

SERVING YOUNG PEOPLE WELL

**The Exodus
Safeguarding Guide**
2025



We believe that every individual is made in the

IMAGE OF GOD

and is of unique and significant value; worthy of the

**HIGHEST STANDARDS
OF CARE.**

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As staff and volunteers it is both our

DELIGHT & OUR DUTY

to create a

SAFE & ENJOYABLE

environment for all children
and young people we have the
opportunity to serve.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Is this young person safe in my space?

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PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES FOR CARING WITH EXCELLENCE

ALL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD REFLECT THEIR VALUE AS INDIVIDUALS MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

1. MAKE SURE EVERY YOUNG PERSON MATTERS BY:

- Being supportive, approachable and reassuring.
- Showing patience and respect of their unique identity and need for privacy.
- Being consistent and fair.

2. IDENTIFY AND MINIMISE RISK BY PLANING AND CHECKING:

- The physical space being used.
- The nature of the activities.
- The people involved.

3. KNOW WHO YOU ARE CARING FOR BY:

- Being aware of who (or in the case of drop-in opportunities; how many young people) you are responsible for.
- Having medical and parent contact details available for each young person you are responsible for.
- Having access to a mobile phone and being aware of the local emergency services number.

4. PREVENT HARM BY NEVER:

- Engaging in rough physical games including horseplay - apart from structured sports activities.
- Engaging in sexually provocative or inappropriate games.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person even in fun.
- Tolerating, ignoring or encouraging any form of bullying.
- Doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
- Sharing or showing of media - (music, photographs, videos etc.) with inappropriate content such as nudity, swearing, violence or discrimination.)

5. STAY ABOVE REPROACH BY NEVER:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child or young person away from others.
- Taking children or young people alone on car journeys, however short.
- Taking children or young people to your home without another adult who has been approved by Exodus.



RESIDENTIALS

BEING AWAY WITH A GROUP ON A RESIDENTIAL OR MINISTRY TRIP IS A VITAL PART OF DISCIPLE MAKING YOUTH MINISTRY.

RESIDENTIAL GUIDELINES

In order to provide the best possible experience the group leader should ensure:

- 1. Parents'/carers'** consent has been obtained and they have clear details of timings, locations and activities.
- 2. Groups adhere to the rules, regulations and schedule** of the location they stay in and respect the property of one another and their hosts.
- 3. The accommodation**
 - a. Has **suitable facilities** for their groups' particular needs and activities.
 - b. An individual leader should not sleep in the same room as one individual who is under 18, but may share a room if there is more than one young person. If one team member has to stay alone in a room, the leader must be nearby so as to monitor activity in the sleeping quarters.
 - c. Male and female sleeping facilities are separate, with clear rules as to when, of ever, males can be in the female rooms, and vice versa.
 - d. **Toilets and washing facilities** should be segregated for male and female group members. If this is not possible, separate times should be established for washing.
- 4. They have considered any hazards or risks** and all activities are in line with the general health and safety guidelines.

5. Group members are briefed on what to do in the **case of a fire or emergency**.
6. There is to be **no smoking or vaping** in the accommodation at any time and no group member should consume any alcohol or narcotic substances at any point.
7. **A record of sleeping arrangements** is kept detailing the names of children and leaders who stayed over and where they slept.
8. The entire group is in the **accommodation** at the end of the day.
9. Any **activities 'off site'** are carried out in groups of 3 or more.

MEETINGS IN HOMES

Regular meetings in homes (such as weekly team meetings) require everyone present in the home over 18 years of age to have a police check (Access NI).

TEAMS STAYING WITH FAMILIES

When groups stay with a host family, the Exodus partner should ensure they:

1. Are **committed Christians, members of a local church** and in sympathy with the ethos and values of Exodus.
2. Have **been recommended** by their local church and will care well for the young people.
3. **Never drink alcohol** around team members or offer them alcohol regardless of age.
4. Will contact the placement host if they have any concerns about team members or their behaviour and call the local emergency services if there is an emergency.



TRANSPORT

WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TRANSPORTED FOR EXODUS ACTIVITIES, THE ORGANISER, ALL DRIVERS AND ANY HIRED TRANSPORT FIRMS MUST KEEP SAFETY AS A PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES.

1. Drivers must:

- a. Be **suitably competent** and qualified for the vehicle they are using. Giving **particular** care to:
 - i. Check before hiring self-drive vehicles with more than 8 seats.
 - ii. Avoid using inexperienced drivers in international settings.
- b. Ensure the vehicle is in a **road-worthy condition** before use. If in doubt, the vehicle should not be driven.
- c. Know what to do in the event of a **breakdown or accident**.
- d. Ensure that they have **adequate and up to date insurance** cover to carry children in their car.
- e. **Drive carefully** and within National speed limits.
- f. Ensure passengers **wear seatbelts**.
- g. Be appropriately **police/garda checked** if they are transporting under 18s without another police checked adult present

2. Vehicles:

- a. Should provide a **single seat** and seat belt for each child/young person.
- b. On **public transport** leaders should sit among the young people and be dispersed in the vehicle; aiming to keep group members in sight of a leader at all times.



DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES

THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE SERVE
MAY NOT ALWAYS MEET OUR EXPECTATIONS.

SOME ISSUES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

- **Not attending** or not **communicating** if they won't be able to attend.
- **Not committing or following through** with agreed responsibilities e.g. Bible readings or fundraising.
- **Speaking** to leaders, or others, without appropriate respect.
- Stepping **outside agreed behavioural boundaries** e.g. the Team Lifestyle Agreement.

In these situations, staff and volunteers should remember that our aim is to create a positive and safe environment for all and so **issues should be addressed early with fairness, gentleness and the desire for growth.**

For **minor incidents** the first step should be for the **staff member or volunteer to raise the issue clearly yet informally** with the individual giving the opportunity for explanation whilst explaining the expectations that have been missed and what is now expected.

*For behaviour that is more serious or persistently challenging, **the staff member or volunteer in charge of the group should follow these steps:***

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

STEP ONE - ASSESS

Prayerfully **talk through the challenge with a more senior colleague** (unless you are part of the Exodus leadership team when a co-worker is appropriate) to **identify the issues and agree a plan.**

STEP TWO - MEET

Arrange a meeting **with the individual, a parent/ guardian** and an additional staff member/ volunteer, making clear what the meeting is about.

Within the meeting the **behaviour should be discussed** with time given to, reminding the individual of any specific incidents or informal correction and giving the **opportunity for explanation.**

Outcomes at this stage may include:

- **Marking the matter closed** either because the explanation given is accepted or the individual apologises and it is agreed that the behaviour has ceased.
- **Communicating** a sanction.
- **Informing the individual** that you will **need to review things** with Exodus before communicating a decision at a final meeting.
- **Communicating any implications** if the behaviour continues or is repeated.

STEP THREE - FOLLOW UP

Depending on the outcome of stage two you may need to:

- Find ways to **encourage the individual or rebuild a relationship.**
- Continue to **monitor behaviour.**
- **Communicate a sanction** or decision in person, in writing or over the phone.
- Act on the **implications when behaviour is repeated or continues.**

ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINARY GUIDANCE

- **Pray** for wisdom and patience throughout, (if possible with the individual(s) involved).
- **Do not conduct a formal disciplinary meeting one-to-one.**
- There should always be **another staff member or volunteer present** (at least one of the same gender as the young person) as well as a **parent or guardian of any individual who is under 18.**
- If on a **team placement**, parents should be informed and involved in the conversation via telephone. Those over 18 should be encouraged to have someone with them.
- **Keep others** (staff, designated person) informed and involved.
- **Never use force, 'put-downs' or humiliation** or threaten actions that will not be approved by Exodus, or followed through.
- **Record** any disciplinary events, meetings and actions.

*The priority at all times must be to **protect all children from harm.***

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Sometimes restraint may need to be applied to a child in order to protect him/her from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property.

1. Only the **minimum force** necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
2. Leaders should never try to restrain a young person on their own; **another leader** may act as an assistant or as a witness.
3. Restraint should be an act of **care, not punishment.**
4. Following an incident when restraint has been used, a **report** should be inserted in an accident/incident report form and parents/carers should be notified.



THEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

GUIDELINES ON HOW TO APPROACH SPECIFIC ISSUES ARE OUTLINED BELOW:

*Exodus subscribes to the **Evangelical Alliance statement of faith** as the basis for our work and as a non-denominational organisation working with a wide range of churches and young people, our staff and volunteers are expected to **respect the diversity of the Body of Christ** and value the backgrounds of each individual.*

BAPTISM *(particularly for team members while away)*

If any team member, leader or co-worker wishes to be baptised they must wait until they come home.

This enables them to discuss it with their family and church leaders, and for those closest to them to be able to attend.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Help young people who may experience a more charismatic environment than they may be used to:

- **Prepare** the group by listening to their existing experiences, discussing different positions on these gifts and describing the likely scenario they will encounter.
- **Enable group members to leave** a situation if they feel uncomfortable (one of the leaders and other young people should go with them).
- **Review** by discussing how the group felt about the experience, taking time with any individuals who may have struggled and encouraging young people to chat to a mentor or church leader.

COMMUNION

Leaders should be aware of the different approaches to communion / the Lord's supper and that some team members may never have taken part. Leaders should avoid putting pressure on people to take it or causing any difficulty for team members or parents. They should not lead communion themselves unless they are ordained.



MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION

Staff, Interns & Volunteers should avoid exclusive or intensive one-to-one private messaging or correspondence and should only have mobile numbers of under 18s if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them.

- **Parents/guardians** will be informed within the consent form as to how Exodus and its staff or volunteers will contact young people directly as part of the programme they are involved in.
- Use **group communication** (group texts, whatsapp groups, e-mails, facebook groups) as much as possible.
- **If using direct texts, email or social media** for specific reminders or encouragements leaders should:
 - Keep a full record of all correspondence.
 - Avoid moving from communication to conversation.
 - A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the young person arrange to meet up to talk further (within the safeguarding parameters).

Leaders should encourage young people to be sensible when taking photos or videoing each other.

They should let peers know if their intention is to post photographs online, giving them the opportunity to object

PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEO

Exodus and its leaders may from time to time use photographs or videos which include young people to celebrate or highlight opportunities within the organisation.

If doing so the following guidelines should be followed:

- Permission must be sought from **both a child and their parent** for photographs to be used.
- If using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to **use group pictures**.
- Children and young people should **not be identified** by name or other personal details.
- Carefully consider **location and pose** to avoid any embarrassment.
- **Do not insist** that a child participates.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Staff, Interns and Volunteers should:

- Think carefully **before adding a child or young person in Exodus, as a friend or follower** on a personal social networking site.
 - Only for young people who have joined an Exodus programme and have parental permission for communication.
 - Only be for the purpose of communication about the opportunity (rather than friendship)
- **Delete or 'untag' any photos** in which they are depicted, in what could possibly be construed as, compromising situations.
- **Not post photographs** of young people, anywhere on the internet, unless they have written parental consent.
- **Consider comments online** the same as if they were made in a public place.

*If a child discloses something to a leader via a social networking site, then **the disclosure must be dealt with by following the normal reporting process.***



HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH AND SAFETY IS A PRIMARY CONCERN FOR EXODUS. ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE PLANNED AND RUN IN A WAY SO AS TO MINIMISE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO SUFFER HARM.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

If a young person is **hurt or there is a "Near-miss"** during an activity the leader in charge should:

1. **Ensure the young person is out of harm.** This may include accessing help from a first aider or calling the emergency services.
 - a. If a child needs professional medical attention every effort should be made to **contact a parent or carer immediately.**
2. Speak to their **supervising** member of staff to make them aware of the incident and agree a plan for communicating with parents.
3. Record the incident using the **Accident / Incident Report Form** within **24 hours.**
(exodusonline.org.uk/safeguarding)

*The **Operations Manager** will review and make recommendations based on the incident and store the form in line with the Data Protection policy.*

The supervising staff member will then ensure that:

1. The incident is communicated to a parent / carer.
2. The **Accident / Incident Report Form** is signed by a parent and returned to the **Operations Manager.**

FIRE

1. All leaders should be aware of fire exits and evacuation procedures for the locations where they are with young people.
2. Every Exodus Centre should
 - a. Have adequate fire alarms which are tested **weekly**.
 - b. Carry out an **annual fire drill**.
 - c. Ensure appropriate annual checks are carried out on all fire **safety equipment** including fire fighting equipment and emergency lighting.

FIRST AID

1. Each **Exodus Centre** should have at least one nominated and adequately trained first aider. The name(s) of these people should be **clearly displayed** in their relevant centres.
2. Each **Exodus event** should have an nominated trained first aider.
3. Every **Exodus centre** will have an **appropriately stocked** and up to date first aid kit and users of the centre should know where this is kept and be able to retrieve it as needed.
4. Every **Exodus team** will be provided with a **basic First aid kit**.
5. Any **first aid treatment** should be recorded and reported using the accident/incident procedure.

SWIMMING

Swimming should only take place in designated swimming areas with a trained lifeguard present.

HEIGHTS

Young people should not be permitted to carry out any activity where their feet will be above head height unless additional professional safety procedures are in place and permission has been granted by the Exodus operations manager

PRACTICAL WORK

Exodus encourages young people to get involved in practical service in local and international communities. These activities must be **appropriate** for the individual's skill and experience and should not include power tools.

SUPERVISION

Young people in Exodus activities should be appropriately supervised at all times. The number of adults required will be dependent on the nature of the activities, the location and the individual needs of group members.

The Standard Recommended Ratios for various ages are:

0-2 years	1 adult to 3 children
2-3 years	1 adult to 4 children
4-8 years	1 adult to 6 children
9-12 years	1 adult to 8 children
13-18 years	1 adult to 10 children

For groups with young people of both sexes, it is ideal to have gender balanced supervision. In the case of teams any single gender leadership pairs for mixed groups must be approved by the teams coordinator.



INSURANCE

PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

Exodus holds comprehensive cover for its buildings, contents and activities including public liability, employers liability, tour company liability and travel insurance. This provides cover for "normal" Exodus activities such as group work, residentials, mentoring, teams traveling, basic practical work, training etc.

Should staff, interns or volunteers wish to carry out unusual or high risk activities they must first communicate these with Exodus and wait for approval before going ahead.

GREEN ACTIVITIES

Adult Literacy
Art/craftwork classes
Badminton
Ballroom dancing
Barbeque
Basketball
Child protection
Christmas parties
Community arts and drama
Computer classes
Cricket/rounders
Dance classes

The following are examples of activities that will usually be covered

Darts/snooker/pool
Discos (max attendance 500)
Fashion shows
(max attendance 500)
First Aid Training
(excluding Personal Indemnity)
Indoor Bowling
Indoor/outdoor football
Karaoke
Line dancing
Musical concerts
(other than rock/pop)

Night at the races
Running/cycling
Sponsored walks
Soccer (informal kickaround)
Swimming
Table quizzes
Tai Chi
Treasure hunts
Volleyball
Welfare Rights
Yoga

AMBER ACTIVITIES

Bouncy castles
Fireworks
Fishing
Gaelic football

Our policy may be extended to include the following activities, IF required.

Hill Walking
Hockey
Mountain biking
Orienteering

Public debates
Sale or supply of second hand
electrical goods
Soccer (leagues etc)

RED ACTIVITIES

Abseiling
Boxing/Kickboxing
Bungee jumping
Circus acts/stunt acts
Cliff/rock climbing
Elastic rope sports
Equestrian events
Fairground rides
Flying (except as a fare-paying
passenger)

Must be checked and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Go karts/quads
Hang gliding
Horse riding
Hunting
Karate/martial arts
Manual work outside of the EU
Mechanical amusement devices
Motor sports of any kind
Mountaineering
Parachuting/gliding

Professional sport
Racing (except on foot)
Rugby
Shooting and archery
Skateboarding
Rollerblading
Snorkelling
Velcro suit sports
Water sports/canoeing
Winter sports

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Exodus provides travel insurance but it is recommended that all team members travelling outside the UK and Ireland obtain a **GHIC** or a valid **EHIC** (Global Health Insurance Card) available from the NHS online.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

All personal items remain the responsibility of the individual, our insurance policy will not pay out in cases of negligence. If loss/ damage occurs where all necessary steps have been taken to secure personal items then a claim can proceed.

CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

Churches and schools that are running Exodus Teams will operate under their own employers and public liability insurance whilst preparing for the placement. The Exodus employers and public liability will come into effect when the team leaves for the placement.

NON-EXODUS BUILDINGS

For any other buildings, in which staff or volunteers plan to run activities adequate cover must be provided by the owner.



CONCERNS

Exodus staff and volunteers have both the
OPPORTUNITY & RESPONSIBILITY,
to identify and highlight young people where
there is a concern that they
ARE AT RISK OR SUFFERING HARM.

CONCERNS WITHIN EXODUS ARE ADDRESSED BY ASKING THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS;

- Are you **concerned about wellbeing?**
Is this a young person who needs help?;
or
- Are you **concerned about abuse?**
Is this a young person who needs protection?

CONCERNS ABOUT WELLBEING

Concerns about the **wellbeing** of a young person relates to their overall wellbeing, including their mental health. This may be things you notice, or told to you by the young person or another individual. You should seek support from the local Area leader.

CONCERNS ABOUT ABUSE

Concerns about **abuse** of a young person relates to the categories below. These concerns may arise from things you notice, allegations about the young person or a disclosure from the young person. You should notify a Designated Officer.

RECOGNISING CONCERNS

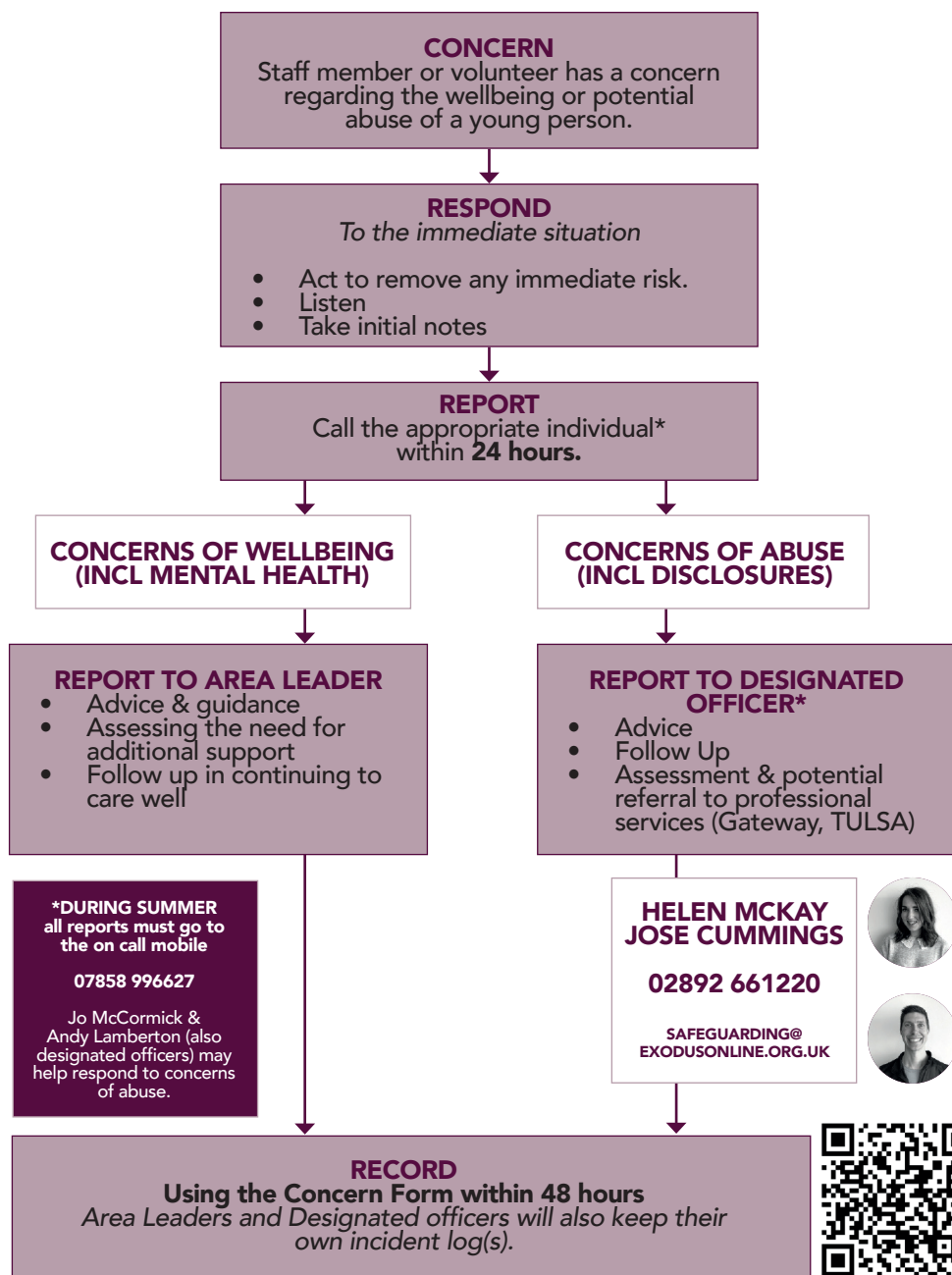
Abuse is a reality and so we must look out for signs, symptoms, suspicions or disclosures of:

NAME OF CONCERN	DESCRIPTION	SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR
PHYSICAL ABUSE	Being hit, kicked, slapped, pinched, or other actions that cause pain or injury	
SEXUAL ABUSE	Being directly or indirectly involved in sexual activity without consent	
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	Being bullied, threatened, ridiculed, intimidated, or shouted at	
NEGLECT	Not providing adequate care or ignoring someone's physical, emotional, or medical needs	
EXPLOITATION	Deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person	

SELF HARM	Is also an area for concern with young people	
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DEALING WITH CONCERNS

PROCESS FOR STAFF & VOLUNTEER LEADERS



DEALING WITH CONCERNS

RESPOND

- **Listen, hear** and **accept** what is said.
- **Stay** calm.
- **Give** time for the child to say what they want.
- **Reassure** them that they have done the right thing in speaking to you.
- Make sure there is no **immediate danger**.
- As soon as you are alone, **note down** as much as you can remember from the conversation, and the exact words used by the child/young person
- **Do Not:**
 - Ask Leading questions
 - Promise to keep secrets
 - Enquire or investigate yourself.
 - Make the child repeat unnecessarily

Staff and volunteers must **ALWAYS** ensure concerns for a child or young person or allegations of abuse are addressed. They must never be ignored or go unrecorded.

*The welfare of a child or young person is paramount and so **the following steps must be followed if you identify a concern.***

REPORT

- Call the appropriate individual within 24 hours
 - For **concerns of abuse**, this is a Designated Officer
 - For **concerns over wellbeing**, this is the local Area Leader
- **Do not** speak to anyone else, including a co-worker, parent or other member of Exodus staff.
- If you have reported a **concern of abuse** the Designated officer, may ask you to fill in a UNOCINI form (with our help) to pass onto social services

RECORD

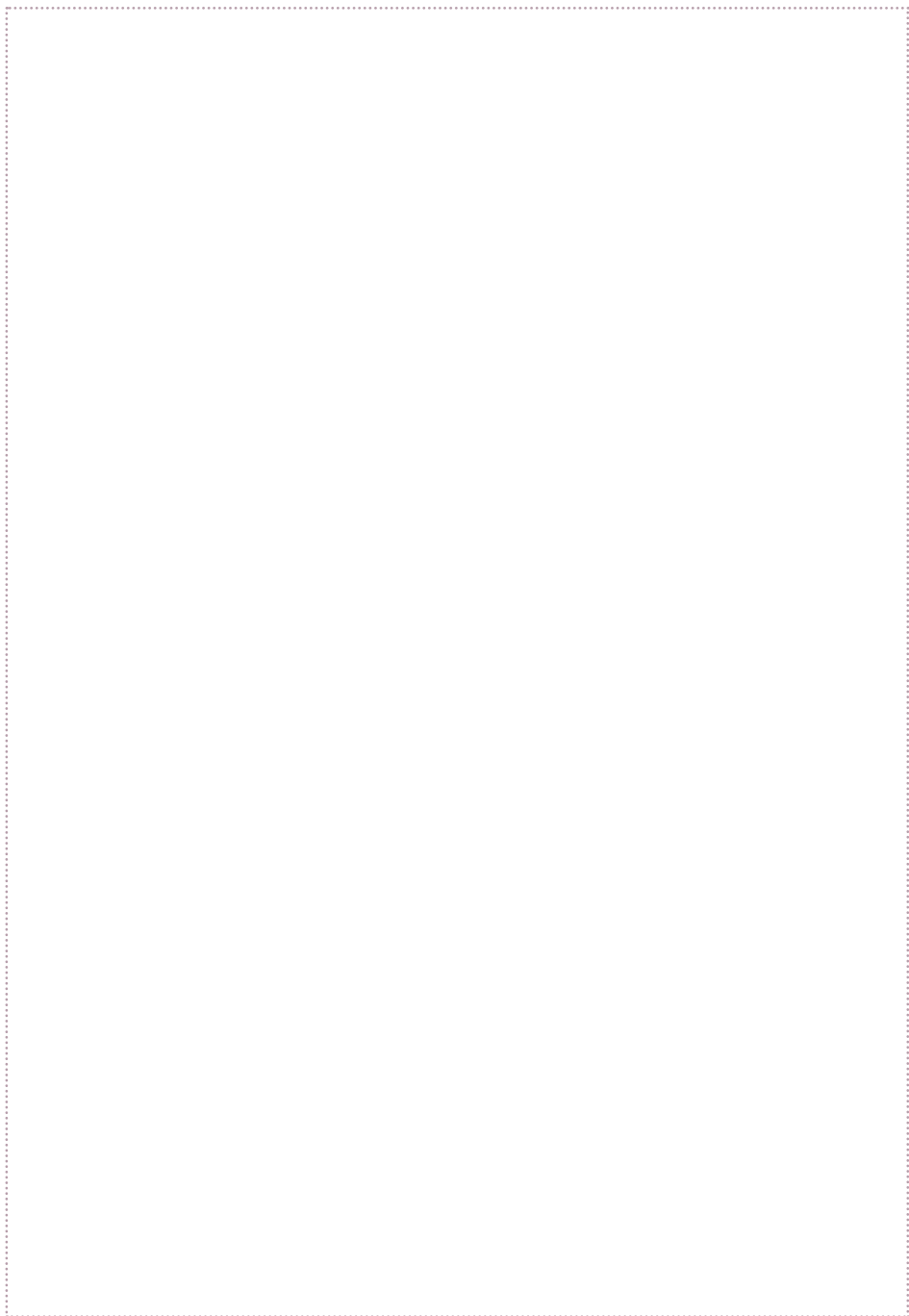
- After talking to the appropriate person about your concern, record your notes using the forms available at: exodusonline.org.uk/safeguarding
 - If you are unable to access this form please type or write key information of dates, facts and individuals.
- Include additional notes on your conversation with the
- Designated Officer or Area Leader
- Keep your notes secure and confidential
- Stay clear and factual - if you wish to give an explanation for your concern this should be clearly marked as an opinion

NOTES

This booklet is based on our policy, which builds on and incorporates legislation, government expectations and other best practice guides for safeguarding including:

- The Children (NI) Order 1995,
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)
- Keeping Children Safe: Our Duty to Care (2017)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- SBNI Child Safeguarding: Learning and Development Strategy and Framework 2020-2023
- ACCESSNI Checks: Working with children in the charity/voluntary sector
- No Harm Done: Recognising and responding to self-harm
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

NOTES



NOTES



CONTACT

Our Designated Staff

ALL concerns for young people should be communicated to the appropriate member of our team without delay.

Concerns of Wellbeing

If you have a Wellbeing Concern for an individual (including mental health, mood, thoughts of harm), you should call the local Area Leader.

Concerns of Abuse

If you have a Abuse Concern for an individual (including disclosures, allegations or potential signs of abuse), you should call the:

Exodus Safeguarding Officers:

*Helen McKay
Jose Cummings*

02892 661220
safeguarding@exodusonline.org.uk

www.exodusonline.org.uk/safeguarding

For full policy and supporting materials

For other advice or support contact:

Childline

*Free, 24 hr confidential advice
& support for anyone under 19*

**www.childline.org.uk
0800 1111**

Gateway Services

*For advice or referrals (if you cannot reach
a designated officer)*

028 3756 7100

Self Harm UK

*Dedicated to supporting young people
impacted by self-harm, providing a safe
space to talk, ask questions and be honest
about what's going on in your life.*

www.selfharm.co.uk

NSPCC

*For advice (if you cannot reach a
designated officer)*

0808 800 5000

Emergency Services

999



EXODUS