




# YOUTH INITIATIVES

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## Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy

Date	Name	Position	Signed	Next Review
April 2024	Siobhan Darragh	Regional Designated Safeguarding Lead		March 2025

## Safeguarding: Basic Information

### Organisational Details

Name	Youth Initiatives
Address	50 Colin Road Belfast BT17 0LG
Email	<a href="mailto:office@youthinitiatives.com">office@youthinitiatives.com</a>
Telephone Number	02890 301174
NI Charity Number	100849
NI Company Number	622215
Insurance Details	Victor Insurance Combined Public and Employers Liability 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 to 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2025

### Chief Executive Officer

Name	Tony Silcock
Email	<a href="mailto:tony@youthinitiatives.com">tony@youthinitiatives.com</a>
Telephone Number	02890 301174

### Regional Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name	Siobhán Darragh
Email	<a href="mailto:safeguarding@youthinitiatives.com">safeguarding@youthinitiatives.com</a>
Telephone Number	02890 301174

### Local Area Designated Officers

Siobhan Darragh	West Belfast	02890 301174
Sarah Nilles	Downpatrick	02890 301174
Jonny Ewan	L/Derry	02890 301174
Wade Aitken	East Belfast	02890 301174
Rory O'Halloran	Ballymac	02890 301174
Ryan Lilley	Lisburn	02890 301174
Heather Torney	Banbridge	02890 301174
Lynda Whinnery	Crosslinks	02890 301174
Tony Silcock	Regional	02890 301174

Youth Initiatives NI is a cross community youth work charity which aims to awaken hope, inspire initiative, and mobilise youth to make a vital contribution to their community and to reconciliation in Northern Ireland, through the discovery and renewal of Christian faith in daily life.

The principal object of Youth Initiatives is to, without discrimination on grounds of age, gender, disability, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin and political or religious opinion, promote the physical, mental, spiritual and social welfare of young people in Northern Ireland through education, youth work, and volunteering.

The charitable company fulfills its objectives through projects jointly led by staff and young people aimed at the personal, social, physical, mental and spiritual development of young people. Youth Initiatives operates 6 youth community hubs across Northern Ireland (Banbridge, Derry/ Londonderry, Downpatrick, East Belfast, Lisburn and West Belfast) with its regional headquarters based in West Belfast. Each youth community hubs work reflects the local context however the typical work includes;

- 10 - 14's programmes
- 15 - 18's programmes
- Single Gender programmes
- Good relations programmes
- Volunteer leadership programmes
- Schools work
- Streetbaased youth work

These programmes are made up of a range of activities centre based programmes, games, day trips, residential weekends, summer camps, international service trips and volunteering.

## Safeguarding: Policy, Procedures and Guidelines

### YOUTH INITIATIVES CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

**“The welfare of the child is paramount”**

“We in Youth Initiatives are committed to practice which protects children, young people and adults at risk from harm.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children, young people and adults at risk, harm.”

**“We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk of harm by:**

- Listening to and respecting children, young people and adults at risk
- Adopting safeguarding guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and children, young people and adults at risk know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns

**We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.**

**Definitions children, young people and adults at risk of harm:**

- The Children Order defines a ‘child’ as a person under the age of 18. Throughout this policy when we refer to a child or young person our meaning (unless otherwise stated) is a person under the age of 18
- An ‘Adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:
  - a) personal characteristics AND/OR
  - b) life circumstances AND
  - c) is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; AND
  - d) where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an ‘adult at risk’ either (a) or (b) must be present, in addition to both elements (c), and (d).

The decision as to whether the definition of an ‘adult at risk’ is met will demand the careful exercise of professional judgement applied on a case by case basis. This will take into account all the available evidence, concerns, the impact of harm, degree of risk and other matters relating to the individual and his

or her circumstances. The seriousness and the degree of risk of harm are key to determining the most appropriate response and establishing whether the threshold for protective intervention has been met.

Youth Initiatives NI (YI) primarily does outreach youthwork serving 10-18 year olds. Some young people and adults at risk aged 18-25 stay on in the organisation as volunteers and some programmes include people over 18 participating in personal and social development programmes.

Whilst Youth Initiatives recognises that the primary responsibility for the care of children, young people and adults at risk rests with parents and guardians, the community as a whole has responsibility for their wellbeing and protecting them.

Youth Initiatives is committed to taking every appropriate step to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those with whom it works, regardless of class, gender, race or creed. This policy applies to all children, young people and adults at risk with whom Youth Initiatives is involved with regardless of age.

All Youth Initiatives staff, volunteers and casual workers must be aware of this policy and it is their duty to guarantee its implementation in accordance with their role and responsibilities.

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children, young people and adults at risk may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

- UN Convention of the human rights article 5
- Rights of the child Article 19
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017
- Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015
- Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011
- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents 2015

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is not Youth Initiatives responsibility to identify and investigate possible instances of abuse – this is the role of the statutory agencies: Social Services, PSNI, and NSPCC. However, Youth Initiatives does have a statutory responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns, allegations or disclosures.

### **The Appropriate Statutory Agencies involved in investigating safeguarding issues are:**

If you think a child, young person or adult at risk is in immediate danger, contact the police on **999**. If you're worried about a child, young person or adult at risk but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns.

- **Contact the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)**. The police can make an emergency protective response if there is an immediate concern about the safety of a child. **Tel: 999**
- **Contact the relevant Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) Gateway Services team**. In circumstances that are not an emergency, the [HSCT gateway services team](#) is the first point of contact for all new referrals to children's social services. (see contact details below)

- **The Regional Emergency Social Work Service** provides an emergency social work service outside of normal office hours, after 5:00pm, Monday to Friday, weekends and public/bank holidays- for emergencies that cannot wait until the next working day.
- **Contact the NSPCC Helpline** on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Our trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.
- **Contact thirtyone:eight** If you or anyone else you know, need to talk about these or if there is anything else that you want to report please contact **0303 003 1111**.

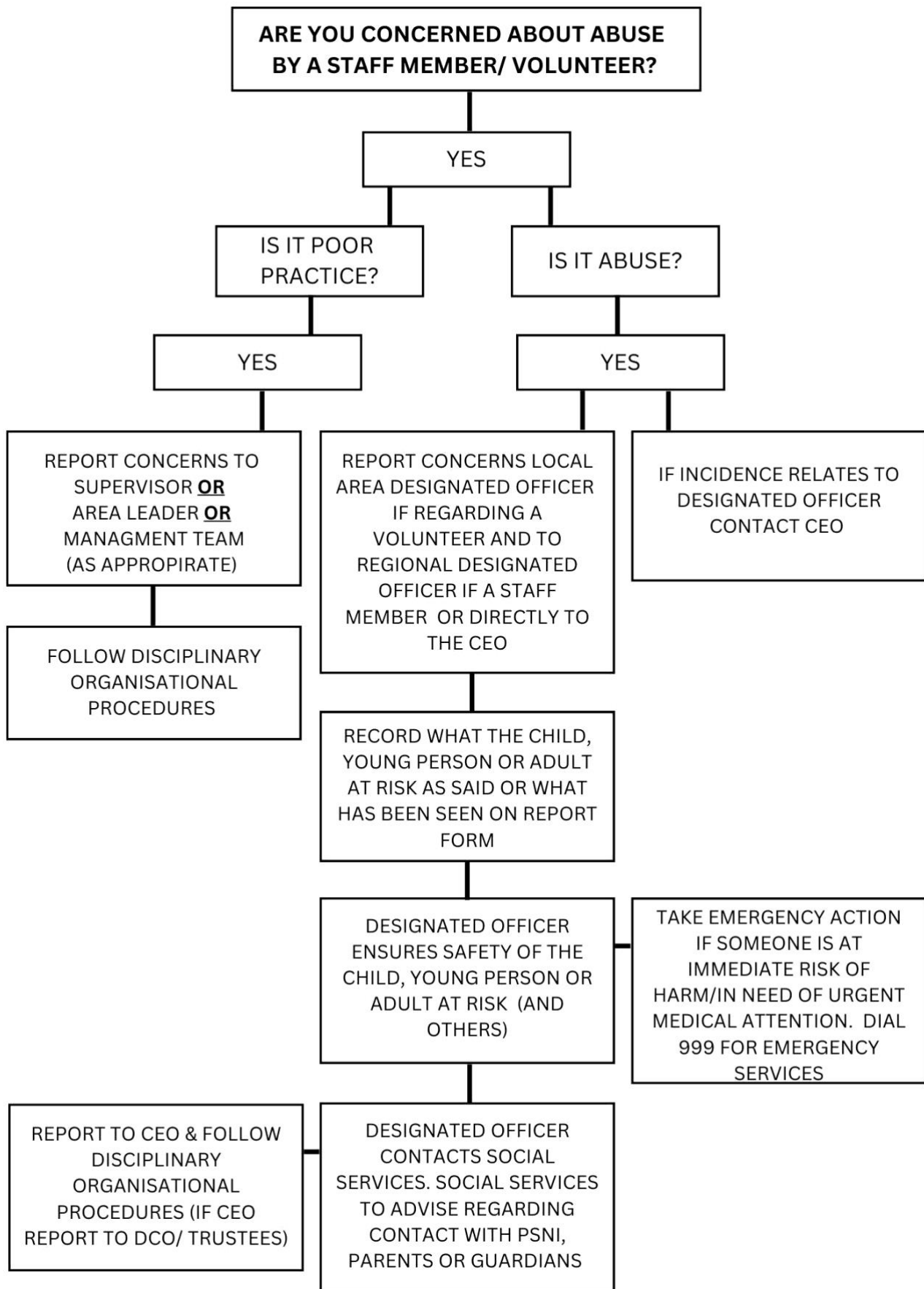
Office	9am – 5pm	Out of Hours Contact No
Belfast	028 9504 1744	028 9504 9999
Northern	028 9441 3659	028 9504 9999
South Eastern	028 9250 1227	028 9504 9999
Southern	028 3754 4423	028 9504 9999
Western	028 7161 1366	028 9504 9999

Services will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the children, young people and adults at risk as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

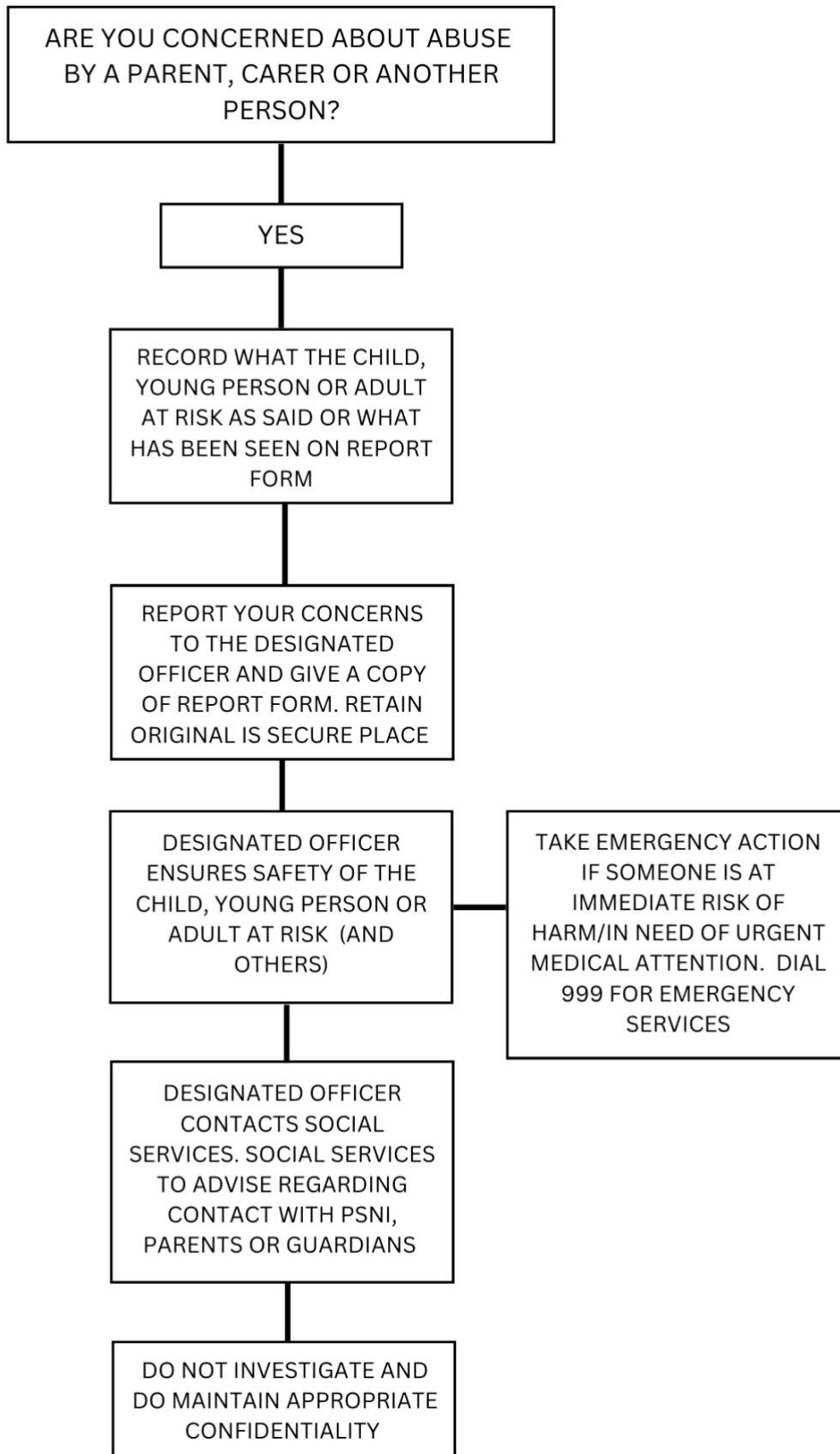
#### **Designated Safeguarding Officers 2022/2023 for Youth Initiatives:**

Siobhan Darragh	West Belfast	02890 301174
Sarah Nilles	Downpatrick	02890 301174
Jonny Ewan	L/Derry	02890 301174
Wade Aitken	East Belfast	02890 301174
Rory O'Halloran	Ballymac	02890 301174
Ryan Lilley	Lisburn	02890 301174
Heather Torney	Banbridge	02890 301174
Lynda Whinnery	Crosslinks	02890 301174
Tony Silcock	Regional	02890 301174

**Safeguarding: Reporting a Concern Flowchart (Staff Member/ Volunteer)**



Safeguarding: Reporting a Concern Flowchart





## Safeguarding: Dealing with complaints

***Youth Initiatives has clear standards and systems for enabling, recording and dealing with complaints by either children, young people or adults.***

Our organisation has an ethos of inclusion, transparency and openness which is communicated to everyone involved including staff, children, young people and adults at risk.

There are appropriate procedures in place to share concerns or make complaints about the organisation. Children, young people, adults at risk or parents can speak directly to a youth worker or Area Leader to raise a concern. They may also raise concerns to the CEO or Management Team by contacting

**Tel: 02890 301174** or [office@youthinitiatives.com](mailto:office@youthinitiatives.com).

Complaints procedures are communicated appropriately to everyone involved in the organisation, including children, young people or adults through the YI Website and safeguarding video.

Having a culture of inclusion, transparency and openness means that the organisation has nothing to hide in terms of its practice, and that it is open to feedback from children, young people, adults at risk, parents and guardians, staff and volunteers with a view to improving how it carries out its activities and delivers its services.

It is important to communicate that our organisation is committed to this principle through having a statement to this effect in our Safeguarding Policy.

Youth Initiatives treats everyone with dignity and respect and is committed to safeguarding them from harm, we will encourage and enable them to take an active role in planning and decision-making.

Some ways this can be achieved are through:

- A commitment to a listening environment within the organisation;
- A member's forum for those who use our services and staff/volunteers who discuss matters affecting their interests;
- Maintaining a record of matters and suggestions made by young people, volunteers and staff and their representatives and actions taken;
- Involvement of youth representatives on interview panels;
- Providing regular feedback on actions taken and developments in the organisation.

It is also important to establish and maintain contact with the parents and legal guardians who are involved in your organisation. Users will have a wealth of knowledge about the emotional, physical and cultural needs of the participants whom they care for or work with.

## **Complaints Procedure**

This procedure is to provide a parent/guardian, child, young person or adult at risk who considers that they have a grievance, with the opportunity to have it examined quickly and effectively, and where a grievance is deemed to exist, to have it resolved if possible, at the earliest practical time.

### **Stage 1 - Initial Contact**

When a parent/guardian, child, young person or adult at risk feels aggrieved on any matter they should discuss the problem initially with the worker responsible for the programme. They will attempt to resolve the issue, consulting where necessary the other members of management. The worker should reply to the grievance as soon as possible, and in any case, within three working days from the time the grievance was first raised.

### **Stage 2 – Involvement of Area Leader or Management Team Member**

If the parent/guardian, child, young person or adult at risk with the grievance is not satisfied with the reply from the worker, or has not received a reply within three working days they may request that the matter be raised with the worker's Area Leader.

On receipt of such a request the Area Leader shall make arrangements to hear the grievance. It is the responsibility of the Area Leader to make arrangements for the hearing to be held within ten working days of the grievance being raised with them.

### **Stage 3 – Involvement of the CEO**

If the parent/guardian, child, young person or adult at risk with the grievance is not satisfied with the reply from the worker's Area Leader or has not received a reply within three working days they may request that the matter be raised with the CEO or Management Team member.

The CEO or Management Team member, on receipt of such a request shall make arrangements to hear the grievance. It is the responsibility of the CEO or Management Team member to make arrangements for the hearing to be held within ten working days of the grievance being raised with them.

Reference to the CEO is the final stage of the grievance.