



# **NORFOLK LOWLAND SEARCH AND RESCUE**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PRACTICE**

The aim of this document is to ensure that all volunteers fully understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and young people.

### **1.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Committee must ensure that:

- All volunteers are aware of the procedure regarding child protection referral, and that all new volunteers are aware of them on appointment.
- The agreed procedure is followed every time a child protection concern is identified.
- All volunteers who are involved in work which involves children and young people receive child protection training, including working with the agreed procedure within the first six months of appointment.

The Committee has additional responsibility for:

- The processing of any referral documentation and for liaising with statutory bodies administering the referral.
- Keeping up to date with any changes to child protection law and informing and advising staff and volunteers of such changes.
- Keeping and storing all records in a safe and confidential manner.

All volunteers have responsibility for:

- Recording and reporting any concerns relating to child protection matters to the Chairman OR one of the nominated NORLSAR Child Protection Officers.

### **2.0 VOLUNTEER TRAINING**

A small number of NORLSAR volunteers have agreed to be nominated Child Protection) officers and have signed up to additional training provided by a

recognised external trainer. An up to date list of such nominated NORLSAR Child Protection Officers is attached to this policy.

In addition all volunteers will attend Child Protection Policy awareness training.

And will receive induction child protection training for these procedures and access to training.

### **3.0 THE PROCEDURE:**

#### **3.1 Initial Response:**

Volunteers will usually come to know about instances of abuse in one of two ways;

- **Disclosure**  
When someone who is being, or has been abused or someone who knows about the abuse, or has concerns the abuse is occurring tells you that it is happening or has happened.
- **Observation**  
When behaviour, appearance, attitude, injury, etc, observed by you or observed by others and reported to you, give cause for concern.

If a child/young person *discloses* to you it is important to:

- Stay calm.
- If you are talking directly to the child, reassure them.
- Make sure that the child knows you cannot keep secrets.
- Consider who else can hear.
- Listen.
- Not ask leading questions or push the child for more information.
- Inform the child what will happen next.
- Record everything you have seen/heard as soon as possible.
- Follow the procedures.

If you, or others, *observe* changes in behaviour, physical injury or changes in attitude or appearance you should:

- Record everything that you observe including times and dates and the nature of your concern.
- In cases of injury, if appropriate ask the child what happened; ask yourself if the injury matches the 'story'.

- Talk with your colleagues about your concerns and their observations.
- Remember not to ask the child/young person leading questions.
- Follow the procedures.

Care must be taken in interpreting children's responses to questions about, indications of, or information about, abuse.

Asking leading questions can be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind. You should not ask questions which encourage the child to change his or her version of events in any way, or which impose your own assumptions (For example, "Tell me what happened.". Rather than "Did they do this to you?") Your role is to listen and not interrupt when the child is recalling significant events, and to make a record of the discussion which should include the time, date, place and people present as well as what has been said. The recording with clear facts, observations, allegations and options be signed and dated by the writer. The original record of concern whether hand written or typed must be passed to one of the nominated NORLSAR Child Protection Officers.

- 3.2 Once a disclosure has been made or observations have given cause for concern, volunteers **MUST** take action.
- 3.3 You must record any conversations or observations fully and ensure that these recordings are kept safe and confidential whilst in your care, and as soon as possible hand your records to either your Team Leader (if on an exercise or call out) or to a nominated NORLSAR Child Protection Officers.
- 3.4 When a child protection arises in respect of a child who is in the care of, or the responsibility of another organisation, (for example during a call out the POLICE should be contacted and their Child Protection procedure initiated) that organisation child protection designated worker should be contacted and their child protection procedure initiated.

#### LIST OF NORLSAR NOMINATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 1. Name | Date |
| 2. Name | Date |
| 3. Name | Date |