Sexpression:UK

Child Protection Policy

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Hollie Kluczewski
Imogen Nicholson
Rosanna Pickles
Matthew Tuck

At Sexpression:UK we understand the importance of Child Protection and the need to have a variety of professionals’ input into the formulation and improvements of a robust Child Protection Policy. It is with great appreciation that we thank the following persons for their assistance with this process.

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Miss Eva Hesmondhalgh – Ex-National Coordinator: Sexpression:UK Alumni
Dr Michael Roe – Named Doctor for Child Protection: Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust
Mr David Smith – Head of PSHE: Royal Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Foreword

Sexpression:UK is a student-led organisation that provides Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) to various education centres across the UK. Our branches work predominantly in secondary schools but have been invited to work in other locations such as homeless hostels, women's refuges and community centres.

Understanding that Sexpression:UK is not immune from Child Protection issues and that we have a fundamental duty of care towards the young people we work with, this Child Protection Policy aims to ensure that all volunteers feel capable to preserve the health and wellbeing of these young people.

The review of this policy took place over a series of meetings and consultations with volunteers for Sexpression:UK as well as professionals from external organisations. As a result of this consultative process there are numerous changes to how Sexpression:UK as an organisation addresses Child Protection when compared to the policy presented in 2007. Consequently, there have been changes to how our volunteers as individuals are trained to implement these changes.

The most pertinent change to how Sexpression:UK address Child Protection is that we no longer see it as our role to actively seek out Child Protection issues: our volunteers require the training and skills which provide them with the ability to become aware of situations that indicate there is an issue to be addressed. This may be through direct interaction with a young person or from indirect observation and subsequent suspicion. It is in these circumstances that individuals and Sexpression:UK become responsible for ensuring any concerns are addressed.

Sexpression:UK acknowledge that they are not immune from Child Protection issues and therefore understand how imperative it is that this information is disseminated in a comprehensive manner to all who work with and alongside us.

David Lawrence

Sexpression:UK National Coordinator

Sexpression:UK National Child Protection Officer
Introduction

As defined by the Government Document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2010, abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Child abuse can take many forms:

- **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.

- **Sexual abuse** involves making or enticing a child to partake in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening or not; it may involved physical or non-physical contact.

- **Emotional abuse** is the continued maltreatment of a child with consequential severe and prolong negative effects on emotional and psychological development.

- **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.

Sexpression:UK believe that concern for the general wellbeing and welfare of all young people who are in contact with our project is of paramount importance. We believe that every child has, at all times and in all situations, a right to feel safe and protected from any activity that results in him or her being physically or psychologically damaged. If we have suspicions about physical, sexual or emotional wellbeing, we will take action.

The purpose of this document is to explain clearly, for volunteers involved in Sexpression:UK and its recognised branches as well as affiliated organisations, outlines of the principles of Child Protection. It is intended to cover those issues of the upmost importance in order to ensure the following:

- **The protection of young people** – although Sexpression:UK and its volunteers cannot guarantee the complete protection of young people, this document aims to ensure that should any evidence of a child protection issue arise that it is addressed appropriately to guarantee the protection of the young person.

- **The protection of volunteers** – this document provides guidance and support for the volunteers who may become aware of a child protection issue and aims to aid them in their response to this.

- **The protection of Sexpression:UK** – the dissemination and implementation of this policy illustrates our commitment to safeguarding the young people we work with.
Although it is acknowledged that this document does not necessarily provide volunteers with the complete ability to ensure the safety of young people, it does give a forum for discussion and the sharing of skills and experiences to ensure that young people are protected to the best of their abilities.
1.0 Child Protection within Sexpression:UK

1.1 General principles (based on the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child):
   1.1.1 A child is defined as a person under the age of 18
   1.1.2 All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
   1.1.3 Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children

1.2 Sexpression:UK has a duty of care to strive to protect, within our capability, children with whom our volunteers come into contact

1.3 Sexpression:UK Child Protection Policy aims:
   1.3.1 To provide all children involved with Sexpression:UK projects appropriate safety and protection at that point in time
   1.3.2 To provide volunteers with the ability to make informed and appropriate decisions in response to specific child protection issues

1.4 All volunteers within Sexpression:UK are required to ensure that:
   1.4.1 The welfare of the child is paramount
   1.4.2 All allegations, disclosures and suspicions of abuse are taken seriously and responded to as outlined in this document

1.5 To ensure this policy is maintained to a high standard it must be revisited annually by the current National Committee

1.6 To ensure this policy is maintained to a high standard and thoroughly investigated it must be reviewed every three years

1.7 The Sexpression:UK National Child Protection Officer:
   1.7.1 This role is currently provided by the Sexpression:UK National Coordinator (coordinator@sexpression.org.uk)
2.0 Implementation

2.1 The Sexpression:UK National Committee have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring adequate levels of child protection training is provided and that this policy is implemented throughout the Sexpression:UK network.

2.2 The Sexpression:UK National Child Protection Officer (NCPO) is the named person responsible for ensuring the distribution of this policy and the provision of adequate levels of child protection training throughout Sexpression:UK.
   2.2.1 The Sexpression:UK NCPO will work alongside the Sexpression:UK National Committee to make this policy readily available in electronic form.
   2.2.2 The Sexpression:UK NCPO will work alongside the Sexpression:UK National Committee to provide comprehensive child protection training at each Sexpression:UK conference as well as on demand via the internet.

2.3 It is the responsibility of the Sexpression:UK Branch Child Protection Officer (BCPO) to coordinate with the Sexpression:UK NCPO to ensure their volunteers are adequately trained.
   2.3.1 The Sexpression:UK BCPO is the named individual from each branch who is responsible for ensuring each volunteer at that branch attends training before working with Sexpression:UK and annually thereafter.
   2.3.2 Each Sexpression:UK BCPO must return a Child Protection Register (see Appendix) to the Sexpression:UK NCPO annually.

2.4 It is the responsibility of the Sexpression:UK BCPO to ensure that the External Child Protection Officer (ECPO) at each institute they visit is informed of the Sexpression:UK Child Protection Policy and its implementation within branches. Branches should be made aware of the external organisation’s own Child Protection Policy and work within this too.

2.5 It is the responsibility of the individual volunteer for Sexpression:UK to attend child protection training each academic year which shall reflect the annual revisiting of this policy.
   2.5.1 Each attendee must also provide their details on the Sexpression:UK Child Protection Register (see appendix).

2.6 It is strongly advised that the Sexpression:UK BCPO seeks the involvement of external organisations or professionals to assist them with the delivery of this training in supplementation to the Sexpression:UK resources.
3.0 Reporting Procedures

3.1 Issues concerning child abuse may become established in a number of ways:

3.1.1 The child may directly disclose the information
3.1.2 A child may directly disclose information concerning another child
3.1.3 An allegation may be made against a volunteer
3.1.4 Suspicions arising concerning the individual’s behaviour

3.2 Should any of the above situations arise it is important to:

3.2.1 Act calmly, listen with care and consideration and show that you are taking the situation seriously
3.2.2 Find an appropriate time in the conversation to explain that they were right to tell you but that confidentiality cannot be promised
3.2.3 Keep questions to a minimum and ensure that you only ask open questions. Never ask leading questions.
3.2.4 Take all disclosures seriously
3.2.5 Inform the child of the actions that the volunteer will take and, preferably, obtain consent from them for this action

3.3 The following reporting procedures must be followed for any child protection concern or allegation experience by a volunteer

3.3.1 Complete a Sexpression:UK Child Protection Reporting Form (see Appendix) as soon as possible
3.3.1.1 All information regarding the concern or allegation must be recorded
3.3.1.2 This information must be factual in origin and written verbatim to include quotes of exact phrases
3.3.1.3 All written information must be signed and dated
3.3.1.4 If a form is not readily available, record on paper immediately and transfer the information at the earliest opportunity.
3.3.2 Inform the BCPO
3.3.2.1 Always refer and never investigate any suspicions or allegations about abuse

3.4 The BCPO or their deputised committee member present at the visit is the person responsible for dealing with the issue from the local Sexpression Branch perspective and must do the following:
3.4.1 Inform the ECPO at the school or centre you are working in
   3.4.1.1 Tell them what has happened
   3.4.1.2 Give them a copy of the Child Protection Reporting Form
   3.4.1.3 Follow up with the ECPO after three days to ensure the issue has been dealt with

3.4.2 Inform the NCPO
   3.4.2.1 Tell them what has happened
   3.4.2.2 Give them a copy of the Child Protection Reporting Form
   3.4.2.3 Maintain contact with them regarding the situation

3.5 Managing information
   3.5.1 Completed Child Protection Reporting Forms should be treated as confidential documents
   3.5.2 The Data protection Act permits the sharing of confidential information without consent where it is considered necessary to safeguard a child or young person
   3.5.3 Access to confidential documents must be restricted to the BCPO, ECPO and NCPO
       3.5.3.1 These named individuals must understand their obligation to handle such information in a confidential manner

3.6 For a diagrammatic interpretation of the above information please see figure 1
Figure 1: Incident Reporting Procedure

1. Incident / Concern
   - Complete Child Protection Reporting Form as soon as possible
   - Inform the elected Branch Child Protection Officer

2. Inform External Child Protection Officer
   - Provide a copy of the Incident Reporting Form
   - Follow up with ECPO after 3 days

3. Inform the National Child Protection Officer
   - Provide a copy of the Incident Reporting Form
   - NCPO to contact ECPO and Medsin Activity Coordinator
4.0 Response Procedures

4.1 It is not the responsibility of anyone involved in Sexpression:UK to investigate whether or not child abuse has taken place. It is their responsibility to ensure concerns are passed on to the appropriate parties.

4.2 Action taken must be individualised and will differ accordingly to:
   4.2.1 Nature of the complaint
   4.2.2 Nature of the setting the Sexpression:UK Branch is working in

5.0 Child Protection Allegations

5.1.1 On receiving an allegation the Sexpression:UK NCPO will initiate an internal enquiry
   5.1.1.1 This may involve liaison with statutory organisations
   5.1.2 The volunteer will receive immediate suspension from all work involving Sexpression:UK until the issue has been resolved
6.0 Prevention

6.1 Volunteer recruitment

6.1.1 Sexpression:UK recognises the fact that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and as such we must take steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with Sexpression:UK

6.1.1.1 All Sexpression:UK volunteers are required to have an acceptable extended Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. This is regardless of if they are a medical student or not

6.1.1.1.1 The Sexpression:UK NCPO can offer assistance on obtaining this, if required

6.1.1.2 Until such screening has been completed no volunteer will be allowed to work with children in Sexpression:UK

6.2 Volunteer training

6.2.1 Any concerns highlighted in the training of a Sexpression:UK volunteer must be communicated from the BCPO to the NCPO and will be addressed accordingly

6.3 Guidance for volunteers

6.3.1 Photos must not be taken during work with children and Sexpression:UK

6.3.2 Do not give out personal contact details to children

6.3.3 Do not disclose personal information to children

6.4 Expectations of the volunteer

6.4.1 It is advised that Sexpression volunteers work in mixed-sex pairs when teaching, where possible

6.4.2 It is advised that a teacher or teaching assistant is present throughout the teaching session

6.4.3 Sexpression volunteers are expected to act professionally when in school, as they ought to in any other educational setting
7.0 Working with Sexpression:UK Partner Organisations

7.1 Child protection policy and procedures should form an essential part of all Sexpression:UK partnership agreements

7.2 The Sexpression:UK child protection policy should be actively promoted to all Sexpression:UK partner organisations

7.3 There should be a process of engagement with Sexpression:UK partner organisations on child protection issues to ensure mutual learning and development of good practice

7.4 Sexpression:UK partner organisations should be encouraged to develop their own child protection policies
Declaration

On behalf of Sexpression:UK, we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of this Child Protection Policy and will take all the necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to:

Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Position within Sexpression:UK:____________________________________________________________________________

Signed______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Position within Sexpression:UK:____________________________________________________________________________

Signed______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Position within Sexpression:UK:____________________________________________________________________________

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Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Position within Sexpression:UK:____________________________________________________________________________

Signed______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Position within Sexpression:UK:____________________________________________________________________________

Signed______________________________________________________________________________________________________
Sexpression:UK Child Protection Reporting Form

This form is used to report any cause for concern or incident about a child. A **concern** may be a general worry or on-going concern about a child. An **incident** may include a disclosure (when a child tells you information which will concern their safety or well being) or an unusual incident relating to a child which you feel you should report. Please feel free to use a continuation sheet. Please pass on this form to your Branch Child Protection Officer and the External Child Protection Officer at your teaching location.

Please write clearly in pen

**School Name** ………………………………………………………………………………………

**Date and time of event** ………………………………………………………………………………………

**Place of incident** ………………………………………………………………………………………

**Young People involved**

First name ……………………………………..  Surname ……………………………………..  Age ……….

First name ……………………………………..  Surname ……………………………………..  Age ……….

First name ……………………………………..  Surname ……………………………………..  Age ……….

**Volunteers Involved (including witnesses)**

Your name ………………………………………………………………………………………

2\textsuperscript{nd} volunteer name ………………………………………………………………………………………

3\textsuperscript{rd} volunteer name ………………………………………………………………………………………

**Details of incident or concern (verbatim)**

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Any other relevant details or facts:
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Please use a continuation sheet if necessary

Volunteer Completing Form
Signature……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Date (form completed)…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Sexpression Committee Member
Name(s)………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Signature(s)…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Date (form read)……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Please now pass this form to the onsite Sexpression:UK committee member in charge of the school visit.

If you have any questions please contact the Sexpression:UK National Coordinator at coordinator@sexpression.org.uk
# Child Protection Register

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