

CHRIST IN THE CENTRE

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

For: Creative team
Company crew
Company members
Volunteers

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CiTC aims to provide safe, positive and empowering environment for all young people who engage in projects, programmes and events organised directly by it, or in partnership with other organisations. The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure that we do everything we are able to ensure the safety and protection of young people and adults with whom they come into contact.

CiTC believes that the safety and well being of young people is paramount and that all young people have the right to protection from abuse, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity.

CiTC's work with young people aims to be fun, engaging and rewarding. This can only be achieved in an atmosphere of trust and respect. CiTC recognises that all children, young people and the adults who work with them have a right to protection. We take seriously our responsibility for the young people in our care and wish to offer our staff information and support to ensure that we provide a safe working environment for everyone.

Ratios

The following ratio's are to be adhered to in weekly rehearsals.

1:20
2:30
3:40
4:50

The following ratio's are to be adhered to in residential settings / off site projects.

1:6
2:12
3:20
4:25
5:30

Staff and young people are to be made aware of who the CP officers are for each project or event where young people are present.

CiTC acknowledges that staff (both core and temporary or freelance and volunteers) are not usually employed/engaged in positions that require them to develop long term relationships with young persons. CiTC does however recognise that staff can develop short term relationships which can give them access and insight to personal information and place them in a position of power, influence and responsibility for young persons in their care.

Disclosure and Barring Service

CiTC requires all staff to provide evidence of a DBS (formerly CRB) certificate. (nb. The Police Act 1997 makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with young people and or to knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with young people)

The following guidelines aim to provide:

- Appropriate safety and protection for young persons and CiTC team members.
- Clear procedures for CiTC team members to implement into their working practice with young people and to help them to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

CiTC recognises that there are a variety of approaches required to ensure an effective preventative strategy. These include:

- Creating the right environment.
- Developing practice standards.
- Empowering young persons and staff.
- Sharing information and developing a monitoring role.

Implementation includes:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of conduct for all staff.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice to ensure that all staff have awareness of the issues which can cause harm to young people and that all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Sharing information and concerns with agencies who need to know.
- Following procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.
- Providing effective management for all staff through supervision, support and training.

CiTC is committed to reviewing this policy and procedures at least every 2 years.

Next review January 2015.

Child Protection Procedures Information for Staff Good Practice Guidelines

All staff are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour when they are working with young persons.

Good practice in arts activities

- Work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication). If a staff member needs to work with a young person on a 1:1 basis this should be done in a public space, or if this is not appropriate, in a room with the door left open. Other staff/group leaders should be informed of the meeting.
- Treat children and young people equally and with respect and dignity. Put the welfare of children and young people first. Strive to build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision making process.
- Ensure that if any form of physical contact is necessary, it should be provided openly and children and young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Involve group leaders wherever possible. For example, group leaders should be encouraged to take responsibility for their young persons in changing areas. If groups have to be supervised in changing areas, staff should ensure they work in pairs or in partnership with the group leader.
- If possible the gender ratio should reflect the groups composition. The young persons should be made aware of/or have access to a named person to whom they can report any concerns.
- Be an excellent role model.
- Establish supportive, positive environments that encourage healthy competition, skill development, fun and achievement by for example giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism, and praise for effort as well as achievement.
- Recognise the development needs and capability of the children and young people.
- Be aware of any special needs of the children and young people whether this be due to cultural, religious, physical, emotional or other needs, prior to working with them.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given. In addition to completing an accident form the parent/carer of the young person should be notified of any injury occurs.
- Ensure confidentiality of information in order to protect the rights of all staff and young people, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided for a project (Data Protection Act 1998).

Practices to be avoided

The following should be always be avoided except in emergencies. Staff should:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with young persons away from others.
- Avoid taking to or dropping off individual young persons at an event.
- Avoid acting in loco parentis unless it is your job to do so.
- Avoid developing intimate relationships or showing favouritism to young people.
- Avoid entering a young persons room or inviting a young person into theirs.

The above should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of whoever is acting in loco parentis ie. stage manager, chaperone etc. For example if a child or young person sustains an injury and needs to go to the hospital or a young person is displaying behaviour which could be harmful to themselves or others.

Practices never to be sanctioned

Staff should never:

- Develop an intimate relationship with a young person.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Share a dressing room or a bedroom with a young person .
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun.
- Take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a young person.
- Reduce a young person to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for young people.
- Invite or allow a young person to visit or stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.
- Do not exchange personal contact details including email and telephone numbers.
- Give out personal contact details including mobile phone numbers and email addresses.

N.B. It is recognised that it may sometimes be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for a young person, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and group leaders. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a young person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report them to CiTCs CP Officer and record the incident immediately. You should also inform the group leader and/or the parents of the young person.

- **If you accidentally hurt a young person.**
- **If a young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.**
- **If a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said/done.**
- **If a young person seems extremely distressed.**

Reporting Abuse

There are several different categories of abuse officially defined in Government Guidance.

Physical

Where children are hurt by ill treatment, or deliberate or neglectful failure to prevent injury or harm.

Emotional

Where children are persistently or severely emotionally neglected or rejected, for example, by not being given love or attention, made to feel worthless, or being intimidated by threats or taunts.

Sexual

Where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity.

Neglect

Where children's physical and/or psychological needs are persistently or severely neglected, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger.

Fundamentally all forms of child abuse come down to the misuse of adult power over children and young people. Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. A staff member can have regular contact with young persons and be an important link in identifying cases where young people need protection. A member of staff may become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of abuse from a number of sources:

- i) directly from a young person
- ii) from someone else
- iii) from signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- iv) from a young persons behaviour
- v) from disclosure by a third party
- vi) from something about the behaviour of a colleague/Staff.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

If a member of staff suspects abuse has occurred they should consider the context of the situation and report the matter according to the following guidelines. In all cases a staff member should listen, accept, reassure, explain, act immediately, record and get support.

Do:

Stay Calm

Listen and hear. Give time to the person to say what they want

Reassure that they have done the right thing in telling

Record in Writing
what was said as soon as possible

Report to the CiTC CP Officer

Don't:

Panic

Ask leading questions

Promise to keep secrets

Inquire into details of the abuse

Make the young person repeat the story un-necessarily

Record your Report

Do ensure action is taken. The one thing a staff member must not do is NOTHING! It is not the responsibility of the CiTC team member to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Use of photographic/filming equipment at events

There has been national concern that some people use events involving young people as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people in vulnerable positions. All Staff should be vigilant and any concerns should to be reported to the CiTC CP Officer as soon as possible.

Individuals and organisations commissioned by us or working in partnership with us cannot use film and photography without the consent of the participating groups. Staff should only take and store photographs of young persons with their formal consent and use them for specific purposes (eg. feedback/publicity). Young persons and their parents/carers should be made aware of how images will be used and stored.
