

# Summer Education Programme



## A Code of Good Practice for Ensuring Protection for Young People

## CHILD PROTECTION AND GOOD PRACTICE

- This document has been prepared to assist all staff, parents and volunteers involved with young people activities to protect any young person from any form of harm. Various acts staff need to be aware of include the Activities Centre (Young Person's Safety) Act 1995, Children Act 1989, Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Responsibility of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. All are often referred to as 'child protection'. Over-riding these are the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which places a "Duty of Care" upon all of us in a work situation. (This would include SEP.)
- These are very complex and detailed acts designed to safeguard the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18 with specific guidelines relating to under 8s'
- Rather than list the detail of the Act section by section guidelines have been written to assist all Summer Education Programme staff whose job involves working with young people
- Why? - we only need to look at the extensive coverage in the media to realise that child abuse is a very real issue and as an organisation we must take such issues very seriously
- One important principal of these guidelines is to :-

**"To promote an enjoyable and responsible experience of sporting, recreational and social activity" in the rugged environment of Loch Lomond". We need to ensure a friendly, welcoming environment for young people while at the same time promoting their general welfare**

i.e. protecting them and their interests (and co-incidentally)  
protecting staff and their interests

- These guidelines apply to all Summer Education Programme staff, volunteers, any third parties coming into contact with the Summer Education Programme or anyone whose role takes them into contact with children/young people as part of their normal duties.
- What is a young person / child?  
Child is under 16 - young person is under 18
- Referring to the guidelines it is obvious that most of it is common sense but there are certain points we should look at in detail and highlight
- We frequently refer to a "duty of care" for young people when they are with us. This is a very important phrase which should always be at the back of our minds, for example we have a duty of care

- to stop them getting run over in the car park where we meet them
  - to stop them being sexually abused by paedophiles
  - to ensure that if a child is involved in an Summer Education Programme activity and has a medical condition we are aware of it
  - to stop them being physically, mentally or emotionally abused by staff, volunteers, the public or their peers
- we are legally bound to take “this duty of care” just as under the Health and Safety at Work Act when planning activities for the under 18’s - we must think about :
    - risk assessment for activity and location
    - suitability of the activity for all participants
    - location of activity
    - appropriate clothing and equipment
    - safety information for participants and leaders
    - maintenance and inspection of equipment
    - first aid provision
    - emergency procedures
    - procedures for dealing with any alleged/actual incident of abuse
    - fire precautions
    - appropriate training
  - Key points to remember. We must try to ensure:
  - that wherever possible staff or anyone else (including a member of the public) is never alone with a child – try to be in line of sight or within earshot of others

**this is as much for staff protection as for the child's!**

- That you can be heard when giving instructions - that everyone is actually listening to them - remember most adults cannot remember long lists of instructions !!
- If you have responsibility for a group make sure that they know that you are in charge – they will then come to you for advice not somebody else
- Treat young people with respect – you do not know their personal circumstances or what is happening in their lives - display the same standards of behaviour that you wish them to have
- Try not to have physical contact with a young person and never hit or manhandle them
- Think about your actions before you do them – could a comforting hug for an upset child be misconstrued?

- Do not verbally abuse or 'slag off' youngsters
- Never leave a child on their own or in the company of an unknown adult
- Try to avoid being alone in a vehicle with a youngster unless it is an emergency
- Taking of any image of a young person must be approved by the Camp Director or nominated person and the young person have approval from parent/guardian
- Do not ignore signs of distress or abuse - listen, act and involve others
- Abuse – what do you do if you suspect harm
- **JUST BECAUSE YOU SUSPECT HARM DO NOT ASSUME OR JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.**
- **JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT SURE DO NOT IGNORE IT**
- Young people can experience many types of abuse

|           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
| Physical  | - | attacks by peer group, parents or relatives, strangers |
| Emotional | - | bullying, name calling, blackmail                      |
| Sexual    | - | paedophiles, rape, innuendo                            |
| Neglect   | - | physical, emotional, nutritional,                      |

- Remember that children will quite often confide in someone they trust or respect – however that does not necessarily mean that what they are telling you is the truth.
- It can be easy to confuse normal behaviour with someone who has been abused.
- The golden rule is – **USE YOUR COMMON SENSE**
- If you suspect anything report it in writing to the SEP Camp Director or nominated person

If a young person wants to talk to you about harm you should

- Listen carefully, keep calm and look directly at them
- Let them know that for you to be able to help someone else must be told and, that by telling you, you are obliged to act
- Reassure them that they are not to blame
- Remember they may have been threatened not to tell anyone – never push for information
- Reassure them that they have done the correct thing by telling you
- Let them know what will happen next
- If you feel you need more advice phone the RSPCC helpline 0800 800 500

- Do **NOT** act alone  
investigate  
delay  
make assumptions about guilt or innocence
- All staff working with young people for Summer Education Programme will be vetted via Disclosure Scotland
- If at any time you have concerns over someone and how they relate to young people you should bring this to the immediate attention of the Camp Director or nominated person.
- Also included in this material is a consent / information form.
- As part of our duty of care we should be aware of any medical problems which a young person has and which might occur while they are participating in an activity
- The parental consent form and any matters arising from it should be passed to any relevant party by the Camp Co-ordinator and indicated as confidential information.
- The Dorm Leader should check the section of the form which deals with medical conditions and if a child may require medication, e.g. an asthma inhaler, they should ensure that the child has the medication with them
- **The important points here are that we need to be able to contact parents should there be an emergency and we need to be aware of any serious health problems**
- **It is the responsibility of every staff member involved in activities for the under 18s to ensure that**
- 1. Risk assessment has been carried out and the safety of young people in our care is a priority

2. We are able to contact parents should this be necessary
3. That we have the necessary information to ensure that youngsters can confidently participate in activities
4. We have systems in place to ensure this.

**If these systems are in place there is no need for any activities involving youngsters to be curtailed and most importantly they help to ensure that they ENJOY THEMSELVES.**