

Safeguarding Leads Webinar - Transcript

[Welcome]

Hello and welcome to our Safeguarding Leads webinar. This is a two-part course and this is session one. As we begin, it would be good to know who we have in the room. We've got a poll to start us off, and in that poll, we're just going to ask you a few questions about you and your role. So, what's the name of your role? Which UK nation are you working in? How long have you held your role for? What type of organisation are you part of? Is that a faith group or a church, charity, community group or something else? And let's think about the size of your organisation too. This is subjective, of course, so just choose whichever you would describe your organisation as, whether that's small, medium or large.

[Housekeeping]

Thank you for your responses, that really helps us frame the course. Now for a bit of housekeeping. This webinar is two and a half hours long and we'll have two five-minute breaks within that time. You should have received a link to the PDF of the slides and the handbook for this course, you will need those throughout the discussion so please have them

ready. There are accessible formats available, so please let the host or the co-host know if you would like those. Ideally, we would like your webcams enabled, but we ask that you keep microphones muted unless you are participating in a discussion or asking a question. We do this because we want to minimise the distractions that background noise could create for people, but we also want to be able to see that everyone is here and engaged. We understand there might be occasions when you would prefer to have the webcam off. For example, if you're having problems with your internet speed, or you've got children who need your attention.

The information shared can be of a sensitive nature, and some of the content is not appropriate for children, so if children are in the room, please consider using headphones and angling your screen away. Also, if you're happy to share any of your own experiences, please bear in mind confidentiality. We ask that you anonymise any examples, experiences or stories that you share.

It is important to keep yourselves emotionally safe during the training and if you need to take a breather from the webinar, that's okay and you can rejoin whenever you feel able to. It might be good to think about somebody you could reach out to if uncomfortable feelings or memories come to the surface. You might need to find support for yourself, or it

might be that you're concerned about someone else or another situation after the session. If that's the case, please do contact our safeguarding helpline as soon as you can because the trainer is not equipped to give specific advice on the webinar platform.

The chat facility can be used throughout for questions and for participation in activities. The co-host might answer the question, signpost you to further sources, or hold on to that question for the next pause and share it with the host. If a question is not answered, or a question is about a very specific issue, please do contact our safeguarding helpline by email or phone.

Thank you for choosing Thirtyone:eight for your training today. Our motivation is to equip, empower and encourage you in your safeguarding responsibilities. As we start, we just want to recognise the time, care and commitment you're investing in your church, charity or organisation by attending this training and in everything that you do, thank you. I hope that the message you get today is that you never have to do safeguarding alone. As I mentioned already, we have a safeguarding helpline; you may want to pop contact details into your phone now if you don't already have them to hand. The safeguarding helpline is there to support you with any questions regarding safeguarding. It might be queries about policies, or you might have a live

situation which you'd value talking about and getting advice on. The telephone safeguarding helpline is open from 7am till midnight, seven days a week, 365 days a year, or 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday for those regular questions about policies, guidance and processes, and the out of hours service for any more immediate concerns. Details on our website at <https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/safeguarding-helpline/>.

Everyone here today will have a different motivation for engaging with safeguarding. For us at Thirtyone:eight, it comes from our passionate belief that safeguarding is close to God's heart. Our name comes from a verse in the Bible, Proverbs 31:8 that says, "Speak out on behalf of the voiceless and for the rights of all who are vulnerable." When we take care of the vulnerable, we are fulfilling God's call. If you're part of another faith group, you may well recognise this call from your own sacred scripts. Or you might be part of a charity that has care and dignity for the vulnerable at its heart. Whatever your motivation, we want to equip you.

[Introduction]

And now let's get into our Safeguarding Leads course. This is the learning journey we're going to be going on over the two sessions. The course is split into five modules based around the 5 'R's often used in

safeguarding training, recognise, respond, record, report, and for us in this course, our fifth R is review. The first four of these, shown here with the yellow background on the accompanying slides are often our safeguarding responses to live situations. What do we need to do as Safeguarding Leads when there's a concern or a disclosure of abuse?

The last module with the very light grey background at the bottom of the slide is still applicable to live situations, as we want to incorporate any learning that we gain from dealing with these situations, but more commonly, it takes the form of scheduled, often annual, tasks that help build safeguarding into our culture. As you'll hear throughout this training, both knowing how to respond in live situations and investing into the wider safeguarding culture of our organisations are essential elements of the Safeguarding Lead role. We hope that this course equips you in a few ways. First, to be clear about what this role is and what it isn't; second, to see how and where you fit into the bigger picture, in your own context and also nationally, in terms of safeguarding and liaising with other agencies. We want you to know the practical things you need to do to fulfil this role. Together, we're going to honestly engage with and explore some common challenges and complexities which you may face in this role and we will signpost you to some support and resources so that you can also be equipped for your role.

The tasks for the role of Safeguarding Lead come from different laws, guidelines, policies, and best practices and there are certain things you will need to do as part of this role. Instead of listing every single task as part of the webinar, we think it's more useful to explain what these responsibilities mean and how they impact our work. We will cover most of these tasks throughout the training, but not in a list. If you look at the images on the left side of the screen – they show the Safeguarding Lead audit tool from your handbook, which we recommend you look at regularly.

This course is designed to work for all four UK nations. The safeguarding principles we cover in the webinar apply everywhere, and we will point out any nation-specific terms. You will find extra materials specific to each nation in the handbook and eLearning resources.

Wales and Scotland have specific training requirements for this role, with national standards for Safeguarding Leads and deputies. If you have already done foundational safeguarding training, this course meets Scotland's Specific Workforce Learning Standards. For Wales, it covers about 80% of the Group C Requirements. The transcripts of learning (available with your course documents) show where each criteria is covered, and how those of you in Wales can complete Group C with us.

Before we talk about what this role is, let's be clear about what it isn't. You don't need to be available 24/7. You don't need to have all the answers. You're allowed to take holidays, sleep and take care of your own general wellbeing. In fact, it is really important that you do those things. You can even delegate non-confidential parts of this role to others. It's really good to build a team around you. Please hold that in mind as we go through the training.

So, what is the role of Safeguarding Lead? Well, it's a vital role. At Thirtyone:eight, we believe that having an engaged and supported Safeguarding Lead is the most impactful thing you can do to create safer organisations. It can make the difference between people staying in a situation that's abusive and being protected. The images on the accompanying slides can help us to understand the different aspects of the role. First of all, our loudspeaker represents that this role involves listening, advocating and empowering. We have a statement from the Welsh framework here that says, 'I understand that giving people voice and control is an essential part of decision making'. Holding space to listen to people's voices, their needs and their experiences, and advocating for them is central to this role. We can amplify the voices of victim-survivors and keep the person at the centre of the concern. This is true even in situations where we need to act in opposition to their voiced

preference. Second, the hands holding each other at the wrist to create a circle represents co-ordinating, building a team and communicating. The statement for this one is 'I understand everyone's role and responsibilities in the safeguarding process'. The role of Safeguarding Lead is a big one, but happily, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. That means that your role is more one of coaching a team than needing to succeed in a solo sport. A significant part of your role is helping others to know how to play their parts, so you don't have to do everything. It also means passing on key information to the right people at the right times. And then finally, our picture with the magnifying glass and the people with the briefcase beside them, represents being informed, fair and organised. Our statement for this is 'I have the ability to make clear and proportionate decisions'. Decision making is an unavoidable part of the role, as is being organised. Clarity in our record keeping and other administrative processes supports our decision making and enables us to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities in a fair and balanced way. The 'I' statements that we've used in this section are taken from Social Care Wales, but they're helpful summaries of what this role is, no matter where you're working. The emphasis on rights and voice is key for Scotland as well.

Throughout this course, we're going to be hearing from the voices of victim-survivors, because learning from them is central to the work that we're doing as Safeguarding Leads. We have a quote here that says, "Thank you to the lady who listened to me today. I felt heard and validated. It really helped to hear the things she said. She gave me time to say everything I needed to and has given me good advice about the next steps I can take." Most people who take on the role of Safeguarding Lead or Deputy do so because they want to make a difference in people's lives and this quote emphasises that it absolutely can and does.

Before starting the first 'R' module, we want to consider one approach to safeguarding that many faith groups and charities find helpful. This training is based on a contextual safeguarding approach. This recognises that people are influenced by the whole range of environments that they interact with. For many people, their involvement in faith and community groups is one of, or the single most, defining influence in their lives. Professionals can't safeguard that person without considering all areas of their lives. For Safeguarding Leads this creates both a responsibility and an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of people who are 'at risk'.

So, what is contextual safeguarding? It's the view that people aren't only affected by where they spend most of their day, but that their

environments also include online spaces, their neighbourhood, their faith communities and any social situations they're in. People can encounter risk in any of these environments. Contextual safeguarding looks at how we can understand the whole person and use that knowledge to make decisions that makes life safer for them.

Practically, contextual safeguarding means that we understand the individual's multiple environments. Think for a second about domestic abuse situations. If the perpetrator is experiencing stress and bullying at work, this increases the risk in the home to anyone living there. If a child in that home is also struggling with online pressure to share nude images, the risk to that young person is increased and the resiliency (ability to cope with these pressures) decreases. Whereas the same online pressure to share nude images for another young person could be far less impactful – they have people to go to, are confident in their right to be protected and can move forward with little to no adverse effects.

It's also important to understand your environment. Your environment, like all others, won't be a neutral part of people's lives. How could you be adding to those risks? Could your team pose a risk of perpetrating abuse? Are there other, smaller risks coming from your organisation? Hopefully, it's more likely that your presence in a person's life increases

resilience, through either practical services or emotional or spiritual support. So, we want to consider this as well – what happens if you close for the summer, or a volunteer moves on? Does a ‘small safeguarding concern’ take on more weight when things in your environment change?

The final thing for us to understand is that nothing happens in isolation. As a parent, I’ve dealt with several situations where an overreaction to a sibling is really the emotion from a difficult school day spilling out. Human beings are complicated, and what happens in one area of our lives often affects multiple areas of our lives.

What does this understanding mean for us as Safeguarding Leads? It’s an invitation to be curious. Are the behaviours you’re seeing a sign that harm could be happening elsewhere? We also need to be broad. The narrow view that harm only happens in the home or in institutionalised care is false and means that we can miss safeguarding people in other areas of their lives. Often the role of the Safeguarding Lead is to hold small puzzle pieces until it becomes clearer how they might fit together. We want to be intentional. The support we offer and the skills we teach in our interactions can help people in all of their environments.

Finally, be part of the conversations. Your lack of a professional role does not and should not mean that you’re not an essential voice when

safeguarding decisions are made. We need to share concerns and advocate for the voice of the 'at risk' individual. Safeguarding should be a team effort.

[Module One – Recognise]

Let's start module one: Recognise. In our foundation training, 'recognise' is mostly about recognising the primary categories of harm and abuse and recognising the signs and indicators of harm and abuse too. That knowledge is still necessary. For those of you who might need a refresher, there's a summary sheet in your handbook, but for Safeguarding Leads, there are additional things that we need to recognise. We need to recognise who we're serving. We need to recognise new and evolving forms of harm and abuse, and we need to recognise different factors that can increase vulnerability, and how this in turn can increase risk.

It's over to you now. We want to have a short discussion, just to get our context in mind to frame the next part of the session. Who are you safeguarding? Are you working with adults or children or across all age groups? What form do your activities normally take? What are the challenges in the lives of those you serve? What are their backgrounds? Do they have any limitations? What are their strengths and priorities? Think about those that you are serving now and have them in mind as

we go through these next slides. Feel free to unmute and share some answers or type them into the text box. We will use this to form our discussions as we continue.

Thank you for sharing. When it comes to safeguarding, there's no one size fits all. As it says on the slide title, we want to recognise real people in their contexts. We want to begin with a realistic view of who it is that we are serving and use that to inform how we outwork the practical tasks that we'll cover in this training. All of us have our own abilities and limitations, and in certain groups, particular abilities and limitations can be more prevalent. That doesn't give us permission to stereotype groups of people, but to be familiar enough with their realities to offer helpful alternatives when needed. Consider who you're serving again, what abilities and limitations might be common? One example is that about 80% of prisoners in Scotland are functionally illiterate. So, if your charity or church predominantly works with people reintegrating into society, then we need to think how we can communicate about safeguarding in non-written ways. If you work with an aging community, it may be helpful to use microphones when communicating key safeguarding messages, rather than assuming that speaking more loudly is enough. What other examples might you have within your groups? It would be good to hear from some of you now. As we go through the five 'R's, we'll ask you to

apply this awareness so that we avoid making the mistake of adopting generic safeguarding practices, rather than practices that safeguard the people involved in our organisations. Understanding what 'safe' looks and feels like to those we serve can be a helpful first step in knowing how to frame our safeguarding. It also helps us to advocate for those we're serving. How can you find out what safe looks like to those you're serving? As we said, part of this role is to listen, advocate and empower, which we can't do without first understanding what that looks like to those we're working with. In some settings, this wouldn't be appropriate to do formally, but informal conversations can be helpful. It's also about educating: Is there more we can do to ensure young people / adults at risk of harm know when things aren't right? For example, working with a youth group, do we sit together with the adults AND the children and review our policy around adults transporting children in their own car, physical touch rules between volunteers and children, WhatsApp communication between volunteers and children etc? Bringing these conversations into the open where the children see the adults involved discussing the rules and agreeing to them empowers them to KNOW when something isn't appropriate and they are not left thinking "Well, it's my youth leader, so it must be ok?"

We have a fun, practical task for you now to illustrate one of the aspects that we're talking about. In a moment, I'm going to reveal a portion of text about Stonehenge, and it's written in quite a wordy and complex way. What we'd like you to do is spend 3-4 minutes in groups simplifying this portion of text so that it can be easily understood by a group of 11-year-olds or an adult with a learning disability. We still want the people reading it to get all the important information, but we want to take away this unnecessary barrier of complex wording. This activity is also in your handbook, and the co-host will paste the text into the chat as well for you to access just now.

Thank you for those suggestions.

It's important not just to communicate good messages about safeguarding, but to make sure that everybody who we want to receive those messages is able to access them.

And finally, just before we go into our first break, we want to look at people's contexts in the widest possible sense. We need to be aware of the impact the wider community and national and global situations can have on a person's wellbeing. Think about the cost-of-living crisis. How might this impact a parent or adult carer's own emotional or mental health? And the stress or distress of those around them? Can we see

how this might have an impact on their capacity to protect the person they are caring for from risk?

Let's think a bit more about financial situations in the UK. In 2024 4.2 million, that's nearly three in 10 children, lived in poverty. Poverty can place people at risk of harm due to the stresses it creates in families and the limitations it places on choice. Even though it is not a safeguarding matter in itself, it can lead to safeguarding concerns such as people's basic needs not being met (for food, warmth and clothing), the impact of stress within a household (common in domestic and emotional abuse), effects on learning and development, poor self-esteem and emotional health issues and risk of substance misuse. It's important to note that it's not that poverty equals risk of abuse, but rather that poverty equals lack of access to resilience factors equals increased risk of abuse. Other community factors can also impact the risk of harm facing those we work with. The rise of online worlds, which can be both a resilience factor or a risk factor. This one is often invisible to us, but online abuse is the fastest growing type of abuse, and one that affects people of all ages. We should also consider people in their physical community. We're about to look at some of the forms of abuse that can occur in community settings. It's helpful to have a curiosity around who's in the lives of those we work with, particularly if we notice signs and indicators of abuse.

We have reached our first break. Please take five minutes and we'll see you again soon. Thanks, everyone.

[Break]

Welcome back. Hope you had a good break. A Safeguarding Lead should come into the role with a summary understanding of the primary forms of harm and abuse, but as society changes and evolves, so sadly do the forms of harm and abuse that exist. To help you in your role, we're going to spend a moment considering some more recent forms of harm that you may or may not be familiar with. It will be good to learn from each other here, so please raise a hand or just call out if you've heard of one of these forms of harm that are on the screen, and if you can provide a definition of it, that would be wonderful.

The first one is Cuckooing, also known as forced home invasion, where perpetrators take over the homes of vulnerable people to use them as a base for crimes such as drug dealing. The signs and indicators include the vulnerable person not being seen for a while, unfamiliar vehicles being seen at the property, blinds and curtains being drawn in the daytime, and crowds congregated by the front or back door. Because this form of abuse has often gone under the radar, there's a call for many front-line workers, including the faith and voluntary sector, to be aware of this and report concerns.

Secondly, we have catfishing. This involves the use of a false identity online to befriend and exploit victims. The catfish is the person who has created the fake persona. Most often this happens online for abuse and fraud and has had devastating effects on people of all ages. Catfishing isn't currently a crime in itself, but depending on the form it takes, the resulting harm and abuse often is - for example, fraud or sexual abuse. Alexander McCartney has recently received a life sentence for online child abuse and manslaughter following a horrendous run of catfishing thousands of children.

Thirdly, we've got sextortion, sometimes overlapping with catfishing, though not always. Sextortion is financially motivated sexual extortion, a type of online blackmail where criminals threaten to share sexual pictures, videos or information about you. They may be trying to take money from you or forcing you to do something else that you don't want to. Anyone can be targeted, but young people aged between 15 to 17, and adults aged under 30 are most at risk. There have been several cases of suicide resulting from this form of abuse. We've included signposting to places to report and respond to this type of abuse and receive support for the victim.

And finally, on this slide, we've got mate crime. This is a type of hate crime where perpetrators target people with learning disabilities,

pretending to be their friend for the purpose of abusing them. It can include physical abuse, financial abuse, torture and even murder, and should be reported to the police.

Now have our second survivor voice. This is from Danny, a young person with experience of exploitation. He says, "Do I want to lose my freedom, or do I want to be dead? I don't want none of that. I want to be alive. I want to be living. I want to have a family."

Now we're going to look at just five examples of evolving forms of harm and abuse, ones you may have heard of, but each of these is either more complex than is typically taught in safeguarding training or is an evolving area. There's more information about each of these in your handbook.

The first one is domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading, violent behaviour, including sexual violence. It's usually perpetrated by a partner or ex-partner, and can also occur within families or by caregivers. Coercive control is now a crime in all UK nations. It can take the form of love bombing, gas lighting, isolating the individual, monitoring their time, controlling finances or threats and intimidation. Police powers to tackle perpetrators of domestic abuse were extended in 2024 and there's also been the introduction of Raneem's law (named in memory of

Raneem Oudeh and her mother Khaola Saleem, who were murdered by Raneem's ex-husband in 2018), which ensures a domestic abuse specialist is in every 999 call centre. It can't be overstated how widespread an issue this is, with over 100 reports of domestic abuse being made to the police every hour.

Secondly, we have fabricated or induced illness, which is a form of child abuse that's been known about for a while but, since it's rare, is one that isn't normally covered in standard safeguarding training. It's where a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. This is harmful to the child for several reasons. If you suspect this is happening, don't confront the parent, but follow the normal process of recording and reporting to children's social services in your area.

Thirdly, child criminal and sexual exploitation. The Jay Review, which was released in November 2023, highlighted that thousands of children and young people across the country are controlled and manipulated by criminal gangs, while countless more are at risk. The toll on these young lives is immeasurable, leading to serious physical harm, long term trauma and criminalisation. Children are paying with their freedom, their childhood and their lives. Signs and indicators include often being outside of the local area, having items that seem expensive, getting lots

of calls or texts, sometimes on more than one phone, secretive behaviour and unexplained injuries.

Honour based abuse is a form of control or punishment used to protect or defend perceived cultural or religious beliefs and honour. It's an umbrella term that includes physical abuse, sexual violence, abduction, forced marriage, imprisonment and murder, where the person is being punished by their family or community. Victims are predominantly women and girls, but males can also be victims, particularly where it's believed they're engaged in inappropriate sexual relations, such as same sex relationships or supporting a victim of honour-based abuse.

And finally, child abuse linked to faith or belief. We need to recognise the impact of a family's cultural and religious background when assessing risk. Both faith and a close community are factors that we know can increase a person's resilience and lessen the impact of harm, but sadly, these backgrounds can occasionally also be a source of harm and abuse. This includes situations like female genital mutilation (FGM), belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, the evil eye, or djins and dakini, ritual or 'muti' murders, where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts believed to produce potent magical remedies. Signs that someone might be experiencing this type of abuse can include low self-esteem, or a

child describing themselves as bad or evil. Concerns about how a person's faith or culture may be harming a child must be reported, not simply accepted as part of their belief system.

Let's pause and consider, now, some factors that might increase someone's vulnerability or risk of being harmed. It'd be good to hear some of these from you. The co-host will post a list in the chat at the end of our discussion, for any we may have missed. [For the transcript, these are the factors that we're highlighting:] A person's age or social characteristics; isolation for various reasons; exposure to adverse childhood experiences. These are traumatic events that occur during childhood, and include things like abuse, parental separation, food insecurity and neglect. The more of these individual experiences in childhood, the greater risk they are of experiencing mental, physical and emotional difficulties later in life, which can place them at a greater risk of experiencing additional harm. There is also parental behaviour and family factors such as loss of employment, mental or physical health challenges experienced by a caregiver, or the loss of a parent. Care experience increases a person's vulnerability, as do communication or health difficulties, environmental factors (the place that they're in, as opposed to ecology) such as fuel poverty, housing affordability, access to education and literacy, crime, and employment opportunities. All these

factors and others that we haven't named here can increase a person's vulnerability to risk. An awareness of these factors can enable us to better safeguard those in our communities.

To finish this first module, we want to just recognise that there are parameters to this role. Safeguarding is such a broad and ever-evolving area, it is important to remind ourselves that this role does have parameters.

So firstly, recognise that you won't be an expert in everything. This role is not about knowing all the answers but rather knowing when and where to ask questions. If situations exceed your knowledge base or expertise, then always seek advice, the signposting part of your handbook is a great resource. Your local authority is also likely to have a website, often with very helpful information.

Secondly, we encourage you to build your signposting store. Be prepared to signpost people to other services. We strongly recommend scoping these out before situations arise or noting them when dealing with specific situations. You will then have an ever-growing signposting store you can use to offer tailored and relevant information to help the person or people you're supporting keep themselves safe. Now is a good opportunity for any of you to share any helpful resources, newsletters, emails, etc. that you are aware of in the chat. Thank you.

And then finally, when it's a serious case being dealt with by police and other statutory agencies, we need to be clear on our parameters. Your role is certainly not to investigate, but it is likely you'll be able to provide support for the victim-survivor and to help maintain a safe environment. Importantly, remember to keep recording and referring new information, even if it's more of the same of what you've already reported.

[Module Two – Respond]

Okay, so we're on to module two now, which is 'respond'. In this module, we're going to consider victim-survivor centred responses, responding fairly, and responding well in a variety of situations. We'll use some case scenarios to look at this together too.

Firstly, victim-survivor centred responses. In foundation level safeguarding training, 'respond' mainly addresses how we can respond well to disclosures of abuse. Unsurprisingly, for Safeguarding Leads and deputies, 'respond' is not limited to the moment of disclosure, but poses the bigger question of how we as an organisation can respond well to victim-survivors. This is the main way we fulfil the 'listen, advocate and empower' part of our role.

Imagine your birthday is coming up. You are told to make space in your diary. A couple of good friends slip into conversation that they've got plans. You turn up to the venue at the time you were told to. You walk

through the doors; there's a crowd of friends in front of you and balloons and cakes. But as you walk around the room, no one thinks to talk to you or wish you happy birthday.

Of course, the experience of abuse should NEVER look like a healthy celebration of a person's life. But, if we're not careful, all of our safeguarding efforts and the safer 'trimmings' we build into our practices can lose sight of the people they were designed to be about.

So, what is a victim-survivor centred approach? It's about making sure that the wellbeing of the victim-survivor is our priority across all of our processes, the steps we take and the way we take them. Why does this matter? We need to make sure that we avoid adding to a person's trauma. The organisation Survivors Voices summarise it like this, "All work with survivors should feel like and be the opposite of abuse." In an abuse situation, power and control are taken away from the victim, and they can feel silenced. If we aren't careful, our safeguarding processes can mirror this dynamic. We want to ensure that we do all we can to manage our power well and put power back into the hands of victim-survivors. How can we ensure that we have a victim-survivor centred approach then? We look at each step of our process through a victim-survivor's eyes. Ask ourselves the question, 'will this feel and be the opposite of abuse?' before each action. One area that victim-survivors

often report on being let down in, is not being kept informed of decisions and outcomes as things progress. This is something we should make a victim-survivor centred decision on and be explicit about it in our policy so that people are clear on what they can expect before they disclose harm and abuse. We want to acknowledge that there are barriers to integrating this into our practice. It is time consuming. It often means changing all our processes to reflect this priority. We might even find we have been overly focused on avoiding false accusations, in reality, though, these are rare. But we have an ethical responsibility not to add to a person's trauma through our responses.

And here we've got a survivor voice telling us why. It says, "I'm angry with them, the church. I haven't even read the report about me. I need the report, but the church is holding on to it. Where's my justice?" That's from Andrew Cadogan, a victim-survivor of child sexual abuse. Andrew reported the abuse to the police in 2022 and, despite agreeing to an independent investigation in February 2023, Andrew was still waiting to read the findings in November 2024.

How might victim-survivor centred responses differ for adults and children? Adults can often communicate with us in words, and are capable of making their voices heard, but they can only do so when a trusting relationship exists. The way that we respond to that voice

through advocacy can help extend that trust. That might look like going with them to report to the police and ensure that they're heard. It could be assisting them with follow up phone calls or sourcing therapy.

Adults with learning disabilities may need greater support to make their voices heard, and we might need to look at alternative ways of communicating, including behaviour and gestures.

Children, similarly, need us to seek to understand their communication. Such relationships need time and creativity and can be built by listening to and showing genuine interest in children. As with adults, we often need to advocate for the child and the family.

We're going to think about how we respond fairly now. As we said earlier, decision making is part of this role, but as humans carrying our own opinions, experiences and biases, it's an area where we can easily get it wrong. We need to make sure that we respond fairly in our role as Safeguarding Lead or deputy, and one way we can do this is by taking the time to identify our own unconscious biases.

What is unconscious bias? Well, we all carry with us, often without realising it, beliefs and views about other people that might not be right or reasonable. For example, do we give more weight to the words of someone with a certain level of education, age, gender or class? Do we have a negative view of any social identities? Is there a difference in how

we respond if a person looks and sounds like us and when they don't?

Having unconscious bias is inevitable, allowing it to affect our behaviour and decisions isn't. Why does it matter that we tackle our unconscious bias more? Everyone should expect to be treated fairly. To treat people differently because we hold certain stereotypes is unethical. On the more extreme end of the scale, if these biases are around any of the protected characteristics named in the Equality Act of 2010, (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, sex, and sexual orientation) and affect our decisions or behaviour, then we're breaking the law.

How can we mitigate unconscious bias? We can do it through being aware of our unconscious biases and disrupting our thought patterns when we notice it, and that can help us become more objective. It can also help to write down and record our decisions. Sometimes, just seeing it there on paper helps to clarify it. Sometimes it's about removing certain pieces of information from our reports. So, if we see something in writing and it hasn't got the details, such as somebody's age or their gender, or you can't hear their accent when they're speaking, that can help us be more objective in those situations.

Okay, that thought brings us into our second break. So again, I will see you in five minutes.

[Break]

Welcome back. Hope you had a good break. We're going to have hopefully an open and honest discussion now about that gut feeling, that emotional response when we're brought certain things in our role as Safeguarding Leads. You are welcome but not obligated to share this. It's incredibly healthy to be able to identify, name and disrupt emotions that may cause us to behave in an unbalanced way. So let's think about how we feel when someone comes to us with a low level concern, or you hear a rumour while you're out for coffee with a friend, a new group or activity starts on your premises without including any safeguarding processes, an allegation of abuse occurred outside of your organisation, but the suspected perpetrator also holds a role with you, or the harm being reported was perpetrated by a child? It might be that your emotional response now in the training or in a live situation, is that of shock or disgust or anger or cynicism, it could be many other things. Recognising and identifying that can help us ensure that it doesn't accidentally affect our practical responses. Bear this in mind as you consider our scenarios now. As well as answering the questions we give you, see if you recognise an initial emotional response to what you hear. You'll be put into groups and asked to look at one of the following scenarios. When you go into your groups, please discuss, firstly, what

determines your next steps, and secondly, how would you practically respond? Please nominate somebody to bring back feedback to the main group, and we'll see you all in a few moments.

Our first scenario is about Trevor. Trevor is a deacon at your church.

He's involved also with the welcome team and children's church and is a popular choice for babysitting among the families as he's a firm believer in parents investing in their marriages. A parent asks to speak to you, as a safeguarding lead, over a concern he has about Trevor. You weren't surprised. His son, Alex, is five years old. The dad tells you that last Sunday, his son came over to him and his mum crying, saying, "Trevor, hurt me." Trevor quickly explained that they were just playing 'tickle monsters'. His wife brushed it off by saying to Alex, "Aw, you like playing that with daddy." And to Trevor she says, "He's probably tired, Trevor, we were out late last night. Don't worry."

However, Alex's parents talked about the incident at home, they realised that this was the second time Alex had come to them upset because Trevor had hurt him.

Alex's dad is angry that this happened for the second time and wants the church to take some action to stop it happening again.

So, what would determine your next steps?

Next steps might be determined by the nature and severity of the hurt when you have more information about it, but you would act in some form anyway. Any existing concerns about Trevor might affect how you respond to this one, and similarly, any existing concerns for Alex. You would look at your policy and procedures for concerns and follow your process – this helps you to stay objective when you know the people involved well. You might get advice from your umbrella body or from Thirtyone:eight, again, a good option when you know people well. Any additional information that comes to light would also need to be considered to determine your next steps.

How might you practically respond then? Well, in the moment, you would thank Alex's dad for speaking to you and reassure him that you'll take action. Then you might check your records for any existing concerns. You could ring the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding helpline for advice, particularly because Trevor is in leadership and having an impartial outside voice is helpful in those situations. You may arrange a meeting with Trevor. You might ask Alex's parents to pass on any new information from Alex about what happened. You might also reflect on what you might have seen, heard or noticed that means that you were not surprised when Alex's dad talked to you. Is this an indicator of an unconscious bias or inappropriate behaviour that you've not fully

considered? Trevor also has access to children when their parents are not with them, through babysitting, which happens outside of church. The concern here could be that of the early stages of grooming, he's linked to the church, and so could carry the authority of being a trusted person, and so parents may be less vigilant, and there is a risk by his association with the church that we may need to consider as well. Risk assess (with advice about confidentiality) whether it's worth sharing some information with parents so they can make an informed decision about continuing to use him as a babysitter.

We snuck into the scenario that you weren't surprised when Alex's dad came with a concern. Why was that? Was it bias that was unaddressed, or were there some behaviours that were ignored? Jo Saxon (founder of the Ezer Collective) makes the comment, "What were the tiny red flags that I just didn't pay attention to? Jo, why aren't you shocked by this? What is not shocking? So what red flags were you ignoring?" Whether it's bias or behaviours, this is a good reflective question to use in this role.

Our second scenario is about Anna. One of your charity's paid children's workers, Seamus, recently got married. When out for coffee, your friend tells you that there have been rumours going around about Seamus' new wife, Anna's 'dark past', and how some of the families don't want 'that

kind of person' around their children. She wonders how you're okay with this 'considering your role as Safeguarding Lead'. She didn't seem to know any details.

So, what determines your next steps? You would consider what contact Anna may have with children through Seamus' work. If Anna is wanting to take a role alongside her husband, your safer recruitment process will determine some of the next steps. It's also worth noting that there's no substance or detail to the rumour at present.

So how would you practically respond? You would take note of the conversation. You could arrange to have a chat over coffee with Anna to get to know her better. You'd also follow any of your safer recruitment steps as appropriate.

Our third situation is about Jomo. Jomo attends your church. He's posted an online fundraiser to your church's social media accounts for a group he volunteers with that works with victims of sex trafficking in the UK. In the comment, someone mentions using the back hall for the social activities the group runs with the women. This is the first you have heard about this venture, and you're concerned about the current lack of safeguarding considerations.

So, what determines your next steps? You want clarity as to what role, if any, your church or charity are playing in this fundraiser. Also, is there a

church policy about other groups using the premises, or sharing outside links to church social media pages? Has the other group taken safeguarding steps and know what checks are needed? Do they have a safeguarding policy in place?

And so then, how would you practically respond? The church, particularly the trustees, would need to consider who they permit to use their facilities. You can talk to them and determine whether they have seen evidence of a safeguarding policy, legal checks etc and hold a copy of any agreements.

You may need to have a conversation with the church leadership to highlight how this could look to the public (for example, that it being on the church's social media makes it look like a church project) and the risks to the church if activities aren't managed safely.

You would also want to have a conversation with Jomo regarding safeguarding risks for himself, the girls and women involved in the group and the church.

Our fourth scenario is about Nancy. Your charity provides a creche for the children of parents attending your weekend courses. Nancy is one of your creche volunteers. Nancy is also a staff member at the local nursery. As Safeguarding Lead, a concerned parent has come to you and told you that she has heard that the nursery is currently under

investigation. She alleges that Nancy has been accused of being physically and verbally abusive to the children in her care, causing children to go home upset and not wanting to go to nursery. She tells you that one of the parents involved told her that Nancy had shouted at a child while pulling his arm, "You really are a spoiled brat. I'm sick of listening to your whining. Go and sit down now," and that she pushed him into his seat. She said that this was just one example of what she's heard. The parent is worried because her child attends the creche at times when Nancy is volunteering. This is the first time a parent has reported a concern about Nancy to you.

What determines your next steps? Well, this is a detailed incident that has been shared with you. However, the person passing it on has heard the information third hand.

So how would you practically respond? You would thank the parent for sharing their concerns with you as Safeguarding Lead and reassure them that the children's wellbeing is of the utmost concern for you. As well as recording the concerns in detail and the context, consider stepping Nancy down, while being clear that this is a neutral act, or consider if she can volunteer in a behind the scenes, non-contact role alongside another adult, until the situation is clearer. You could contact the Safeguarding Lead of the nursery and ask them if they can share

any information with you that will help you make an appropriate risk assessment since she holds a similar role with you. Be aware that they might not be able to tell you anything, and equally you shouldn't share anything confidential with them. They may be able to tell you whether or not there is an ongoing investigation.

And then our final situation is about Fin. Fin is 15 years old and attends your community youth group on a Friday night. He has some social difficulties. You're unsure if he has an official diagnosis, and you know that he attends a local mainstream school. You're the Safeguarding Lead, and his youth worker has asked you for help and advice in managing Fin's behaviours. Fin does not always understand social cues and can overstep, especially when it comes to physical contact with both leaders and his peers. The youth worker tells you of a recent incident. Fin tried to kiss one of the girls in the group last Friday night, the other boys were cheering him on while the girl in question, Bella, was telling him, "No, Fin, stop it," and trying to push him off. It wasn't until one of the leaders intervened that he stopped the behaviour.

What would determine your next steps? If we get Bella's account and know her wishes and feelings, that might determine some next steps. Also, if we have any existing concerns and additional information about Fin, this may have an impact on how we respond. We'd look at our

policy and procedures for concerns. We might take advice from our umbrella body or Thirtyone:eight, and we'd also include any additional information that comes to light.

So how would you practically respond? We would thank the youth worker for speaking to us. Ask if there have been any other incidents they've noticed before now. We would check our records for any existing concerns.

We could ring the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding helpline for advice, particularly around informing Fin and Bella's parents. Also, check that the youth group have a code of conduct for behaviour, and if all the young people and volunteers know about it.

Our final thought for our first session is all about responses. How do we respond well to people's responses to your responses?! One of the most difficult areas of the role is to navigate it when we've had to make certain decisions or take certain actions, and those decisions or actions cause upset to people. It's not unusual to face situations like this in your role.

Firstly, some people feel that safeguarding is just a bureaucratic process and a waste of time and money. Unfortunately, involving people with this mindset in training and following processes can be time consuming and tiring. Secondly, relatives or friends of suspected perpetrators can't possibly believe that the accusation is founded in reality, and feel that

you were wrong in reporting it. You also might have conflicts and tensions within a community, when some people in a community believe one person and others believe another, and you end up with community splits or loss of friendships, which can be painful and difficult to manage when not everyone knows all of the information and we can't share it. And the final situation that can be really challenging is when victim-survivors feel that they haven't received the justice that they hoped for, and we're walking with them as they manage that.

Have you ever faced situations like this? Sadly, facing conflicts like this is almost unavoidable. There's often not the evidence needed to see perpetrators brought to justice. People will still often blame the victim rather than the offender, and others simply won't recognise the need for making our organisations safer places.

If you have faced situations like this, what has helped? It would be really good to share some advice and wisdom with each other here. One thing can be reflecting on the positive differences you have made to people's lives. Think back to our first survivor voice: "Thank you to the lady who listened to me today. I felt heard and validated. It really helped to hear the things she said. She gave me time to say everything I needed to and has given me good advice about the next steps I can take." It's also helpful to remember those key aspects of your role that you can see on

the slide, and strive to do them - advocate for those whose voices may go unheard, build a team, even if it's a slow journey of culture change, and respond to all in a fair and balanced way, as much as you can.

Aside from that, we want to finish this session by encouraging you to take care of your own emotional wellbeing if you do nothing else. After this session, aim to identify someone you can confide in without sharing details that breach confidentiality, so that you remain well and supported as you take on this really important role. That is the end of our first session. We will see you again for part two. Thanks, everyone.

[End of Session One]

[Part 2 – Welcome]

Welcome back for session two. As we begin, we just want to reflect on our first session. What stood out to you from that first session as being helpful to you? Was there anything that was unclear that you'd like some more information on? And what is it that you're hoping to gain from this session? You might be hoping for a list of the policies and procedures you need to have in place as Safeguarding Lead. We're not going to spend a lot of time talking through this in the webinar, but there is an audit tool in your handbook which takes you through lots of the tasks of a Safeguarding Lead and what you might need to have in place. So

please do refer to that as it may be helpful for you in managing those practical aspects.

We also encourage you to hold in mind the contextual safeguarding approach and how it helps us understand the behaviours and signs we're seeing. Consider Fin for a moment. Contextual safeguarding might also encourage us to look back at our records for the names of the group of boys encouraging his inappropriate interactions with Bella. Contextual safeguarding means that we're more likely to correctly interpret the situations we're seeing unfold in front of us.

[Module Three – Record]

Let's get into module three, which is 'record'. Here, we're going to take a practical look about how we manage our safeguarding records. We're going to think about recording safeguarding concerns, securely storing those records, and about the importance of person-centred recording.

When we think back to our framing of the Safeguarding Lead role and its purpose, record keeping is a practical element of the role that enables us to empower people to get the protection they need, to identify patterns, to pass on information to the right people at the right time, and to inform decision making - our own and that of the statutory agencies too. For this to happen, our record keeping needs to be accurate, informative, timely and organised. When setting up a record for a new

concern, what information needs to be captured to ensure that it will be useful for you and others if and as a situation develops? So think about having the full names of those involved, addresses, date of birth of the person if known, because that's something that statutory agencies need. We want to capture the who, the what, the where and the when of a situation and other relevant factors from a person's context. For live documents and running records, we want to record each new action, phone call, email, any kind of contact, so that you can see patterns emerge, demonstrate your safeguarding efforts, ensure that others can access relevant information if needed, and evidence your decision making.

Here is a survivor's voice, which emphasises the importance of recording signs and indicators, not just the things that we are told: "I displayed many behaviours that should have let my parents, guardians, teachers and the adults in my life recognise that I must have been being abused." It's from Dorota's story that she shared with the Survivors Trust. So often, recording is making a note of the behaviours that concern us until we have enough pieces of the puzzle to know how we should act.

So, what do we need to record? The following list is in your handbook. Having these ten things on a slide can seem overwhelming, but actually

it's just a helpful step by step tool. There's a form that captures all of this information in the appendix. You need the information that was received by the Safeguarding Lead, including the date and time and from whom. Record any advice sought, if that's applicable, again, including the date and time and the source of that advice, for example, a name or organisation. You would write down what advice it was that you received, particularly advice about informing parents, or in the case of adults seeking consent and gauging capacity. You want to record an initial assessment of the concern following the advice that you've got. Record what actions have been taken and with reasons, again, including the date and the time and who took those actions. Record any referrals made, and to whom those referrals are made, including the date and the time, and by whom. Record what signposting was shared or support given, and if there is ongoing monitoring happening. Make it clear in recording whether a parent or carer was informed, if yes, who was spoken to when and by whom, and detail the reason why or why not. And again, record any other relevant information. It can seem a lot to list it like this, but when you have these boxes and you're encouraged to fill them in, it allows us to create a full picture, so we don't miss anything. If something's not applicable to your situation you can just put N/A, but they are helpful prompts to make sure that we have captured everything we need.

We're going to put that into practice now. You're going to go into groups and think about how you'd record developments in the next part of either Anna or Nancy's scenarios that we discussed yesterday. Please discuss, what would you note down for each of the ten areas? (If you want to do this in real time, you could actually make the notes if you have a piece of paper handy. If something isn't relevant, just write N/A or make up a hypothetical answer.) Firstly, we're going to hear the second part of Anna's situation. So, Seamus and Anna have recently got married, if you remember. Seamus has grown up in the area and has been in his paid position of children's worker with your charity for five years now. He also manages the volunteer team who help him. Seamus regularly has the young people and volunteers over to his home for barbecues, always with the young people's parents' permission. He and Anna met in Scotland 18 months ago, and they've been married a few months. Seamus didn't tell you much about Anna, but he knows you want to do a criminal records check on her, because some of the charity activities happen in their home, and she works directly with the kids from time to time. Anna discloses to you that she does have a record. Several years ago, she was convicted for a violent crime where she used a knife to hold up a store intending to rob it to get drugs. She's been clean for three years now, isn't on probation, and says she's turned her life around

since then. She tells you that she wants to be involved with the charity and support Seamus as much as possible.

So, what would you note down?

We'd make a record of what we've been told, using Anna's own words, this is helpful to refer to if anything shows on the criminal records check at a later stage. We'd note down that a crime was committed, and the status of her probation or any ongoing limitations. It's also worth noting, if anything about her conviction is relevant to work with children and young people. Several charities work with ex-offenders and can give advice. It's worth contacting those with specialist knowledge and note any advice given onto your record. Remember that having a criminal history does not necessarily exclude people from roles, paid or unpaid, and it can be illegal to stop people doing certain things simply because they have a criminal record. Seek advice, but for now, the focus is on recording the concern.

And now Nancy. Again, what would you note down? Here is part two: Almost immediately, after hearing from the concerned parent, Nancy calls you saying that someone has been spreading lies about her. She tells you that it's all just a personal vendetta, and that her nursery line manager has already fallen for it, and she hopes that you know better.

She says she's been depressed lately and doesn't know how she'll cope if anything else is taken away from her.

So, what would you note down? The 'paramount' principle when it comes to children suggests that we need to step Nancy back while things are being investigated or aren't yet decided. People are often nervous to do this, but it's a neutral act. Make records of what's been said, including by Nancy. Ensure that she's getting pastoral support and possibly signposting to mental health support. Her comment about not coping shouldn't cause us to ignore concerns where children are involved, but we don't overlook her safety and wellbeing either.

It's important to say with this one that when we're unsure about whether the allegation is malicious or not, our response must always be suitable for both the possibility that the alleged perpetrator is actually a victim in need of support, or that the alleged perpetrator is manipulating the situation. In reality, false accusations are rare, but we have a duty to safeguard those under our care, which is our priority.

As well as creating and updating accurate records, our safeguarding responsibilities also include ensuring we should store these records securely. The three UK charity regulators have different ways of framing charities safeguarding responsibilities, but a shared minimum expectation is that charities do no harm to those they exist to serve.

Failing to store sensitive information about somebody's life in a secure way can do real harm. What harm might come from insecure storage of safeguarding information, do you think? And what steps could you take to avoid this?

There's no one size fits all approach to storing safeguarding records. Your resource and budget will determine what is appropriate and possible in your context. There are tailor-made safeguarding management systems, such as MyConcern, CPOMS and iKnowChurch, which are designed with security and searchability in mind, and offer different levels of access for different roles. These systems have a cost attached, but there are other secure ways of storing safeguarding information. For example, a locked filing cabinet that can only be accessed by certain people is a safe option for paper files, and password protected, access restricted electronic Cloud Storage is also possible.

Data protection laws hold organisations to account about the information they hold and share about individuals. Any personal information we hold about someone has to have a legitimate purpose. Safeguarding often is that legitimate purpose, but we have to ensure that the information we hold is in line with the UK Data Protection Act, and the way that we intend to store, use or share somebody's information doesn't contravene

their rights. The Caldicott principles that apply to NHS England can be helpful guidance for this, and the co-host can share those with you just now. The recommended time for storing safeguarding information is 75 years. Different types of records have different retention schedules, and some organisations have their own retention policies. You may need to seek advice from your parent organisation, denomination or insurance company about this. One implication of long-term storage to consider is that you are unlikely to still be your organisation's Safeguarding Lead in 75 years' time! How can you store records in such a way that those who take over the role from you can locate, understand and use your records if needed in the future? Another simple but vital aspect of record keeping that this fact highlights, is the need to date every record, including the year.

Our final focus in this recording module is around person-centred recording. Record-keeping can seem like a more clinical, administrative part of the Safeguarding Lead role, but at the heart of every record is a person who needs protection. With this in mind, we're going to finish this module by considering how we make our recording practice person-centred.

What do you think is meant by these things that we've got on the screen here? First of all, accessible processes: Literacy levels and physical

disability should never be a barrier to the safeguarding process. Your role may involve supporting people to make records of their concerns, or you creating written records based on alternative forms of communication.

Secondly, age-appropriate processes: Having safe conversations in the presence of a trusted adult, and using simplified language are things for us to consider when we are making records with children. You may or may not have come across something called a body map, where an outline drawing of a body is used to help children communicate about the harm they've experienced. This can be helpful for simple clarity and communicating without words, but we also know it can be triggering in some circumstances, so be cautious and considerate about the situation if you're thinking of using that.

Thirdly, trauma awareness is an important aspect of working with victim-survivors. Experiencing trauma can make many aspects of daily life more challenging, and recounting details of a traumatic event can be re-traumatising. We can make our processes more trauma aware by intentionally considering safety, trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment. We want to offer choice about how we make records. Does someone want to make a record verbally or in writing? Do they

want support present or not? We can be led by the person about when and how much they feel able and ready to share.

Fourthly, strengths-based recording means focusing on what a person can do, rather than only on what they can't. It is particularly relevant to safeguarding in situations relating to at risk adults. Noting somebody's personal strengths can broaden the possibilities available for keeping them safe.

Fifthly, avoid victim blaming language. Write your records imagining that one day you may be reading them out to the person that they are about. Using victim blaming language (where we indicate that a person is partly or wholly responsible for the harm they've experienced) in our records can prevent someone from getting the protection they need and may damage our relationship with them, cutting off the possibility of any support we want to offer.

And finally, include the voice of the child or adult. Records that keep the person at the centre should include their voice whenever possible and appropriate, including their wishes and feelings about any steps that may be taken to safeguard them. Even when it's not possible to comply with a person's wishes, knowing them helps us to frame and explain the safeguarding process in a way that recognises their individuality and

value. So that brings us to the end of our recording module and into a five-minute break.

[Break]

[Module Four- Report]

Welcome back. Hope you had a good break. We're going to move on to thinking about reporting now. We often need to make a report after we've recorded a concern. This module, again, takes a practical view of reporting externally, both for adults and children. We will also consider reporting to, or notifying, family, and also reporting internally.

Safeguarding adults needs to be managed very differently from safeguarding processes for children, particularly when it comes to reporting externally. Firstly, unless someone is in imminent danger, you shouldn't report outside your organisation without first getting their consent.

For adults, the key guiding principle, including on when to refer, is that our actions should be 'proportionate'. This is because we should assume that adults have the capacity to make their own decisions, unless a formal assessment for mental capacity has shown that they can't. Even this is complex, because formal assessments can only be done by a professional and capacity is situational. This means that even when we

know they lack capacity in one area, we must assume they retain capacity in other areas. For example, an older person may need support staying safe when shopping online, but that doesn't mean they need help with physical shopping.

The details of determining mental (in)capacity is beyond the scope of this course. Our rule of thumb for adults is (except for situations where either they're in immediate danger or you're concerned about the adult's capacity to make a decision about the situation that's concerning) we need to be careful not to over respond. We should only report in a way that's proportionate to the situation and in line with the adult's voice.

Reports should be made to the police and / or adult social services. If there's an immediate risk of danger, you should call 999. If a crime has occurred that they wish to report, one form of advocacy can be accompanying the adult to the police station to help ensure their voice is heard. If the adult's need is for support rather than reporting of a crime, then we would want to report to our local adult social services department. If the adult has vulnerabilities, it may be worth reporting to adult social care services at the same time as reporting to the police to see what services can be provided to reduce the risk of ongoing abuse. The guidance on this changes between the four UK nations, so we

strongly recommend familiarising yourself with that section of the handbook and your local authority's website.

The threshold for reporting concerns about children is much lower, since protection of children is our paramount concern. Child protection means doing all we can, both preventatively and responsively, to limit the experience of harm and abuse for children. When we have concerns, ideally, children agree to the report being made, but we need to pass it on even if they don't. We should pass on all concerns. Northern Ireland and Wales have reporting laws that you need to be aware of, which you can find in your handbook. If we think the child could be at immediate or serious risk of harm, we don't allow them to go back into the situation until we've had advice from social services or the police. Unlike adults, we don't need to obtain a child's consent to make a report. In fact, we still need to report when we know they might not want us to. That said, we believe it's good practice to give the child a voice in the process. We could say something like, "I may or I will need to pass this on to this person, how do you feel about that?" We can then hold space for the child's feelings while offering reasons why we need to report the concern in child-appropriate language, meaning the child isn't excluded from a situation that involves them. It also means that you know what the child's preferences are and might be about to advocate for them as you make

the report. We'll discuss the issue of talking with parents in a moment.

We're going to just think for a moment about reporting thresholds.

There's more about this in your handbook. We sometimes think "I reported, but no action was taken. Did I misunderstand the thresholds?"

A reporting threshold is essentially deciding when things are bad enough to get outside agencies involved. It's quite complicated to navigate this in real life, because safeguarding is often subjective. What you understand as harm and risk can look different to my understanding of it. Statutory agencies such as police and social services are often running at capacity. This can mean that they only have the resources to respond to the more pressing cases, not all the cases that fall within their threshold.

Delegates sometimes share their frustration that they have previously followed the guidance on reporting but is not followed up. We want to encourage you to do two things. Firstly, report anyway. Secondly, report clearly, as being able to show a pattern of concerns will often help statutory agencies to triage situations correctly. Never think, "I've reported this same thing before. There's no point reporting it again." The death of 10-year-old Sara Sharif tragically highlights this. Her teacher reported injuries and inconsistent explanations to social services in March 2023, but Sarah was found dead in August the same year after suffering more than 70 injuries. A safeguarding review into what went wrong is ongoing. I wonder how it would feel to be the teacher if you

hadn't reported, knowing what we know now was Sara's awful home situation. There's a quote on your screen at the moment from Sara's teacher, Helen Simmons. She describes Sara as a "happy child" who at times, would be "sassy".

Now we're going to go back into groups again, and this time, we're going to think about the second part of Trevor's situation. As you read through the situation, discuss would you need to report this externally? If so, who would you report to? Also, what challenges might you face as Safeguarding Lead in this situation?

On Tuesday morning, you receive a phone call from Alex's mum. She tells you that last night was Alex's bath night. When she was helping him to wash his hair, she noticed a small bruise on each armpit and a couple on the top of his arms. When she pointed them out to Alex, he said, "That's where Trevor hurt me. I don't like his games." You thank Alex's mum for telling you and advise her that you may need to pass this information on once you sought advice and will keep her informed.

So, would you need to report this externally? Yes, you would. A child has been physically harmed. You can see those bruises. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you aren't sure whether to report externally, refer to your policy in the first instance for steps and guidance. Just getting that objectivity in a live situation is helpful, and remember, you

can always ring us on the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding helpline for reassurance and advice as well.

Who would you report to? It would be children's social care services. In Northern Ireland, you'd go through the Health and Social Care Trust gateway services team. In Scotland, you'd contact the child's Named Person.

You may need to report to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in England and Wales, or Disclosure Scotland, because Trevor is in a Position of Trust. Also, there's the possibility that you need to report to the Charity Regulator and the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland.

What challenges might you face as Safeguarding Lead in this situation? Well, we might be wondering how to support Alex. Alex should come first in this situation. Then we might experience some interpersonal or relational challenges in our organisation because of what people feel about Trevor. Power dynamics may also be challenging. Trevor is in leadership, and he seems popular in the community. You might be wondering if you will have the support of other leaders in your community if you need to take action to step Trevor down, for example. This scenario is based in a church community, and in faith contexts, there's sometimes that additional complexity of deference towards

leaders based on certain Bible passages or that a spiritual leader represents something of God or faith to someone. You might be wondering about how much information you can share and when there could be conflicts of interest for others who may become involved. For example, your trustees, if they have personal relationships with Trevor or with Alex's family. We've also got that aspect of Trevor's private relationships with families from your community. It says in the first part of his scenario that he is often an option for babysitting. We could be wondering how to manage that, as it's not a church activity, but the link is through the church. When we have an allegation against someone in our community, it can affect us personally as well, so think about how you might manage your own wellbeing. How do we remain objective? There's also the challenge of supporting all the different people involved. So, we could have Alex, his parents, Trevor, and any others that may become involved down the line. We want to delegate so that different people are allocated to pastoral and decision-making roles and for supporting different people. There is an appendix in your handbook on managing allegations as this is an area where we often need some advice and clarity in the moment.

One of the things with Trevor's situation is that he is in a Position of Trust, and so it's a good thing for us to move on to think about Position

of Trust now. This term has got a general meaning, which is worth bearing in mind: when people hold a position within an organisation, then often people will implicitly trust them, since it's assumed that the organisation who's allowed them to hold these roles also trust them. But it's the legal definition that we're concerned with here. In 2022 the Position of Trust section of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 was extended to include sports and religious contexts. This protects a wider range of relationships where adults hold a position of influence or power over others. It's now illegal for anyone in a Position of Trust to engage in a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 in their care, even if they're over the age of consent. This Position of Trust law does not currently apply to faith leaders in Scotland. As with all reporting for children, if you're concerned that someone is abusing their Position of Trust, this should be reported to social services and the police or by phoning 999 if that child is in immediate danger.

Another external report we might need to make is to the lists. The lists are formally held registers of people considered unsuitable to do regulated work with certain groups, usually those groups are children or adults at risk of harm. Within the UK, the lists are held by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Disclosure Scotland. Both regulators hold two separate lists, one for those who shouldn't be allowed to work

with children, and one for those who shouldn't be allowed to work with adults. An individual might be on one or both of these lists. The standard of proof for the lists is different to that in legal proceedings. This means that even when there isn't enough evidence for the individual to be prosecuted or convicted, if on the balance of probabilities, the person is deemed more likely than not to have committed the offence, they will be placed on the barred list and prohibited from working with children, adults at risk of harm, or both. This matters for you, because you are expected to report to the barred list even where there is doubt about guilt or innocence. In certain situations, you have a duty to refer.

There are other types of external reporting that might be involved, most of which can usually be delegated to the trustees. Unless the alleged perpetrator presents ongoing risk to others, none of these bodies need to know identifying information or the confidential details but rather want to know how you've responded.

You might need to report to your Charity Regulator when an incident has resulted in harm to someone participating in your activities, your staff, your property, your finances or your reputation. This is often as part of your annual reporting and typically falls under the trustees' responsibility.

You may need to report to your insurance company. Insurance companies need to know when a safeguarding concern happened within

an organisation, and the organisation has some responsibility for the harm. There might be liability to pay through public liability insurance.

Finally, your umbrella organisation, denomination or network, might have a policy that they expect to be informed when it's an incident that happens of a certain level as well.

We are going to consider when we pass information on to a person's family now. So, while not technically a report, this is looking at who we might tell and when, which is why we have it here in this section. One question for us to consider when we've got a concern about an adult is, is there concern about mental (in)capacity? If so, are there any adult children who should be informed? And secondly, does anyone hold legal power of attorney for this adult?

When we've got concerns about children, two considerations are, is the child old enough and cognitively able enough to make a decision for themselves and about whether or not their family should know? This is known as Gillick competence, and you may also have heard of the Fraser guidelines as well. There's an appendix around this and child development in your handbook. We'd also consider who has parental responsibility for the child. This is a legal term, and in some families, there's some complexity here about parental responsibility, and so we need to find that out. Are there additional risk factors that may create

harm if we do or don't inform guardians? And then finally, if the child is care-experienced, is there a corporate parent who you need to inform? Are they a ward of the state, for example? The decision about who to involve and when should be based on a combination of law, the wishes or consent of the child as appropriate, the child's best interests and advice from professional bodies. If you're unsure, please do seek advice on this.

We're going to look at part two of Fin's situation to help us consider this further. As you listen to this, just think, would you need to share concerns with Fin's parents? Why or why not? And if yes, at what stage would you inform them?

The next week, the same youth worker calls you and says they've had another incident with Fin. During a game, he pulled back the waistband of one of the girl's trousers. She shouted, "Get off!" and pushed him away. The youth worker then overheard Fin say, "I'm just playing, Jessie lets me." Jessie is Fin's younger sister. The youth worker spoke to Fin, reminding him of the group's agreed behaviours and the need to respect people's body boundaries. Fin apologised, and the rest of the evening carried on as normal. The youth worker was going to speak to Fin's parents, but he went home with a friend last night, and now they're not sure what to do.

So, would we want to tell Finn's parents here? We would say a considered 'yes', unless there was a reason not to. The reason for wanting to inform parents is that this is the second incident of problematic sexual behaviour, so it really needs addressing. We also might have concern for Jessie, and parents could act to protect Jessie at home and monitor that situation. But when would we do this? So, before informing parents, we would check our records to see if there were any existing concerns that mean informing parents could increase risk for either Jessie or Fin. You can get advice from the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding helpline if you're unsure about the next steps. If we're informing children's social care services /named person / health and social care trust, then do this before speaking to the parents, in case the services have advice or insights on why this might increase risk.

And now we'll move on from our scenario to consider internal reporting. Balancing the need for confidentiality and the ability for your groups to keep running without more harm being created is a difficult balance. The rule of thumb for sharing information is to share details on a need-to-know basis. There're some people internally who we might consider reporting to when we've had a safeguarding incident. So firstly, trustees, they'll need to know the number and type of situations that you're dealing with as a Safeguarding Lead. If a behaviour contract needs to be

enacted, then one trustee will often need to be aware of the individual being managed and what the conditions are of their involvement. They don't necessarily need to know the details of the offence or the details of the victim-survivors, though.

What about our organisational leaders? They need to know enough information to support you well. And, like trustees, they may need the overview, but they are unlikely to need access to names or details of the specifics. And then finally, group leaders. They need to know areas of risk, for example, if a particular young person shouldn't be unsupervised with younger children, or that bathrooms need to be accessed by one individual at a time. Even if the policy is brought in to respond to a specific safeguarding concern, it's rarely appropriate for all group leaders to be told all the details of the concern.

Unfortunately, when organisations do become aware of harm and abuse, they often don't respond in appropriate or sufficient ways, you and all those who interact with your faith group or charity should be clear about how to escalate concerns internally, and if there's a whistleblowing policy. We strongly recommend that your organisation includes a 'what to expect after telling us about a concern' section in your safeguarding policy. This both helps build trust with those who are brave enough to report something to us but also signals that we are open to and expect

to be held to account. A whistleblowing policy tells you what you can do if the organisation's response isn't sufficient and also explains how the whistleblower will be protected from unfair consequences following a whistleblowing incident.

Once you've made a report, if you feel that someone is still unsafe, you should escalate that concern. In this situation, it's worth contacting the organisation and asking them what you need to do to escalate it. Often there is an ombudsman (for police, social services, etc.) who you can pass your concern to and who can follow complaints up on your behalf.

So that brings us to the end of module four.

[Module Five – Review]

Now we're into our final module, which is review. This final module starts by sharing how you can reflect on and apply learning from real-life situations. We will also encourage you to review your own capacity and knowledge and review your organisation's safeguarding culture and the ways you can strengthen it. As we mentioned in the introduction, these final two areas aren't dependent on live safeguarding situations.

Peer reflection allows practitioners to share experiences and challenges with others in the same role. It exposes us to a wider range of perspectives, enables others to ask the questions we haven't thought of

ourselves, and gives us the opportunity to share best practice. More and more, this is established practice for those involved in safeguarding, because it's such a helpful process. Your Safeguarding Leads training that you're on now includes free access to this peer reflection session. You can book via this link, which the co-host will share, and you'll also get an email with the link in a few days' time. You can wait until you have a live situation you'd like to discuss with other Safeguarding Leads or attend at any time to learn these reflective skills. Whether as part of our sessions or as an individual practice, reviewing how we respond to live situations in an honest and teachable way is something we should do regularly. Let's take five minutes now and I'll see you for our final part of the training after a break.

[Break]

Welcome back. Hope you had a good break. The remainder of this training focuses on the areas of safeguarding that aren't reactive but hopefully are preventative or periodic aspects of building our safeguarding cultures. We're going to go into breakout rooms now and really dig into our capacity and wellbeing. The wellbeing of a Safeguarding Lead dictates how long they can hold the role, but we don't want to patronise you by saying what that should look like for all individuals. Self-identifying is helpful because it reminds us that it's as

important an aspect of the role as the processes, for example, updating the safeguarding policy. As you go into your groups, please talk together about how this role could adversely affect your wellbeing. How would you know if this is happening? How can you avoid it? And how can you maintain healthy boundaries? I hope you have good conversations.

Just a brief mention now on the relationship between the Safeguarding Lead and the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. In your organisation, who supports you, whether that's formally or informally? If you're not able to easily answer this, it's worth formalising this with your leadership and your trustees. Trustees hold legal responsibility for the organisation, so it's important that these lines of communication are open.

If possible, we recommend that organisations have someone on the trustee board who takes particular responsibility for safeguarding. The relationship between this role and your role is important. You work together, but your roles are distinct. In summary, the Safeguarding Lead has operational responsibility and general oversight of safeguarding within the organisation, passing information to and from the trustee board. The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (along with the rest of the board) holds the legal responsibility for safeguarding, provides strategy and guidance and has oversight of governance and culture.

Safeguarding is never static. It's always evolving and changing. Just as it's important for us to review our own practice, much of the wider changes in safeguarding, guidance and law that we now have are born out of preventable death or the serious harm that someone has experienced. All those who hold a specific role for safeguarding should be informed of this wider learning.

As well as growing our awareness of things that can go wrong, both inside and outside of our environments, we need to learn to be open and honest with people if things go wrong or had the potential to go wrong. The trustee relationship that we've just looked at is one appropriate place to discuss this.

Part of your role as Safeguarding Lead is annually reviewing your policies and processes. For your policy documents, there are several aspects to this, so instead of listing them all in a webinar and hoping you'll remember them, we've put them in as an audit tool in your handbook. Key things to consider are: Are they a good reflection of what you're currently doing? Is it accessible and fit for purpose for those you're serving? Is it helpful in telling people what they need to do to highlight concerns, and what they can expect from us? You'll probably need additional policies, such as whistleblowing. Again, see your audit tool.

In terms of your team processes, review whether all your workers were safely recruited, have codes of conduct, have the right level of training and it's in date. Does each staff member and volunteer have someone checking in with them regularly?

Now we're going to look at part two of the last one of our scenarios that we started off with in session one. As you read part two of Jomo's situation, consider, what about your current processes meant that Jomo was unaware of the need for safeguarding?

The fundraiser was a success, and lots of people have asked for photos and updates of the charity's work with the victims of sex trafficking. He promises to update his socials and share stories. You have a chat to him the week after the fundraiser to mention that you want to make sure people involved in this are kept safe. You ask him if he's thought about safeguarding and he says he 'doesn't even know where to start'. He's happy for you to help him out.

What about your current processes meant that Jomo was unaware of the need for safeguarding?

Jomo's volunteering role is for a different organisation, so things like safeguarding training would be done there - unless he also has a role for church. We want to have safeguarding woven through all aspects of the church culture so that everyone is aware of this priority – our current

processes may not be strong enough in terms of communicating this priority. How do we communicate the importance of safeguarding to everyone in our community, groups who are using our buildings etc.? How can we create a culture where safeguarding is part of all activities from the beginning, never an add on or afterthought? There may also be some specialist signposting we can do for Jomo, such as to the Dochas code of conduct for taking and sharing images, to make sure Jomo's not accidentally putting people at risk through what he's sharing online.

It's really important that we regularly review with our teams, asking the question: what about our safeguarding isn't obvious? Does everyone involved in our organisation know who you are as Safeguarding Lead? Do they know where to go for help? How are they told this? How could they find that out? Do they feel confident in doing this? And if not, why is that? It's helpful to have these conversations with your team, that might be through a once-a-year session, maybe on safeguarding Sunday, or in informal conversations. You could also reinforce some of those important messages through posters that are displayed around the building. We also want to constantly review with our team whether we're all managing power, bias and accountability structures well. Are we comfortable sourcing support or using people as sounding boards?

One final and crucial area to review is whether our safeguarding keeps victim-survivors at the centre. If the victim-survivors in the case studies were part of your organisation, do you believe your safeguarding processes would keep them at the centre? Do your processes offer support or signposting to those who have lived through horrendous experiences? Do they have provision for keeping victims informed as things progress? If not, we need to ensure that our responses when things go wrong keep people at the centre.

[Summary and thanks]

This is the learning journey that we've been on together. We hope this course has equipped you as we've looked at how we recognise, respond, record, report and review. We hope you feel more equipped and clear about what your role is and what it isn't; that you can now see how and where you fit into the bigger picture of safeguarding; that you've got ideas about the practical things you need to do to fulfil the role; that you've learned from our honest engagement with the common challenges and complexities; and that you feel equipped with support and resources going forward.

Your honest feedback is really important to us. Please take a few minutes to complete the feedback form. Thank you so much for being

with us across these two sessions and all the best for your role in the future. Thank you.