

YOUNG FOUNDATION

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Contents

Overview.....	3
Training	3
Purpose	4
Definitions.....	5
Children and young people	5
Vulnerable adults	5
Consent with children	7
Gatekeeper consent.....	7
Minimising risk	8
Immediate action	9
Making a referral.....	9
Information required when making a referral.....	10
Substantiated allegations.....	10
Whistle blowing	10
Following a safeguarding incident	10
Lone working.....	11
In the event of an incident.....	11
Legal Framework.....	12
Other related YF policies.....	12

OVERVIEW

The Young Foundation (YF) is committed to creating an environment in which participation in research, community activities or other events that we may deliver protects the welfare of all participants and its staff. This policy is intended to cover our work across the whole of the UK, including Northern Ireland. The relevant legal frameworks and policies which have been consulted in drawing up this document are listed in the appendix.

A particular area of concern relates to young people and vulnerable adults involved in our work, with a commitment to ensure they are safe from harm and abuse and any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately dealt with. However, safeguarding also extends beyond these groups to all participants, with a requirement to ensure that issues such as power imbalances between participants and staff, or the exploration of sensitive subjects, do not cause harm to arise during the process.

Safeguarding also extends to the welfare of Young Foundation staff, including issues such as lone working safety and the potential impacts on emotional and mental wellbeing of discussing sensitive issues or working with certain groups.

The Young Foundation requires all staff and volunteers to be aware of this policy, support it and act with the interests of all participants and their own personal safety as paramount. YF staff and volunteers should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of the people they are working with. Safeguarding awareness will be a required part of the induction process and managers must ensure all new staff working directly with communities receive, read and understand this policy, which will be reviewed yearly. Appropriate training and support will be given to staff to enable them to deal with safeguarding issues effectively.

The name of the safeguarding officer for the Young Foundation is Victoria Boelman, Director of Research and a copy of this safeguarding policy will be kept in the staff handbook. This policy applies to all staff, associates, fellows, the Board and anyone else conducting work on behalf of the Young Foundation.

Training

The Young Foundation will offer training to staff and volunteers whose work brings them into contact with young people and vulnerable adults so that they are able to recognise the indicators of possible physical, emotional, sexual and secondary abuse and neglect as highlighted in ANNEX 3. All staff will sign a form to state they have read, understood and will comply with the safeguarding policy.

Purpose

YF is committed to safeguarding welfare, particularly of children and vulnerable adults. It believes that everyone, regardless of their sexuality, race, nationality or country of origin have the same right to protection. YF staff and volunteers should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of the people they are working with.

It defines abuse as neglect, physical, sexual or emotional harm, and bullying, racial or cultural abuse.

The purpose of The Young Foundation's safeguarding policy is to:

- 1.** To ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with a definition of safeguarding, understand their responsibilities and how to recognise and minimise the risk of abuse or other harm.
- 2.** To ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the appropriate recording, reporting and information retention procedures for safeguarding issues.
- 3.** To ensure a multi-agency approach is followed when dealing with safeguarding incidents or alleged incidents

WORKING WITH SPECIFIC GROUPS

Definitions

Children and young people

A child is anyone under the age of 18. Child protection is the response to the different ways in which a young person's or child's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.

Safeguarding is defined in *Working together to safeguard children 2013* as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Vulnerable adults

Adults aged 18 and over have the potential to be vulnerable (either temporarily or permanently) for a variety of reasons and in different situations. An adult may be vulnerable if he/she meets any of the following criteria:

- Has a learning or physical disability;
- Has a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs;
- Has a reduction in physical or mental capacity;
- Is in the receipt of any form of healthcare;
- Is detained in custody;
- Is receiving community services because of age, health or disability;
- Is living in sheltered or residential care home;
- Is homeless, a refugee or asylum seeker, or without recourse to public funds;
- Is unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

It is recognised that people who meet one or more of the criteria above may not be vulnerable at all, or all of the time. We also recognise that vulnerability is 'a state not a trait' and people may become vulnerable at certain times, e.g. following a bereavement or job loss. However, until direct contact is made by a member of staff or associate of YF with people on an individual basis, that it may be impossible to identify whether vulnerability exists in relation to an activity or event involving adults that they are planning.

CONSENT WITH VULNERABLE GROUPS

All staff working with children and young people or vulnerable adults should be aware of specific considerations around the need for consent. This is particularly the case where work is specifically with children and young people or vulnerable adults either individually or in small groups, and/ or where the nature of the work is specifically related to their vulnerability.

Prior to working specifically with vulnerable groups, or where it is highly likely that there will be the involvement of vulnerable groups, YF staff must:

- Review the available literature on best practice for obtaining consent from and methods for working with the specific target group(s)
 - This may include the development of special materials – e.g. Easy Read forms with pictures for adults with learning disabilities or literacy problems, and young children or the development of a clear protocol for “rolling/ process consent” when working on research relating to particularly sensitive topics.
- Evaluate the potential risks to participants and put in place a plan to mitigate these as appropriate. These should include a consideration of the potential impacts of any power imbalance and whether issues such as a financial incentive may have an undue influence on consent.
- Consider whether additional ‘gatekeeper’ consent is required, e.g. from care workers, family members or others in the case of adults with severe cognitive impairments.
- Submit their proposed processes and materials for obtaining consent and research methods to the Director of Research for ethical review

Obtaining consent does not mean that a signature on a form is necessary on every occasion. Consent is a process - it results from understanding through dialogue and the provision of information. Consent may be expressly given; alternatively it may be signalled by a person’s conduct. It does not matter so much how a vulnerable individual shows consent, whether this is by way of signing a form, or saying, or indicating by another means that s/he agrees. The important issue is to ensure the consent given is valid.

Consent of a vulnerable individual is considered valid only if:

- S/he has the capacity to consent, that is, s/he can understand and weigh up the information needed to make the decision
- Sufficient information has been given to him or her, in an appropriate way, on which to base the decision; and
- Consent has been given on a voluntary basis that is free from coercion or negative influence.

If any of these three factors is absent, consent cannot be considered to be valid.

Consent must also be considered throughout the process – if there is any sign, be that verbal or otherwise, that a participant may not wish to continue, the staff member must remind them of their right to withdraw.

Consent with children

Consent to a child/young person's participation in research should normally be obtained from the person with parental responsibility (see Gatekeeper consent, below). In addition, children who are capable of forming their own views should be granted the right to express them freely in all matters affecting them, commensurate with their age and maturity.

Gatekeeper consent

In the case of children and young people, consent must also be obtained from the parent or guardian.

For vulnerable adults, staff must consider whether additional 'gatekeeper' consent is required, e.g. from care workers, family members or others in the case of adults with severe cognitive impairments.

SAFEGUARDING APPROACH

The Young Foundation has appointed a designated safeguarding officer, whose name is Victoria Boelman, Director of Research. If any worker has any child or vulnerable adult safety concerns, they should discuss them with the safeguarding officer as a matter of urgency. The safeguarding officer has the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice through training, tracking paperwork (i.e. incident report forms), and, monitoring and reviewing practice;
- Being the first point of contact for child and/or adult safeguarding or protection issues;
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child and/or adult safeguarding or protection issues;
- Escalating child and/or adult safeguarding or protection concerns to the relevant authorities and keeping records on all developments ;
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Safeguarding Representative.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.

Minimising risk

To ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers and the people we work with will:

- Ensure that all YF staff and volunteers working with young people have gone through a standard or enhanced DBS check (as appropriate) and have received induction training relating to the YF safeguarding policy
- Ensure that all YF staff and volunteers are carefully selected and trained following YF selection procedures and by providing two references (who are not related to the individual and where appropriate one should be the last employer). All staff complete a probationary period.
- Ensure that all YF staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with the 'YF Code of Conduct' regarding what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour when dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure our work and approach is ethical and that informed consent is sought, and the relevant consent forms are signed
- Respect the views and wishes of those we work with
- Ensure that the area we are using for activities is fit for purpose
- Ensure that all staff are aware of our policies and procedures and signed up to this process

All posts working with children and young people will be exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended).

Immediate action

If immediate action is necessary it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child or children and/or vulnerable adults concerned, including:

- If emergency medical attention dial 999 or taking someone to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child and/or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger contact the police by dialling 999

In the event of an incident or concern we will:

1. Listen to the child/young person/vulnerable adult
2. Give the child and/or vulnerable adult time and attention
3. Allow the child and/or vulnerable adult to talk about their concern freely without interruptions or without making judgments
4. Explain that we cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality
5. Reassure the child and/or vulnerable adult that, and tell them they have done the right thing in telling you, and if appropriate, that they have not done anything wrong
6. Take whatever is said seriously. Take accurate notes of exactly what is said by filling out an incident report form avoiding assumptions and conjecture. Record as much detail as possible, e.g. the timing, setting and people present, and the child's and/or vulnerable adult's presentation as well as what was said. Information will be passed to the safeguarding officer and stored securely.
7. Tell the child and/or vulnerable adult what we are going to do next and
8. explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
9. We will minimise the need for the child and/or vulnerable adult to repeat his or her story.
10. Use the child's and/or vulnerable adult's own words where possible.
11. If parents or carers have been involved in the meeting, a copy of the notes should be agreed with and shared with them.
12. Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the YF designated safeguarding officer and the named safeguarding officer in the institution and recorded using the form in ANNEX 2. in the incident report log.
13. Speak immediately to the Local Authority or NSPCC for further advice and guidance.

Making a referral

Unless there is a concern that requires immediate action, the safeguarding officer has the responsibility of making a referral to the police or social services.

1. Parents/carers will be informed of a referral if possible and if this does not put the child at risk of harm.
2. If the concern is about harm or risk of harm from a family member or someone known to the children and/or vulnerable adults, we will make a telephone referral to the Child Assessment and Investigation Team (CAIT) or equivalent in the area where the child and/or vulnerable adult resides
3. If our concern is about harm or risk of harm from someone not known to the child and/or vulnerable adult family, we will contact the Police directly.

Information required when making a referral

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible:

- Our name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- The full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and/or vulnerable adult and siblings.
- The gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- The names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others if possible
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family and/or vulnerable adult e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School, if possible.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for the concern.
- An opinion on whether the child and/or vulnerable adult may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Our view of what appears to be the needs of the child and/or vulnerable adult and their family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with Parental Responsibility has been given to the referral being made and why.

Substantiated allegations

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed, the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, The Young Foundation should agree with the Police or Social Services as appropriate further action to be taken and by whom.

Whistle blowing

Whistle blowing is when a member of staff raises a concern about malpractice or a dangerous activity that they are aware of through their work. The Young Foundation encourages staff to raise concerns about safeguarding young people with us in the first instance. Staff should follow The Young Foundation procedures on whistle blowing with their line manager.

Following a safeguarding incident

The YF safeguarding officer will ensure that YF keep an accurate record of the concern(s) made at the time and accurately record the action agreed and taken and the reasons for this decision. Confidential records relating to safeguarding incidents will be kept safely at the office in a secured facility (for YF this is a locked cupboard close to the safeguarding officer). All records made in relation to a referral will be kept confidentially and in a secure place and information will be shared on a "need to know" basis.

SAFEGUARDING FOR STAFF

The wellbeing and safety of staff is of equal importance to that of participants. All staff who are working out of the office must take reasonable steps to assess the likely risks of doing so. Concerns should be raised with the member of SMT responsible for the project prior to undertaking any work.

Lone working

At times, staff will be required to work alone, sometimes in the homes of participants or at other community locations. Staff must adhere to the following process:

- Ensure name of participant, address of meeting and times of meetings are stored securely on the server but accessible by the project team
- Inform at least one colleague of planned appointments in advance – and arrange to check-in and check-out (by text or call) before and after each appointment
- Agree a time after which your designated contact will call you (and on what number) if you fail to check-in

YF policy is also that staff must put their personal safety above the needs of any project. As such if at any time you feel unsafe (e.g. when interviewing in a private home) then you must terminate the interview as soon as possible and leave the location.

In the event of an incident

If a member of staff has been involved in an incident where they felt threatened or were assaulted the member of staff should report this to their Project Manager, Head of HR or a member of SMT as soon as is practical (but not prior to calling the emergency services in the event they are required).

The Young Foundation will take all reasonable steps to support the member of staff. We will:

- Log the incident, including who was involved (victim, perpetrator(s) and any witnesses), its location and time, and the nature of the incident. This data will be stored securely by the Safeguarding Officer.
- If desired by the individual, we will support making a report to the Police
- Victims will be given an opportunity to talk about their experience, including verbal abuse, which can be upsetting. The following will be considered (depending on the severity of the incident):
 - Debrief - speaking with the individual involved internally
 - Time off and/or access to counselling
 - Information and possible training for other members of staff, along with an update of risk assessment procedures.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Legal Framework

- This policy was drawn up based on the guidance provided by the NSPCC and SCIE is based on law and guidance that seeks to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults, including:
 - Children's Act 1989
 - The UNCRC
 - The Data Protection Act 1998
 - General Data Protection Regulation
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - The Children's Act 2004
 - Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice 2014
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
 - Information Sharing 2015
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005
 - Care Act 2014
 - Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
 - Getting it Right for Every Child (Scotland)
 - Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
 - Revised regional core child protection policies and procedures for Northern Ireland 2018
 - The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
 - Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017
 - Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015

Other related YF policies

This policy is further supported by the following Young Foundation Policies:

- Privacy Policy
- Dignity at Work
- Equal opportunities
- IT – information security Incident Management
- Health & Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- YF Code of Conduct

POLICY REVIEW

Policy approved on:	January 2019
Policy approved by:	
Safeguarding Officer	Moira Grant
CEO	Helen Goulden
Chair of Trustees	Julie Mellor

Policy to be revised annually	
Details of revisions:	
January 2021	Update of Safeguarding Officer details; New format