

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy



Last updated: August 2021

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OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

If you have a concern about a child or vulnerable adult in your role at Let's Talk About Loss, do not keep those concerns to yourself. If the person is in immediate danger, phone 999.

*Please note, this policy applies to everyone - not just meet up attendees. If you hear **anything** concerning, even if it's about someone outside of LTAL, you have an obligation to act.*

If the person is not in immediate danger, raise your concerns via a verbal report (phone call) to the LTAL Director on 07771 875425.

Once you have alerted someone verbally, make a formal report using the Incident Report Form. This should be a factual account of the incident, the date and time, and include your signature.

Send your report to the Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer by emailing safeguarding@letstalkaboutloss.org

Remember: safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and it is essential that you read through this policy and fully understand your role and responsibility when you are working for (including volunteering for) Let's Talk About Loss.

NAMED PERSONS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer of Let's Talk About Loss:

Beth French

Contact number 07771875425

Contact email hello@letstalkaboutloss.org /
safeguarding@letstalkaboutloss.org

Please note: if the Director does not answer immediately, please try again in one hour and put your concerns in an email.

The Designated Trustee for Safeguarding: Rohit Sagoo

Contact email safeguardingtrustee@letstalkaboutloss.org

USEFUL CONTACTS

Any safeguarding concerns that need to be reported to the authorities should be sent to the team responsible within that local authority. As an example, we have included the right links for Bristol based safeguarding concerns:

EXAMPLE ONLY: Adults at risk safeguarding reporting form:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/report-suspected-abuse-safeguarding-adults-at-risk>

EXAMPLE ONLY: Children safeguarding reporting form:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/first-response-for-professionals-working-with-children>

Here are some other useful contacts for advice and anonymous support:

Help for adults concerned about a child (under-18): NSPCC (UK) call 0808 800 5000

Help for under-18s: Childline (UK) call 0800 1111

Help for adults: Samaritans (UK) call 116 123 / SHOUT (UK) text 85258 / C.A.L.L. (Wales) call 0800 132 737 /

Mental health support and information: Mind Infoline (UK) call 0300 123 3393

Domestic Abuse helpline: Refuge (UK) call 0808 2000 247

THE WORK OF LET'S TALK ABOUT LOSS

Let's Talk About Loss exists to support young people aged 18-35 who are bereaved. Our work includes, but is not limited, to:

- Running monthly peer support meet up groups in towns and cities across the UK
- Managing a blog about grief with contributors across the UK
- Running events that encourage young people to talk through the taboo of grief, including panel discussions, live events, art exhibitions and more
- Encouraging the public to talk more openly about grief, through projects, events and campaigns
- Creating digital resources (website and social media content) that promotes talking about grief
- Any other work the Trustees consider appropriate.

We are committed to putting the wellbeing and safety of every young person engaging with Let's Talk About Loss at the forefront of everything we do. This policy outlines how we will fulfil our duty of care, and safeguard those we work with. It also outlines how we will safeguard our staff, volunteers, trustees and partner organisations.

At Let's Talk About Loss, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Abuse and neglect have devastating effects on children, adults, families and wider society. Further to this, incidents and allegations can harm the work of the charity. It is essential that safeguarding is our highest priority, and this policy outlines clearly each person's roles and responsibilities in protecting children and adults at risk from any harm.

SCOPE AND TERMINOLOGY

This safeguarding policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, advisors and contracted associates working on behalf of Let's Talk About Loss in any capacity and in any setting. Any partner organisations working with Let's Talk About Loss need to share our commitment to this safeguarding policy.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are used:

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child or adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may include but is not limited to: Physical Abuse, Verbal Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Neglect, Online Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Domestic Abuse and Criminal Exploitation.

Adults at risk: Any person who is aged 18 years or over and who is at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support (Care Act 2014, England). They may have an illness affecting their mental or physical health, have a learning disability, suffer from drug or alcohol problems or be vulnerable. Having a bereavement does not fall within this definition, but Let's Talk About Loss is committed to supporting vulnerable adults through bereavement.

Child: According to the law in England and Wales, a child includes babies, children and young people from pre-birth until the age of 18. In Scotland, in most situations a child is under-18 but in some contexts a child may be defined as a person under 16 years of age.

Safeguarding: Promoting the welfare of children and adults means protecting them from maltreatment, preventing harm to their health or development, ensuring they have safe care and taking action to enable them to have the best outcomes.

Early identification: Statutory guidance places significant importance on the opportunity of early help and support for children and adults at risk, to avoid intervention at a later time.

THE STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE OF A VULNERABLE CHILD

The UK Government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' categorises and defines abuse in terms of:

- Physical abuse including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.
- Emotional abuse including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Sexual abuse including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- Neglect including failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to provide adequate supervision and/or access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Domestic abuse including witnessing domestic abuse

All those involved with Let's Talk About Loss need to be aware that bereaved and grieving vulnerable children and young adults can be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship as a means of obtaining support. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online.

Bullying and cyberbullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

Let's Talk About Loss will assess posts on social networking sites, chat rooms, messaging services etc to ensure abuse is not occurring.

CHARITY COMMISSION EXPECTATIONS

The following expectations from the Charity Commission will be adhered to:

1. All trustees will make sure their charity:
 - a. Has policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries
 - b. Have checks in place to confirm that people are suitable to act in their roles
 - c. Has trained staff and volunteers who know how to spot and handle concerns
 - d. Has a clear reporting system to be used as soon as concerns are identified
 - e. Sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register
 - f. Follows all statutory guidance and good practice
 - g. Is quick to respond to concerns and responds appropriately
 - h. Ensures that protecting people from harm is central to its culture
 - i. Has enough resources and personnel to safeguard effectively
 - j. Regularly reviews safeguarding policies and procedures

2. If there is an incident or allegation of abuse we will:
 - a. Handle and record it responsibly
 - b. Follow all policies and procedures and act quickly
 - c. Report it to any relevant agencies and regulators in full
 - d. Be open and transparent about the incident
 - e. Review the incident to stop it happening again
 - f. Report to the police, or the Charity Commission, where appropriate

3. In working with children or adults at risk we will:
 - a. Work with excellent safeguarding policies and procedures that all trustees, staff and volunteers follow
 - b. Provide all staff and volunteers annual training on working with children and adults at risk and their safeguarding responsibilities
 - c. Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer
 - d. Manage concerns, complaints, allegations and whistleblowing effectively and following legislation and guidance
 - e. Identify and work with local authority safeguarding boards

OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

Let's Talk About Loss works to the following principles of safeguarding:

Empowerment - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

Partnership – Communities (such as meet ups and online) have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

One Team – Each member, including Trustees, Staff, Volunteers and Attendees plays a part in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

We make the following commitments:

- Safeguarding is our highest priority, and is embedded throughout our leadership, governance and culture.
- Staff and volunteers working with children (under-18s) have enhanced DBS checks.
- Young people are empowered to shape our activities, decisions and reviews.
- All individuals have an equal right to protection from abuse and neglect, regardless of their age, ability, gender, disability, nationality, racial heritage, faith, sexual orientation, identity or any other additional vulnerability.
- We will support all our staff, trustees and volunteers to properly implement safeguarding best practices.
- Our physical and online environments will be safe and secure, and promote positive experiences for all attendees.
- We have a clear process for reporting, acting on and following up safeguarding concerns, which are regularly reviewed.
- Our safeguarding policy will be publicly available on our website.

VOLUNTEER AND STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At Let's Talk About Loss, we rely on volunteers to help run our meet up groups.

Our volunteer **Hosts** are responsible for:

- Complete training appropriate to their role, including but not limited to, safeguarding vulnerable adults, managing their wellbeing as Hosts, and how to run meet up groups online.
- Ensuring that any risk assessment created includes consideration of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Raising any concerns immediately with their Host Coordinator or the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Our volunteer **Host Coordinators** are responsible for:

- Complete safeguarding training upon appointment and once a year.
- Raising any concerns either of their own, or from a Host, to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- Support Hosts to understand safeguarding responsibilities and ensure they regularly review the safeguarding policy.
- Abiding by Safer Recruitment practices for new volunteer Hosts, including requesting an enhanced DBS check for anyone working with children (under 18s).

Our **paid staff** are responsible for:

- Completing training appropriate to their role, including but not limited to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Allowing LTAL to complete an enhanced DBS check for any staff working with children as part of LTAL's commitment to Safer Recruitment.
- Ensuring that any risk assessment created includes consideration of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Raising any concerns immediately with their Host Coordinator or the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

The **Director (also the Designated Safeguarding Officer)** is responsible for:

- Knowing and adhering to this safeguarding policy, including with work involving external partners.
- Completing safeguarding training.
- Receiving safeguarding concerns from the team.
- Raising with the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS) any questions about safeguarding concerns .
- Giving advice about safeguarding concerns.
- Contacting appropriate services in an emergency situation.
- Making referrals to Children's Social Care or Adult's Social Care as necessary.

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Let's Talk About Loss expects that safeguarding is a key governance priority for trustees. All trustees must:

- Act in the best interest of all children and adults at risk
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them
- Ensure designated staff assess and manage risks correctly
- Ensure up to date safeguarding policies and procedures are in place
- Ensure up to date safeguarding training is completed by all necessary people
- Monitor and review safeguarding policy to ensure it is effective
- Responding appropriately to allegations of abuse.

One trustee is nominated as the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS). This person will:

- Complete safeguarding training
- Meet with the Designated Safeguarding Officer twice a year to maintain an overview of safeguarding procedure
- Respond to questions or concerns from the DSO as quickly as possible
- Maintain oversight of all risk assessments to ensure reasonable precautions are in place
- Maintain oversight of all safeguarding allegations and incidents to ensure all are appropriately managed
- Ensure the trustee board are fully informed of any safeguarding issues and work to improve practices.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer role is taken by the Let's Talk About Loss Director.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer oversees the safeguarding at Let's Talk About Loss and is responsible for:

- Receiving all safeguarding concerns from the team
- Giving advice on how to action safeguarding concerns
- Making referrals to Adult's or Children's Social Care as necessary
- Ensuring staff and volunteers have access to safeguarding advice and support
- Checking that all allegations and incidents are recorded properly and logged in a secure file
- Assessing that any partner organisations wishing to work with Let's Talk About Loss have appropriate safeguarding policies in place
- Regularly appraising the safeguarding training needs of staff and volunteers
- Offering guidance and where needed training, to increase the level of understanding and expertise on safeguarding
- Chairing the safeguarding panel and convening the panel when there is a serious incident
- Contacting the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding where there are questions or concerns around how to deal with safeguarding allegations and incidents
- Alerting the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding of any significant safeguarding concern and ensuring the process for managing it is followed correctly
- Keeping up to date with relevant safeguarding law and guidance

THE PRINCIPLES OF REPORTING A CONCERN

The five Rs should be used at all times when reporting a concern:

Recognise any concerns that a child or adult at risk is being harmed or is at risk of harm.

Respond appropriately and quickly to a child or adult who is telling you what is happening to them.

Refer the concerns where appropriate to social care providers, the police and the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Record the concerns appropriately and any subsequent action taken. Ensure there is no delay in responding to these concerns.

Resolution and escalation - take responsibility for following up your referrals and take further action if the situation is not appropriately resolved.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT A PERSON ENGAGING WITH LET'S TALK ABOUT LOSS

If the person you are worried about is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately.

If the child or adult at risk is not at immediate risk of harm, call the Director on 07771 875425 to report the concern, and then make a report of all relevant details and your concerns. Ensure you include the views of the person who has spoken to you throughout the process.

Your report is made via an Incident Report Form [see appendix] and should include:

- The time and date of the incident.
- A factual account of the incident, including who was involved, what was said/seen/heard, where the incident took place and any preceding information which is relevant to the incident.

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talking through the taboo

- Accurate reporting of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words. Do not interpret information or use words the person did not use.
- Your name and signature on the report.

Next, send this report to the Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) by emailing safeguarding@letstalkaboutloss.org.

If the incident is deemed to be a serious incident, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will share the details with relevant authorities who will advise on the best course of action.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will give feedback from a reported incident as is appropriate, but may be restricted by confidentiality reasons from giving specific details.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF OR A VOLUNTEER

If there is immediate risk of harm to a child or adult at risk, call 999 immediately.

If there is an immediate risk to the reputation of the charity, inform the Director immediately.

If there is no immediate risk of harm or danger, or after you have called 999 and alerted relevant agencies, the next step is to alert the Director. To do this, call the Director on 07771 875425 and make a verbal report of your concerns. Include what you have seen or heard why these matters are of concern to you.

Follow up your verbal report with a written report within 24 hours. This should include the date, time, details of the concern, other persons present and be signed and dated by you. Send this to the Director on safeguarding@letstalkaboutloss.org.

The Director will use their professional judgement to determine whether the incident will be handled by the police or handled internally within Let's Talk About Loss.

If the concern is around the behaviour of the Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer, you can alert the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding by emailing safeguardingtrustee@letstalkaboutloss.org.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will give feedback from a reported incident as is appropriate, but may be restricted by confidentiality reasons from giving specific details.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE

If you receive a disclosure and need to report a safeguarding concern, this can be an emotional experience. Remember these key points:

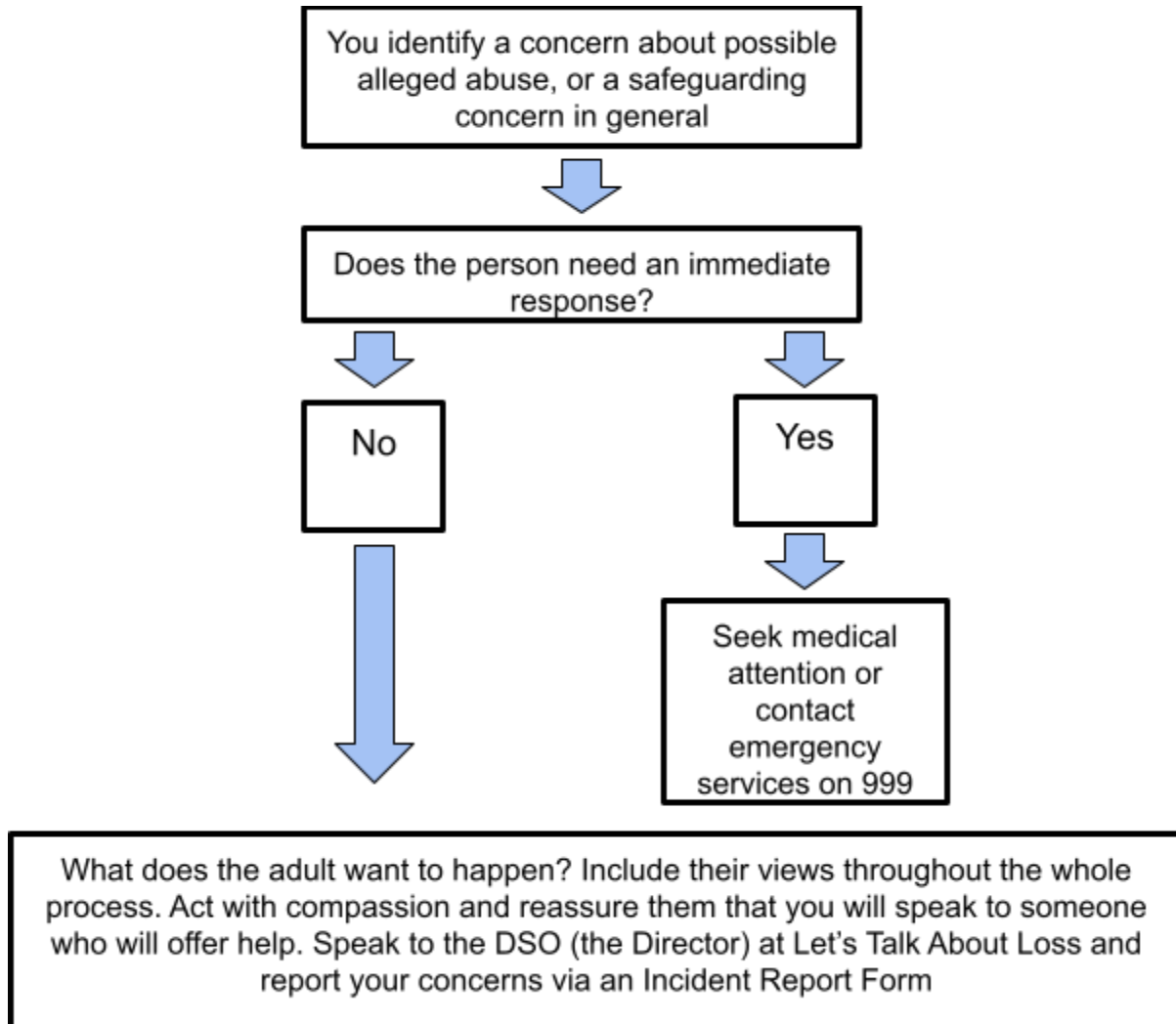
1. Stay as calm as you can throughout the experience.
2. Be non-judgemental - it is essential that the account is the true experience of the victim, so do not let your own judgements affect what you write.
3. Don't ask any leading questions - simply ask them to tell you what happened as they experienced it, in their own words.
4. Always use the person's own words, and write as true an account as you can. Don't try and fill in blanks, or rewrite things. Simply record exactly what they tell you.
5. The final thing to say to someone once they have made a disclosure is to explain clearly what you are going to do next. Tell them that you are going to tell someone who can help and thank them for speaking to you as this takes a lot of courage. Do not promise a particular outcome as nothing can be guaranteed at this stage.
6. Debrief with the Director afterwards so you can ensure that you are ok before you move on from the situation. Do not debrief with anyone else, as these conversations are highly confidential.

REVIEWING THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every year and trustees, staff and volunteers will be able to share their views as part of the review process. This safeguarding policy has been written in accordance with the Department of Health's guidance on protecting children and adults at risk. These guidelines should be considered alongside the organisation's Code of Conduct, Risk Register and Whistleblowing policy.

APPENDIX

Reporting a safeguarding concern: the process for over-18s



Incident Report Form

Your name:	Your position:
Organisation: Let's Talk About Loss	Your contact number:
The person's details	
Name:	Date of birth:
Address:	Phone number:
Other relevant details:	
Details of allegations/suspicions	
Are you recording: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disclosure made directly to you by the individual• Disclosure or suspicions raised by a third party• Your suspicions or concerns	
Date and time of disclosure:	
Date and time of incident:	
Details of allegations/suspicions: <i>State exactly what you were told/observed and what was said. Use the person's own words as much as possible.</i>	
Action taken so far:	
Signed:	Date: