



CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT

FIRST STEPS – WHAT SHOULD I DO?

LEGISLATION

The Police Act of 1997 makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with children and young people and/or to knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children and young people. This includes individuals on childrens' group committees who are making decisions which involve the well being of children in that group.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures Service was established in 2002 to enable employers and community voluntary groups to make recruitment checks, particularly for positions that involve regular contact with children and young people.

WHAT IS A CHILD?

In law, a child is defined as up to and including the age of 18 in The Children's Act of 1989. Extensions of this exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings.

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- As a voluntary or charitable group working with children or young people it is **essential** to have a child protection statement (CPS).
 - A CPS safeguards not only the child but also the staff or volunteers working in the project.
 - Groups must nominate a child protection representative (CPR). It is the responsibility of the CPR to ensure that the statement is working. All people involved in the project must know who this person is.
 - The model Child Protection Statement on Factsheet 3 may be photocopied and put on display. This will raise awareness that your group is safeguarding children who attend the project.

- This person should undertake regular child protection awareness training and be updated about a practical procedure for action where abuse is suspected.
- This person must be CRB checked.
- The CPS should be adopted and signed by the Management Committee. Staff and volunteers should also sign to say that they have read and understood the policy.
- A copy of the Statement should be on display in an appropriate location.
- This policy is a guide only and can be altered to fit in with your group's needs.
- Groups working with children and young people must take up references when recruiting an employee or volunteer.
- It is good practice to have a CRB check done on **all** staff/volunteers working with children.

(See Factsheet 3: Model Child Protection Statement)