

# A Safe Space



This leaflet contains information about promoting the safety and well-being of our girls, young women and adult members. You must ensure that you, as a Girlguiding volunteer, are following our policy and procedures.



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

**Girlguiding**

Registered charity number 306016.

# Code of Conduct

**As a Girlguiding volunteer you are always expected to:**

- abide by UK laws and legislation
- respect everyone as an individual
- provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- respect everyone's right to privacy
- show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
- adhere to the organisation's policies, as found in *The Guiding Manual*.

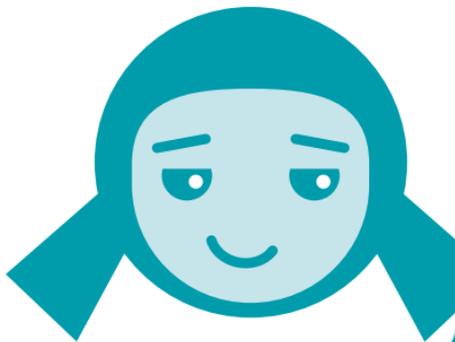
**As a Girlguiding volunteer you may not:**

- permit abusive behaviour
- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- jump to conclusions or make assumptions about others without checking the facts
- encourage inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- show favouritism to anyone
- make suggestive or inappropriate remarks or actions
- deliberately place yourself or others in a compromising position.



## Alcohol/drugs/smoking

Adults at an event or residential experience involving girls and young women should exercise discretion regarding alcohol. They must abide by the legal age for drinking alcohol, any guidelines set down prior to an event and the venue's policy on the consumption of alcohol. All adults must remain capable of dealing with an emergency or first aid incident, and at least two adults who can drive should be below the legal alcohol limit for driving a vehicle. Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, in front of young members should be avoided, and substance misuse will not be tolerated by Girlguiding.





# Safeguarding

## Concerns about a young member

If a young person makes a disclosure, or you have a suspicion or concern about someone's physical, sexual or emotional well-being, it is extremely

important that you understand your responsibilities as a volunteer to offer appropriate support, and you must:

- listen carefully and trust that what is being said is correct
- offer immediate support, understanding and reassurance
- tell her that you cannot keep it a secret and explain that you may need to pass the information on to keep her safe
- stay calm - try not to show signs of anxiety or shock
- do not investigate, but try to find out as much as you can from the young person, using open questions (avoid asking questions such as 'why?')
- record an account of the conversation immediately, and sign, date and keep the record safe
- contact your Commissioner to ensure that you have support, and agree on the action you will take.

It is the Leader's responsibility to make Young Leaders aware they must refer any disclosures from a young member to an adult, and to advise them on how to respond to a disclosure from a young person.

## Reporting your concerns

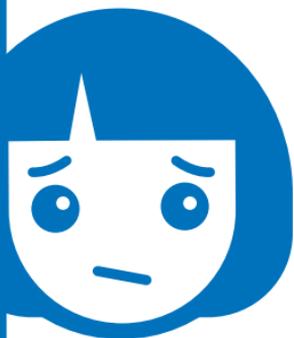
Think about the following when making a referral.

- Are you able to refer to social services?
- Is there reason to be concerned about the young member's immediate safety? If so, contact the police.
- Have you taken account of her right to know what action, if any, will be taken?
- Have you provided for her immediate support needs?

Girlguiding recommends that you refer your concerns to social services. You can also refer via the NSPCC. Please remember that it may help to protect a young member if you give the NSPCC permission to share your details so that the relevant authority can contact you for further information if it needs to. However, if a criminal offence is disclosed, the NSPCC is legally bound to refer this to the police.



**You must refer and not investigate** if you have concerns about a young member. If she is in immediate danger, call the police, otherwise contact social services or the NSPCC (0808 800 5000). Get in touch with your local Commissioner to report the action you have taken. You can contact Safeguarding Officers at Girlguiding HQ for further support (see page 12).



### Important changes in legislation

- As of October 2015 there is a legal duty to report any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM) in relation to under-18s to the police or social services.
- Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of Girlguiding's wider safeguarding duties. For more information, please visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for 'the prevent duty'.

## Concerns about a volunteer

Any allegations or suspicions about a volunteer in respect of a safeguarding issue must be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Officers at Girlguiding. If you are aware that a volunteer has breached Girlguiding's Code of Conduct, you must pass this information on to your Commissioner.

If you or an associated person (eg your partner or an individual you reside with) becomes involved in any police or social services investigation, you must immediately notify your Commissioner.

If you have any questions or concerns about safeguarding to do with either a young member or a volunteer, please contact the Safeguarding Officers at Girlguiding (see page 12).

# Digital communications

You should not contact members under 14 directly - communication should be with the parents (or carers) and always from a member of the Leadership Team. When you contact parents (or carers) or young people over 14 by email or online you should:

- use appropriate language - try to avoid any words or phrases that could be misinterpreted or misconstrued
- ensure that any images you send are appropriate and that external hyperlinks you include do not lead to inappropriate content
- always copy another member of the Leadership Team in to any messages you send to a young member.

Individual texting between girls and members of the Leadership Team is discouraged.



## Sharing photos and/or videos



- Ensure that you have checked photo permissions before sharing photos or videos of young members on websites, social networking sites or media-sharing sites such as YouTube.
- Avoid mentioning members' full names or including other information that could inadvertently reveal their identities.
- Make sure girls are aware that they should not share photos or videos of their friends online without permission from their parents or carers.
- If a young member makes a disclosure regarding inappropriate activity online, please refer to A *Safe Cyberspace* at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/staysafeonline](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/staysafeonline).
- You can also report inappropriate online behaviour to the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command at [www.ceop.police.uk/Ceop-Report](http://www.ceop.police.uk/Ceop-Report).

# Safe activities

When planning any activity, please check *The Guiding Manual* for current regulations and guidance. For details of the few activities that are prohibited by Girlguiding, see the 'Prohibited activities' page. If you are unsure about an activity, please contact [activities@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:activities@girlguiding.org.uk) or your local Outdoor Activities Adviser, who will be happy to help you.

## Managing risk

When planning any activity or event, Leaders need to consider the risks involved and how to manage them. This is best achieved by completing a Risk Assessment form, available from *The Guiding Manual* and in your unit's Emergency File.



If an accident or incident occurs:

- follow the flowchart in your unit's Emergency File to help you manage the incident effectively
- contact the police immediately if you suspect that a criminal act has been committed
- complete a Notification of Accident or Incident Form and an Accident/Incident Witness Statement form, which can be found in your unit's Emergency File
- do not admit liability.

Girlguiding has an internally funded scheme to pay for certain expenses incurred when accidents occur during guiding activities. Details of the Members' Benefits Scheme are sent out when appropriate on receipt of a Notification of Accident or Incident Form.



## Insurance

Girlguiding's insurance covers all members and other persons associated with Girlguiding while taking part in guiding. All information regarding insurance is available in *The Guiding Manual*; alternatively, you can contact [insurancesupport@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:insurancesupport@girlguiding.org.uk). If an injury, illness or medical condition needs medical or hospital treatment during a guiding activity, the Leader must immediately complete a Notification of Accident or Incident Form, which can be found in your unit's Emergency File, send a copy of it to Insurance Support at HQ, and keep all receipts.

Please remember that additional insurance is required for buildings, contents and equipment for your unit. This can be arranged by Unity Insurance Services, which can also provide travel insurance for overseas trips.



# Contact details

Safeguarding: [safeguarding@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@girlguiding.org.uk)

020 7834 6242

(Out of hours, emergencies only: 07508 032997)

Press Office: 020 7592 1733

(Out of hours: 07990 553940)

Insurance helpline: 0845 260 1053

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

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