

Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy



Guidelines for Drama, Workshop and Performance Leaders (Voluntary and Paid)

Definition:

For the purposes of this Policy, a vulnerable adult is a person over 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness.

A vulnerable adult is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or is unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or serious exploitation.

A vulnerable adult may be a person who:

- has a physical or sensory disability
- is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- has a mental illness or dementia
- has a learning disability
- misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- has social or emotional problems
- exhibits challenging behaviour

A person's vulnerability will depend on their circumstances and environment, and each case must be considered individually.

Society will want reassurance that the vulnerable adults are safe. Borders Youth Theatre is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, vulnerable adult and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. Volunteers and staff should, at all times, show respect and understanding of vulnerable adults, and their safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects our principles.

No activity should be entered into that is potentially harmful to a vulnerable adult and good practice should be adhered to at all times.

Principles

You can reduce likely situations for the abuse of participants and help protect yourself from false accusations by making sure that everyone is aware that, as a general rule, you should not:

Spend time alone with a vulnerable adult away from others

Contact a vulnerable adult out with the activity or the project, where it constitutes the inappropriate use of contacts made through the group

Take vulnerable adult alone in a car on journeys, however short

Take a vulnerable adult to your home

When occasions arise where it is unavoidable that these things happen, then they should only occur with the full knowledge of your line manager, senior worker or the young person's parents.

Code of practice

Staff and volunteers should never:

Engage in inappropriate rough, physical and sexually provocative games, including horseplay

Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form

Deter vulnerable adult from making allegations through a fear of not being believed

Allow vulnerable adult or other staff and volunteers to use inappropriate language
(Obviously, there will be situations within the work undertaken during workshops and productions when the subject matter requires strong language - Leaders should prepare carefully for this.)

Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a vulnerable adult even in fun

Do things of personal nature for vulnerable adult that they can do themselves

Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts

Show favouritism to any individuals

Rely on just your own good name to protect you

Believe it could never happen to you

Staff and volunteers should always:

Treat everyone with respect

Respect a young person's right to personal privacy

Take seriously any allegations a vulnerable adult makes, ensuring that the appropriate people alerted (see below) that the incident is recorded

Provide access for vulnerable adult to talk to others about any concerns they may have

Remember that someone might misinterpret your actions, no matter how intended

Plan activities so that at least one other member of staff or volunteer is present, or is at least within sight or hearing of the activity

Recognize that special caution is required even in sensitive moments of counseling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse

What should you do if you suspect a vulnerable adult is being or has been abused:

Tell the designated person for child protection – AMANDA GLASGOW

Record any FACTS which support your suspicions, referring to the SBC Child Protection Guidelines which follow.

Sign and date your notes, storing them in a safe and secure place

If a vulnerable adult discloses to you abuse by someone else:

Allow the participant to speak without interruption, accepting what is said

Never question the young person or attempt investigation

Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment

Advise the vulnerable adult involved that you will try to offer support but that you must pass on the information

Record any FACTS

Sign and date your notes, storing them in a safe and secure place

Contact the designated person for child/vulnerable adult protection - this is a matter of urgency : AMANDA GLASGOW

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself

Immediately inform Trustees via BYT Administrator

If it's not possible to discuss this with the person in charge then contact the designated person for child/vulnerable adult protection AMANDA GLASGOW

Record the facts, as you know them

Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position that could cause further compromise

Disclosure

'Disclosure' is the relatively new term for what, in the past, has been called police checking or screening. All contracted workers and volunteers shall obtain a certificate of extended disclosure. This can be arranged at no charge for volunteers through Youth Borders.

A new scheme - Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) - was introduced in February 2011. From that time, contracted staff and volunteers should be registered via the PVG Scheme. There will be a period of 'grace' when BYT will recognize enhanced disclosure as sufficient.

BYT is registered with Disclosure Scotland and contracted staff can register with the PVG scheme through BYT.

With the advent of the Disclosure, concerns have been raised about the balance to be struck between the need for child protection and the need to allow everybody to have a place and a purpose within the community. Disclosure Scotland has established a code of practice which includes detailed guidance about disclosures. The guidelines are designed to combat unfair discrimination. This is in a context where there are millions of people with past criminal convictions, possibly involving imprisonment. Many of these people can still prove to be perfectly capable and safe staff and volunteers.

Appendix : Scottish Borders Council Adult Protection Guidelines

Adult Support and Protection

Most adults with mental illness, physical or learning disabilities, or other special needs manage to live their lives comfortably and securely.

They either do this independently or with assistance from carers, relatives, friends, professionals or volunteers. However, for a small number, dependence on someone may produce conflict, exploitation or harm.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 was introduced by the Scottish Government in October 2008. Part 1 of the Act deals with the protection of adults at risk of harm.

The Act can be used to deal with any harm, whether this has been perpetrated with or without deliberate intent. It may also be used for adults at risk who are harming or neglecting themselves, or who are experiencing domestic abuse.

What to do if you have concerns

If you are worried that you or someone you know may be or has been harmed, it is important to tell someone.

Please contact our Social Care and Health team as a matter of priority. You can also speak to a health professional or the police.

When a report is received, we will investigate the risk of harm. All actions are taken in partnership with the adult at risk and may include:

- immediate action to ensure the safety of the adult*
- the police conducting criminal inquiries*
- providing advice and support to the adult at risk and any carer/s*
- providing a social care service to the adult, which may include referring them to other appropriate agencies.*

Most adults at risk are supported to stay in their own home. Where appropriate, you will be advised of the outcome of any enquiry.

Who is an Adult at Risk of Harm?

An adult at risk of harm is a person (aged 16 years or over) who:

- is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests*
- is at risk of harm, and*
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, is more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.*

Please note that all three points of the above definition must be met. Reference: Section 3(1) Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

What is meant by risk of harm?

An adult is at risk of harm if:

- *another person's conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed, or*
- *the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.*

Please note: 'conduct' includes neglect and other failures to act. Reference: Section 3(2) Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and Section 53: Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

What is meant by harm?

Harm includes all harmful conduct and, in particular, includes:

- *conduct which causes physical harm*
- *conduct which causes psychological harm (e.g. by causing fear, alarm or distress)*
- *unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (e.g. theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion)*
- *conduct which causes self-harm.*

Who can cause harm?

Anyone can harm - a perpetrator can be any person such as a member of staff in a health/care setting, a carer, relative, spouse/partner, friend or neighbour, volunteer or other service user.

Where can harm happen?

Anywhere - this could be in the family home or any type of social or health care setting e.g. hospital ward, care home, day service, social club or respite service.

Staff Working with Adults at Risk of Harm

Concerned about an adult?

If you witness, suspect or receive information about an adult at risk of harm, you have a duty to report this.

The Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders (ELBEG) guidelines and the Adult Protection Procedures for your workplace describe the steps you must follow and who should be contacted. These documents should be available on your own organisation's intranet site and/or a hard copy should be held centrally.

Adult protection training

A rolling program of multi-agency training is delivered to staff working with adults in the Scottish Borders. Level 2 'Supporting and Protecting Adults at Risk' training is mandatory for selected Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and Lothian and Borders Police staff.

It is recommended for all other relevant multi-agency staff in the voluntary and independent sectors who have roles and responsibilities in supporting and protecting adults at risk, whether they have adopted a mandatory approach to adult protection

training or otherwise.

Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee

The Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee has been established since 2004. Some of the functions of the Committee and its subgroups are to:

- *review local procedures and practices*
 - *give information or advice, and make proposals on the safeguarding of adults at risk*
 - *assist and encourage the development of knowledge and skills*
- improve cooperation between agencies.*