

## **1. Introduction**

Survivors Together takes seriously the safety of its members and their children. We recognise the requirements of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 as legislation for the protection and safeguarding the welfare of children in England and Wales and the Care Standards Act 2000 and similar legislation for the protection of vulnerable adults. We also abide by Government guidance for Safeguarding Children 'Working Together' 2006 (DOH) and "No Secrets" (DOH 2000) for the protection of vulnerable adults.

Survivors Together has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter "the policy"). It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies.

Survivors Together undertakes to follow the principles found within 'Caring for the Young and the Vulnerable Persons Guidance for preventing abuse of trust' issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## **2. Scope**

For the purposes of this policy the term staff applies to any person employed by Survivors Together in a full, part time or casual capacity and any volunteer. The term child/children refers to any person under the age of 18 and any vulnerable adult of any age, as defined in section 5 below.

For staff the policy applies whenever they are undertaking work on behalf of Survivors Together or when representing Survivors Together.

## **3. Expectations**

All staff will be expected to operate within

- the law
- General policies and procedures adhered to by Survivors Together.

## **4. Policy Statement**

- Survivors Together will take all allegations of abusive behaviour and/or practice in all forms seriously and will respond to such allegations quickly
- Survivors Together considers that the emotional well being of all members is of paramount importance
- All staff will abide by our confidentiality policy. Details of the extent and limitations of this policy can be found in this document.
- Survivors Together recognises the importance of the welfare of children and their right to protection from all forms of abuse as set out in section 1 above, and recognises a duty of care to children by its staff.

#### **4. Policy Statement contd.**

- Survivors Together will not employ, in any capacity, staff under the age of 16.
- Survivors Together is committed to safe recruitment, supervision and training for all workers, paid or unpaid.

#### **5. Definitions of Abuse (Working Together 2013)**

##### **Definition of a vulnerable adult**

For the purposes of Survivors Together staff a vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who has:

- A learning or physical disability.
- A physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise including an addiction to alcohol or drugs.
- A reduction in physical or mental capacity.
- A dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of physical functions.
- Severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others.
- Impairment in a person's ability to protect him or herself from assault, abuse or neglect.
- And requires
  - Accommodation and nursing or personal care in a care home.
  - Personal care or support to live independently in his or her home.
  - Any services provided by an independent hospital, clinic, medical agency or NHS body.
  - Social care services.

Any services provided in an establishment catering for a person with learning difficulties.

Additionally early trauma often makes survivors of sexual abuse vulnerable either frequently or in specific circumstances.

##### **What is Abuse and Neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

##### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

## **5. Definitions of Abuse (Working Together 2013) contd**

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Spiritual abuse**

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting an individual's right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

## **6. Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect**

Abuse can take place in any context and by all manner of perpetrator. Abuse may be inflicted by anyone a person comes into contact with. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.

- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance. this could be someone whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable clothes or there is a deterioration in hygiene.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person.
- They may self-harm.
- They may have a fear of a particular group or individual.
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.
- Harassment of someone because they are or are perceived to have protected characteristics.

This policy will be reviewed annually on 1<sup>st</sup> April

Signed *Hilary Colston*

Date 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023

Print Name\_\_ Hilary Colston \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Chair of Trustees

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment \_\_\_\_\_

## Practice Guidelines

### 1. Responding to Disclosures and Allegations

Where the disclosures or allegations are made by, or in respect of an adult, that adult should be involved throughout the process wherever possible, and their consent gained for any referrals to social care or police if the person has capacity.

Under no circumstances should staff, other than those named in these guidelines, carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The following procedures should be implemented:

- Disclosures, allegations or suspicions should be recorded clearly and accurately on the Action Sheet prescribed below as soon as is practicable, including a note of what the person said using their own words.
- Where person is an adult, discuss the safeguarding concerns with them, obtain their view of what they would like to happen, but inform them it is your duty to pass on your concerns as set out below.
- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to Yvonne Fletcher (hereafter “the Director”) tel no: 0208 472 7473 who is nominated by Survivors Together to act on their behalf in dealing with allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter to the statutory authorities.

### **1. Responding to Disclosures and Allegations contd**

- In the absence of the Director, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Director then the report should be made to Hilary Colston, Chair of the Steering Group (hereafter the Chair) tel no 020 7476 0250. If the suspicions implicate both the Director and the Chair, then a Safeguarding alert should be raised with the local Social Services department.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Director, the absence of the Director or Chair should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
- Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information provided is accurate.
- Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times, this information must only be shared with your LSO and others on a need to know basis.
- If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of an adult at risk then contact the emergency services immediately.
- The Director or Chair will follow Survivors Together policy in conjunction with local Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

### **Allegations made against staff**

- The Director will also immediately inform the Insurance Company.
- The role of the Director / Chair is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion, investigate and take appropriate action. Where a child makes allegations of abuse it is Social Services' task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- Survivors Together will support the Director / Chair in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is the right of any individual as a citizen to raise a Safeguarding alert although Survivors Together hopes that staff and others will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Director / Chair have not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Director / Chair as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that Survivors Together demonstrates the commitment of Survivors Together to effective protection of vulnerable adults and children.

Responding to Allegation – Action sheet

Strictly Confidential

Survivors Together	
Name of Vulnerable Adult / Child	
Contact details	
Date of birth (if a child)	
Name of Person reporting allegation	
Date incident alleged	Time allegation made
Account of allegation made	
Action taken	
Date	Time

## 2. Appointment, support, supervision & training of staff

Survivors Together will ensure all staff will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised.

All adults working with Survivors Together will be required to complete a DBS check prior to commencing that work. The relevant forms OR login details will be given to each person to complete and they will be advised where to go to hand in the forms or login.

### **3. Dealing with special needs**

Adults and children with special needs may be a greater risk of abuse if they have limited understanding or have communications difficulties, or learning difficulties. They may require the services of a support worker to help with communication, as advisors may not have the necessary skills appropriate for the individual.

### **4. Equal Opportunities**

Survivors Together operates an Equal Opportunities Policy. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend upon the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offence.

### **5. Data Protection**

The Data Protection Act 1998 is designed to provide privacy for individuals about whom personal identifying data is kept. It applies to paper records as well as computerised information.

Processing data includes obtaining, recording, holding or storing information and carrying out any operations on the data, including adaptation, alteration, use, disclosure, transfer, erasure and destruction.

- Personal data will be processed fairly and lawfully, in accordance with the rights of data subject under the Data Protection Act.
- Personal data shall be held only for one or more specified and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in a manner incompatible with that purpose or purposes.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is processed.
- Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than necessary for that purpose.
- Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of the data.
- Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or a territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

## Referral and advice contact details

### Newham Adult Social Care

<https://adultsocialcare.newham.gov.uk/pages/what-happens-when-you-make-a-referral.aspx>

Professionals must complete and email the Safeguarding form available on the website.

24 hour Safeguarding helpline: 0203 373 0440  
During office hours please select option 1

### Barking & Dagenham Adult Safeguarding

[https://www.proceduresonline.com/lbbd/adults/p\\_adult\\_sg.html](https://www.proceduresonline.com/lbbd/adults/p_adult_sg.html)

### City & Hackney

<https://hackney.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board>

For people in Hackney – call 020 8356 5782 or email [adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk)

For people in the City – call 020 7332 1224 or email [adultsduty@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:adultsduty@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

Havering Adult Social Services Safeguarding Adults Team

[https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20015/adult\\_social\\_care/117/adult\\_protection\\_and\\_safeguarding](https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20015/adult_social_care/117/adult_protection_and_safeguarding)

Telephone: 01708 433 550

Email: [safeguarding\\_adults\\_team@havering.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding_adults_team@havering.gov.uk)

### Redbridge Health and Adult Social Services

<https://mylife.redbridge.gov.uk/protecting-adults-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect/>

Telephone: 020 8708 7333 (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm) or 0208 553 5825 outside of these hours.

### Tower Hamlets Assessment and Intervention Team

<https://www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk/aboutus/Safeguarding>

Telephone: 020 7364 5005

Email or complete an alert form and send it to [adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/node/7996>

Telephone: 020 8496 3000 at any time

Email: [wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk)

### Mental Health Access Teams for NELFT (North east London Mental Health trust)

Barking & Dagenham: 0300 555 1038

Havering: 0300 555 1092

Redbridge: 0300 555 1088

Waltham Forest: 0300 555 1242

### ELFT East London Foundation Trust

Newham: 020 3288 5100 / 020 3288 5101

Tower Hamlets: 020 7771 5807

City and Hackney: 020 8510 5000

### Rape Crisis

<https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/find-a-rape-crisis-centre/?region=London>

Helpline: 0800 160 1036

### The Survivors Trust

<https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/>

Free Helpline: 08088 010818