

AFCU GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Introduction

As a Christian charity serving the Armed Forces community, the AFCU is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We aim to create safe, respectful environments where all participants-military personnel, families, and others, can engage with confidence.

All staff, members, and volunteers are expected to follow legally compliant safeguarding practices, shaped by both professional standards and our Christian values of care, dignity, and protection. Safeguarding applies to everyone, regardless of age, ability, gender, background, belief, or identity.

We prioritise the welfare and best interests of those we serve, ensuring they and their families are treated with compassion and respect.

This guide offers practical support for anyone working with vulnerable groups in an AFCU context. It supplements our full Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and does not replace formal safeguarding training.

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Summary of AFCU Safeguarding Policy

The Armed Forces' Christian Union (AFCU) is a Christian charity supporting over 3,000 members in the Armed Forces and their families through discipleship, fellowship, and prayer. Many activities involve children and adults in need of care and support¹, making safeguarding a top priority.

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

AFCU is dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all. We uphold the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Care Act 2014, ensuring protection from all forms of abuse, harm, and neglect. Safeguarding is embedded in our culture and practice and exceeds legal compliance.

Key Safeguarding Principles

Workers (volunteers or paid) are expected to follow strict safeguarding practices and codes of conduct.

All children (under 18) and adults at risk are protected under this policy.

Positions of trust must never be abused. Relationships of power carry responsibility, and appropriate boundaries must be maintained.

Abuse and Neglect

Abuse, whether against a child or an adult, can take many forms and is often perpetrated by someone known or trusted. AFCU recognises its responsibility to safeguard all individuals by preventing harm, identifying risk, and responding appropriately to concerns.

Abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial, discriminatory, organisational, domestic, and modern slavery-related harm, as well as neglect and self-neglect. For children, abuse is any action, or failure to act, that causes significant harm or neglects their need for love and care. For adults, it includes any mistreatment or exploitation of those unable to protect themselves due to disability, illness, or other vulnerabilities.

Safe Recruitment & Training

All workers are recruited safely, with DBS checks and references where appropriate.

Regular safeguarding training is provided (renewed every 3 years).

Every activity undergoes a risk assessment, and workers must read and sign to say they have read the Good Practice Guide.

Reporting Concerns

¹ Sometimes called adults at risk or previously vulnerable adults

Immediate danger: Call 999.

Standard concerns: Report to Safeguarding Lead (Liesel Parkinson), Deputy Lead (Adrian Campbell Black), or the Safeguarding Trustee (Andrew Thompson).

Reports should be factual, confidential, and made without delay.

Concerns can also be reported to external agencies like Thirtyone:eight or local authorities.

Low-Level Concerns

AFCU promotes early intervention by encouraging reporting of low-level concerns (subtle or minor behaviours inconsistent with organisational values). These are recorded and monitored to identify patterns or risks.

Safeguarding Leadership & Procedures

The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for managing incidents, training, policy development, and liaising with authorities. Procedures differ based on whether the concern involves a child, adult, or an allegation against a worker. Where appropriate, referrals are made to social services, the DBS, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Pastoral Care & Risk Management

Where appropriate, support is offered to victims of abuse through pastoral care and prayer. Individuals who may pose a risk are only allowed to attend events under strict safeguarding agreements based on risk assessments and external consultations.

Data Protection & Review

Safeguarding data is handled lawfully under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, shared only when necessary. The policy is reviewed annually and is available in accessible formats.

Contact:

AFCU Safeguarding Lead – safeguarding@afcu.org.uk Tel: 01793 783123

More info: www.afcu.org.uk

Good Practice – a few key points

- **Remember:** Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- **Recognise:** Make sure you can recognise different types of abuse. This can include physical abuse, sexual abuse, grooming, emotional abuse, neglect, bullying/cyberbullying, sexting, discriminatory abuse, spiritual abuse, modern slavery and child trafficking.
- **Respond well:** If a child or an adult makes a disclosure to you:

DO

- Listen and take them seriously
- Keep calm
- Ask open questions: what, how, who, when etc
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing speaking to you
- Tell them what you will do with the information
- Know who to contact and what to do with the information

DON'T

- Promise to keep what they say 'secret'
 - Assume anything
 - Investigate their allegations
 - Ask leading questions
 - Carry out any physical/medical examinations
 - Contact the accused
- **Record:** As soon as possible write down everything you were told. Make sure this includes the time and date and who was involved. Try to record the exact words and phrases that the victim used. Record facts and observations (she said..., he had...) and avoid your interpretations, (I assumed that...)
 - **Report:** what you have heard/seen as soon as possible:
Email: safeguarding@afcuk.org.uk
Telephone: 01793 783123
Complete this [online form](#)

If there is any immediate danger call 999.

1. Detailed Guidance for workers with children and young people

1.1 Minimising the risk of abuse

All work is to be planned to minimise situations where abuse can occur.

Sometimes it may be necessary to do things of a personal nature for a child, particularly if they are very young or have a disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents/carers. After an emergency, which requires this type of help, parents/carers should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important to ensure all children's workers undertake personal care tasks with sensitivity whilst avoiding isolation in such tasks to create accountability.

There are several factors to be considered when working with children and young people not only to keep them safe, but to protect all workers from any suspicion of harm while the children are in their care. The factors we must consider are:

- The age and gender of group members and the ratio of adults-to-children
- Children with additional needs
- First Aid cover

- Nature and location of the activity
- Possible risks (there should be a risk assessment. It is your responsibility to read it and check that any risks are being mitigated)
- Our behaviour, including the things we must and must not do when working with children and young people.

1.2 Some DO's and DON'Ts

You must:

- Understand and minimise the risks that meeting in a particular venue might create and make every effort to minimise them
- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- To ensure that there is more than one adult present during the activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others. If this is not possible then the reasons should be recorded
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Be available as a listening ear and, if necessary, refer for more appropriate help
- Try to remember that your actions may be interpreted differently from your intentions
- Beware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
- Seek advice in any situation where you feel unsure
- Identify visitors before allowing them access
- Make sure children and young people know who the leaders are, and their names
- Make sure children are only collected from sessions by someone they know and you recognise as a parent/carer/designated person.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs along with any treatment given.
- Respect the safeguarding, dignity and privacy of the children in your care especially when assisting with intimate personal care (e.g. toilet trips). Where possible, have at least two adults present for intimate care, respect a child's privacy by leaving the door slightly ajar or having a team member step back, and encourage the child to do as much as possible for themselves.

You must not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- Permit abusive behaviour such as bullying, ridiculing, or taunting
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people

- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as 'crushes'
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Engage in rough physical games, or those that could be considered as sexually provocative.
- Share sleeping accommodation overnight with a Child or Adult at risk.
- Go into the bedroom of a Child or Adult at risk unless absolutely necessary. (If it is necessary, two members of staff should enter.)
- Use a mobile phone or camera to photograph a Child or Adult at risk except for legitimate and express purposes and where relevant written consent (from parent/guardian) has been established beforehand.
- Allow children or colleagues to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make comments to a Child or Adult at risk, even in fun, that could be construed as sexually provocative.
- Deliberately reduce a Child or Adult at risk to tears as a form of control, belittle or demean a child or adult at risk, or use emotional abuse.
- Do things of a personal nature for a Child or Adult at risk that they can do for themselves

1.3 Adult to child ratios

There must always be a minimum of two adults linked to every group for activities and events. This is the minimum and good practice requires higher numbers of adults for younger children.

When thinking about adult/child ratios we must consider that a child, young person, or adult may become unwell or have an accident. We must be able to meet the needs of that child/adult in difficulty as well as meeting the needs of the remaining children or young people.

Never plan to work alone with a group or an individual child or young person where there is little opportunity for the activity being observed by others.

Where an activity involves planned separation into smaller groups, the subgroups should remain in close proximity to one another to allow an adult leader to summon the help of another adult. This also enables the leaders in the subgroup to monitor each other to safeguard the interests of both the children, young people and adults involved.

1.4 Transporting a child in a vehicle

This should only happen with a parent's full consent. Ensure children are adequately supervised on the journey and take the necessary safety precautions depending on what kind of transport you're using (for example making sure everyone is wearing a seat belt). Make sure that there is more than one adult in the vehicle. Make sure

parents or carers know what time and where to drop off and pick up their children. Make sure they tell you in advance who will be picking up their children if they aren't doing so themselves.

1.5 Supporting a worried child/young person

It may be necessary and helpful for an adult to meet with a child or young person alone. Sensible steps to be taken include:

- Informing another adult that the meeting will take place
- having the meeting in a room adjacent to others that are in use, keeping the door ajar or ensuring visibility for other adults through a window or where they may be seen by others

This is to ensure that your care and safety needs and those of the children and young people are met appropriately.

Efforts should be made to achieve a gender mix in the composition of the leaders and helpers working with children and young people.

2. Detailed Guidance about recognising abuse for everyone

Defining abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child, young person or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Abuse can occur at any age. Men may also be the victims of abuse.

2.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Signs of possible abuse which should be reported include:

- Any bruising to a baby - pre-walking stage
- Multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- Bruising of different colours, indicating repeated injuries
- Fingertip bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- Burns of any shape or size
- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps

- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP

2.2 Emotional Abuse in children

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child, young person or vulnerable adult's emotional development. It may involve conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving them opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on them. These may include interactions that are beyond their developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing them participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, although it may occur alone.

These signs may be present in children or young people whose parents are over-critical, emotionally distant, or unable to meet their child's emotional needs:

- Excessive behaviour, such as excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, headbanging
- Self-harming, for example, cutting or scratching themselves or an overdose
- Attempt at suicide
- Persistently running away from home
- High levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection

2.3 Emotional or Psychological Abuse in adults

Psychological, or emotional abuse, includes the use of threats, fears or bribes to negate a vulnerable adult's choices, independent wishes and self-esteem; Cause isolation or over-dependence (as might be signalled by impairment of development or performance) or prevent a vulnerable adult from using services, which would provide help.

Possible Indicators of psychological abuse

- Ambivalence about carer
- Fearfulness expressed in the eyes; avoids looking at the carer, flinching on approach

- Deference
- Overtly affectionate behaviour to alleged perpetrator
- Inability to sleep or tendency to spend long periods in bed
- Change in appetite including loss of appetite or overeating at inappropriate times
- Unusual weight gain/loss
- Tearfulness
- Unexplained paranoia
- Low self-esteem
- Excessive fears
- Anxiety, confusion or general resignation
- Agitation

2.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young people or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming another child, young person or vulnerable adult in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Signs of abuse may include:

- A change in usual behaviour for no apparent or obvious reason
- Sudden onset of confusion, wetting or soiling
- Withdrawal, choosing to spend the majority of time alone
- Overt sexual behaviour/language by the vulnerable person which is out of character
- Self-inflicted injury
- Irregular and disturbed sleep pattern and poor concentration
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, bloody underclothes
- Love bites
- Pain or itching, bruising or bleeding in the rectal or genital area
- Sexually transmitted urinary tract/vaginal infections
- Bruising to the thighs and upper arms
- Frequent infections

- Severe upset or agitation when being bathed/dressed/undressed/medically examined
- Pregnancy in a person not able to consent

The following should always be reported:

- Something a child, young person or vulnerable adult has told you or told someone else.
- A child or young person or vulnerable adult who shows worrying sexualised behaviour (including, for children, in their play with other children)
- A child or young person who seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age.
- A child, young person or vulnerable adult who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sex offender.

2.5 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may look like failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect them from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, their basic emotional needs. If you become aware of the following, they could be symptoms of neglect and should be reported:

- Squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions.
- Parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs.
- Children who appear persistently undersized or underweight.
- Children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy.
- Children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.

2.6 Self-neglect (adults)

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Possible indicators of self-neglect:

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/ or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions

- Neglecting household maintenance
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury

2.7 Domestic Abuse

As well as physical violence, examples of domestic abuse can involve: undermining an individual's self-confidence; threats to others including children; controlling behaviour such as isolation from friends and family; restricting access to money, personal items, food, telephone etc.; and stalking.

Possible Indicators of Domestic Violence and abuse

- Destructive criticism and verbal abuse: shouting/mock/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening
- Pressure tactics: sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, commit suicide, take the children away, report you to welfare agencies, lying to your friends and family about you, telling you that you have no choice in any decisions
- Disrespect: persistently putting you down in front of other people, not listening or responding when you talk, refusing to help with childcare or housework
- Breaking trust: lying to you, withholding information from you, being jealous, having other relationships
- Isolation: monitoring or blocking your telephone calls, telling you where you can and cannot go, preventing you from seeing friends and relatives
- Harassment: following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you
- Threats: making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting you down, destroying your possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm you and the children
- Sexual violence: using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts, having sex with you when you don't want to have sex
- Physical violence: punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling
- Denial: saying the abuse doesn't happen, saying you caused the abusive behaviour, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

2.8 Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory abuse is targeted at a perceived vulnerability or on the basis of prejudice including racism or sexism, or based on a person's disability. It can take any of the other forms of abuse, harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Discriminatory abuse may be used to describe serious, repeated or pervasive discrimination, which leads to significant harm or exclusion from mainstream opportunities, provision of poor standards of health care, and/or which represents a failure to protect or provide redress through the criminal or civil justice system.

Possible Indicators of discriminatory abuse include:

- hate mail
- verbal or physical abuse in public places or residential settings
- criminal damage to property
- Tendency to withdrawal and isolation
- Fearfulness and anxiety
- Being refused access to services or being excluded inappropriately
- Loss of self esteem
- Resistance or refusal to access services that are required to meet need
- Expressions of anger and frustration

2.9 Financial Abuse

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse:

- Missing personal possessions
- Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- Power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- Failure to register an LPA after the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so
- The person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative
- The family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy, attorney or LPA
- Recent changes in deeds or title to property
- Rent arrears and eviction notices
- A lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service
- Failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- Disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house

- Unnecessary property repairs

2.10 Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is not confined to any one religion, denomination, or belief system. It has also not been defined legally but is seen as either a form of emotional or psychological abuse. As such it is deeply damaging, affecting an individual's sense of self, faith, and relationship with others. Because it may be subtle or masked as spiritual guidance, it can be difficult to recognise. Victims may fear that challenging the abuse could be seen as a lack of faith or an attack on religious freedom. The AFCU recognises spiritual abuse is a serious safeguarding concern. There are specific guidelines regarding how prayer ministry should be offered to members².

2.11 Modern Slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Possible indicators of modern slavery:

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

3. Other detailed good practice guidance for everyone

3.1 First Aid and Fire Safety

- Ensure you know where an appropriately equipped First Aid box is clearly located and marked
- Make sure that all are aware where the responsibility for First Aid lies and what to do in an emergency
- Ensure that the building complies with Fire Safety Regulations and Guidelines

² Prayer ministry guidelines are available through the AFCU Office.

- Include in your checks that all exits, equipment regulations and signs are clearly visible and unobstructed
- All users of the premises should be aware of emergency procedures
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs along with any treatment given, this needs to be shared with the AFCU office office@afcu.org.uk

3.2 Risk Assessments

The AFCU draws up a set of comprehensive risk assessments for each event. These should be read and any risks mitigated for as directed. However, these risk assessments cannot capture every possible risk and a dynamic risk assessment should be carried out on site by event leaders and children's workers. Any risks should be noted and mitigated appropriately.

3.3 Communication Guidelines for Workers with those Under 18 years old

The AFCU recognises that using the Internet (and other forms of technology) is an important part of the lives of the children and young people we work with. We understand that for many children and young people, using the Internet is a regular part of their lives and has a significant impact on their social development. In accordance with the AFCU's Safeguarding Policy, we recognise that we must take all possible steps to protect young people from significant harm or risk whilst using the Internet or any other form of technology as well as when we meet with them face to face.

3.3.1 Reasons for contacting a young person via social media (including WhatsApp), or email

You should not add children or young people on your personal social networking page who are part of the AFCU's children's and youth ministry and who are under the age of 18.

Electronic communication including mobile calls or texts should be used only for AFCU 'work' or a service AFCU is providing to the children and young people, not for general socialising.

You can set up a Facebook group for your project or group and invite them to be members of a group with the permission of the Families' Ministry Coordinators or an AFCU director, noting that there are age restrictions for many social networking platforms (13 for Facebook and Instagram). Contacting children younger than thirteen via social media is therefore not allowed. These networking groups should be deleted once the project has ended.

The only permissible, regular, one-to-one contact via electronic means is for the ongoing formalised mentoring relationships between Summer Camp leaders and campers aged 14 and above. Leaders and campers must ONLY use platforms where the threads cannot be deleted. They should be transparent and purposeful, i.e. for mentoring the camper in their faith. Texting (including WhatsApp messages) late in the evening have the potential to be viewed as inappropriate. Therefore, texting after 9pm is discouraged.

3.3.2 Parental awareness and consent

Parental consent for using electronic forms of communication is essential and explicit consent should be granted agreeing to the use of this form of communication. Parents must be CC'd in to emails and made aware of any social media groups their children/young people are joining and must give permission for formal mentoring relationships to be established between a leader (or leaders) and their child after camp. Access to these conversations should be made available to parents on request.

3.4 Cyber-bullying

What to Do if a Child or Adult at Risk Tells You About Being Cyberbullied

DON'T PANIC! Your initial reaction is vital. Listen, learn, involve and resolve

- Assure them that they have done the right thing by telling you
- Decide a plan of action with the young person
- Do not look at any explicit images or make a record of them
- Ask them to tell you about the messages that they have received and kept
- Ask them not to open any further online or text messages from these addresses and phone numbers, but to allow you to open them instead
- Encourage them to discuss changing their mobile phone number with their parents
- Encourage them, with their parents, to change their online profile

Engage the parent(s) or carer(s) of any child. Record and report your concern to the Safeguarding Lead, and give feedback to the young person

3.5 Low Level Concerns - Building a Healthy Safeguarding Culture

DON'T IGNORE LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS!

Everyone shares responsibility for keeping AFCU events safe. Stay alert, act early, and support one another.

DO:

- **Stay aware of others and notice small changes or boundary concerns.**
- **Record and report low-level worries promptly – prevention starts small.**
- **Be open and accountable; working transparently keeps everyone protected.**
- **Encourage a culture where raising low-level concerns is normal and welcomed.**
- **Seek advice from the event Safeguarding Point of Contact usually the Event Leader or Safeguarding Lead if unsure how to respond.**

- **Support less experienced volunteers in recognising and managing safeguarding concerns.**
- **Promote kindness, awareness, and mutual care at all times.**

DON'T:

- **Dismiss a concern as “too small” to matter.**
- **Keep safeguarding worries to yourself.**
- **Assume someone else has already reported it.**
- **Let trust or good intentions stop you from staying alert.**

Together, we maintain a culture of care, accountability, and safety – ensuring every AFCU activity provides a secure and supportive environment for all.

4. Reporting Abuse

If you are worried about anything, it is NOT your responsibility to decide if it is abuse BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and report it. If in doubt, seek advice.

Remember

If a child or adult at risk says something or acts in such a way that abuse is suspected, the person receiving the information should:

- React in a calm but concerned way.
- Tell the person that s/he is right to share what has happened; and that s/he is not responsible for what has happened.
- Take what the person says seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum only to clarify what the person is saying, not to interrogate.
- Do not interrupt the person when they are recalling significant events.
- Reassure the person that the issue can be dealt with.
- Do not give assurances of confidentiality that cannot be kept but should reassure the person that the information will only be passed on to those people who need to know.
- Make a full record of what is said and done

In an emergency or if someone is in immediate danger, please contact the police by telephoning 999.

All other reports of incidents or allegations of abuse should be made to the AFCU Safeguarding Lead:

Liesel Parkinson – AFCU Safeguarding Lead

- Telephone: 01793 783123
- Email: safeguarding@afcu.org.uk
- Complete this [online form](#)

It is better to report a concern, even if you are not sure it meets the threshold than leave possible abuse unchecked.

More details including contact details for outside agencies are included in the AFCU Safeguarding Policy.