indicators may be signs that a child is or has been sexually abused:

Physical signs

- Signs of blood or other discharge on the child's under clothes
- Awkwardness in walking or sitting down
- Tummy pains
- Regression into enuresis
- Tiredness

Behavioural signs:

- Extreme variations in behaviour (e.g., anxiety, aggression, or withdrawal)
- Sexually provocative behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age and understanding
- Drawings and/or written work which are sexually explicit (indirect disclosure)
- Direct disclosure; It is important to recognise that children have neither the experience nor the understanding to be able to make up stories about sexual assault.

d) Neglect

Indicators of neglect are recognisable in the child, in the parent/carers' behaviours and within the home environment.

Physical signs

- Abnormal growth including failure to thrive
- Underweight or obesity
- Recurrent infection
- Unkempt dirty appearance
- Smelly
- Inadequate/unwashed clothes
- Hunger
- Listlessness

Behavioural signs:

- Attachment disorders
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Poor social relationships
- Poor concentration
- Developmental delays
- Low self esteem

Environmental signs:

- Insufficient food, heating and ventilation in the home
- Risk from animals in the household

- Inappropriate sleeping arrangements and inadequate bedding
- Dangerous or hazardous environment