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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

VOLUNTEER INDUCTION

WHY IS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IMPORTANT

This session explains what is involved in safeguarding children and young people. It looks at:

- How you might be able to recognise abuse in a child or young person
- What you should do if you are concerned that a child is being abused or neglected

It is important to note that the term 'children' means children and young people from birth to their 18th birthday

WHY IS SAFEGUARDING IMPORTANT, EVEN IF YOU DO NOT VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN?

Protecting children from harm is important in everyday life because every child matters. If you only volunteer with adults, you need to be aware that those adults may at some point disclose important information about children or even their own childhood.

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Safeguarding for staff and volunteers

As a volunteer you have:

A duty of care, it is your duty to identify and report any concerns, not to act or investigate further

A responsibility to be aware of the Prevent strategy and an obligation to report concerns.

- Organisations have a duty in law to ensure that they safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

- Unfortunately, many children in the UK do not grow up in satisfactory conditions. Some children and their families need extra help to allow them to reach their full potential.

- In order to carry out their duty to safeguarding children, all staff and volunteers need to be able to understand and recognise signs of children being harmed.

DO YOU THINK A CHILD IS MORE LIKELY TO BE ABUSED BY A STRANGER OR SOMEONE THEY KNOW?

Children and young people may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or wider community setting.

The abuser(s) may be someone known to the child or, more rarely, a stranger. More often than not the person responsible for the abuse has a close relationship with the abused child.

Any child can be at risk of abuse regardless of their age, sex, ethnicity, ability or disability.

Those most at risk are babies and young children, those with learning difficulties and those with physical disabilities.

Young people are also at risk of abuse, and they may respond in ways that put them at further risk of harm, for example, by running away.

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can be divided into four main categories.

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse

Other forms of abuse include:

- Bullying
- Online abuse
- Living in a home where there is domestic violence
- Being in an abusive relationship (young people)
- Female genital mutilation
- Radicalisation

There are many other forms of harm inflicted on children and young people:

- Modern slavery
- Trafficking
- Honour-based violence
- Forced marriage
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE).

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIGN OF ABUSE?

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- Becoming withdrawn/seeming anxious
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- Lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- Poor bond or relationship with a parent
- Knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- Running away or going missing
- Unexplained bruises/burns or scalds on the body
- Any physical injury in a non-mobile baby – 'what doesn't cruise doesn't bruise'
- You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety & wellbeing

Which form of abuse might you suspect?
Please choose an option for both scenarios:

While you are volunteering, a mother starts talking to you about her 7-year-old daughter. She is worried because her daughter has started 'acting up', having mood swings and then sudden bursts of crying and is refusing to go anywhere without her mother. She has also suddenly started wetting the bed.?

While you are volunteering you notice that a child is being made fun of by children in the group for smelling and looking unclean.

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

Abuse and neglect during childhood increases the risk of:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Poor physical/mental health
- Early and multiple sexual relationships and teen pregnancy
- Risk of perpetrating or being a victim of domestic violence
- Difficulty with job performance
- Relationship problems
- Likelihood of going to prison

On the positive side, many children and young people, despite having suffered from abuse, overcome this adversity and go on to enjoy successful and contented lives.

VOICE OF A CHILD

- Hearing and capturing the voice of the child is really important
- You can be the child's advocate
- Listen to them and share information appropriately

DOMESTIC ABUSE

- Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

- Domestic abuse affects children adversely and if you become aware of potential or witnessed domestic abuse you need to share this with your volunteer Coordinator (or share with Ward Staff).

Your role in Safeguarding – what do you do?

As a volunteer you may meet children, young people and their families or carers. You have a responsibility to play your part in keeping children safe. If a child or young person gives you some information that indicates they may be being abused, but then insists you don't tell anyone, what should you do?

Please choose one option:

- Nothing – the child's confidentiality is more important
- Report it – the child's safety is more important

RAISING CONCERNS

WHO DO I TELL?

In the first instance raise any concerns with your Volunteer Coordinator or the person who is responsible for volunteers within your service area.

- Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and abused, whether physically or mentally.
- The law ensures that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, carers or anyone else who comes into contact with them.

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SESSION SUMMARY

- All children have the right to grow up in a secure and loving environment that caters for all aspects of their development including physical, intellectual, social, emotional, behavioural and sexual development.
- Child abuse is the maltreatment of a child through action or lack of proper care by parents or adult carers
- There are four categories of child abuse:
  - Physical abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Neglect
  - Sexual abuse
- Domestic abuse damages children and may indicate that there are other types of child abuse occurring
- Multiple forms of abuse may be affecting the child - Any type of abuse can cause long-term damage to a child both during childhood and in later life
- **It is a volunteer's responsibility to immediately raise any safeguarding concerns**

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THANK YOU!

The content of this training was developed by NHS England, E-Learning for Healthcare and has been adapted by **Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**, to provide an accessible format, ensuring that all volunteers have the same basic learning when they start in their role.