

Child Protection

All agencies have a role to play in terms of protecting children and young people. In terms of child protection you have the following responsibilities:

- To be aware of your organisations child protection policy and procedures
- To be alert to indicators of concern in children and young people you come into contact with
- To respond to concerns you have about a child by acting in accordance with your organisations' procedures.

It is possible that within the structure of your group a child or young person may share sensitive information with you. The following principles have been developed to assist you to consider how best to share that information:



Sharing information for child protection: general principles

- The safety, welfare and well-being of a child are of central importance when making decisions to lawfully share information with or about them.
- Children and young people have the right to express their views and have them taken into account when decisions are made about what should happen to them.
- The reasons why information needs to be shared and particular actions taken should be communicated openly and honestly with children and young people, and where appropriate, their families.
- In general information will normally only be shared with the consent of the child or young person (depending on age and maturity). However, where there are concerns that seeking consent would increase the risk to a child, or young person, or others or prejudice any subsequent investigation, information may need to be shared without consent.
- At all times, information shared should be relevant, necessary and proportionate to the circumstances of the child, and limited to those who need to know.
- When gathering information about possible risks to a child or young person, information should be sought from all relevant sources, including services that may be involved with other family members. Relevant historical information should also be taken into account.
- When information is shared, a record should be made of when it was shared, with whom, and for what purpose, in what form and whether it was disclosed with or without informed consent. Similarly, any decision not to share information should also be recorded.
- Agencies should provide clear guidance for practitioners on sharing information. This should include advice on sharing information about adults who may pose a risk to children, dealing with disputes over information-sharing and clear policies on whistle-blowing.



(National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2010)