

Safeguarding Fact Sheet – Do’s and Don’ts

Anyone working with children and families should:

- Be familiar with and follow their organisation’s policy and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Know who to contact to express concerns about a child’s or adult’s welfare
- Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation and therefore practitioners should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse
- Attend training that raises awareness of safeguarding issues and equips them with the skills and knowledge needed

What do you do if a parent or child discloses information to you or you are concerned about their safety:

DO

- Stay calm, listen and don’t judge.
- Explain you cannot keep any secrets and that you must report what you have heard to keep them safe.
- Make factual notes immediately after and hand these to the agency’s designated safeguarding lead
- Be aware of your own limits when dealing with difficult issues
- Treat all families equally, and with respect and dignity
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance
- Report to the agency’s Lead Safeguarding Officer immediately after the disclosure/concerns.
- Follow After Adoptions Safeguarding policies and procedures

DO NOT

- Panic or allow emotions of shock, horror or distaste to become apparent
- Probe for information, try to verify facts or ask any questions
- Ask leading questions
- Make any assumptions about what you are being told
- Make any comments negative or otherwise about the alleged perpetrator
- Promise to keep secrets
- Give out your personal telephone number, email or address
- Give or loan money
- Gossip, but be aware that if something serious is raised you are obliged to seek advice
- Talk about the personal or intimate areas of your own life

This is not your sole responsibility. You are obliged to report the incident to the agency’s Lead Safeguarding Officer and you must always follow the agency’s safeguarding policies.

Information passed on to the Designated Officer, Social Services or Police must be as helpful as possible hence why a detailed record should be made at the time of disclosure or concern. Information wherever possible should contain the following:

- The nature of the concern or allegation
- A description of any visible bruises or other injuries
- A record of the young person's or vulnerable adult's account of the explanation of bruises or other injuries and how they occurred and what happened
- Details of any witnesses to the incident
- Any relevant dates and times
- The young person's or vulnerable adult's details – name, age, date of birth, address, parental/carer details
- Details of alleged abuser