

Transcript for Gateway to Safeguarding- eLearning

Welcome

Hello and welcome to this Gateway to Safeguarding course. This course is designed to give you a basic awareness of safeguarding. If you are over the age of 16 and want to have an introduction to safeguarding and to know what to do if you are worried about someone in your community, then this course is for you.

Navigating this course

The course might take you 1 to 2 hours to complete. Go at a pace that allows you to understand the material – feel free to take breaks or complete the course in bitesize chunks.

There are interactive tasks to help you check your understanding. Some of these only appear once you've completed the section you're on.

Learning Considerations

Please be mindful of your own circumstances and how you may be personally affected by the content.

Take your time and seek support for yourself if you need to, your safety and wellbeing are a priority.

This course is a strong introduction to Safeguarding. We also have training for those of you in roles working directly with children and adults at risk of harm, and specialist training. Contact us for more information.

Those around you

Consider your own learning environment and any other people who may be able to see your screen or hear the audio, especially children.

If any of the content of this course causes you to worry about yourself or somebody else, talk to the Safeguarding Lead for your organisation.

Members can also contact our helpline team for advice via email helpline@thirtyoneeight.org or call us on 03 03 003 11 11, selecting option 2.

Module 1 - Recognise

What is safeguarding?

So, what is safeguarding? If someone asked you that question, what would you say? Don't overthink it, use the box below to type some thoughts. Thank you.

Good answers might have included:

Safeguarding is...

About preventing harm

Involves passing on concerns

Relates to both children and adults

Is a legal duty

What Safeguarding isn't...

Some common misconceptions include that safeguarding:

Only applies to schools and hospitals

Is only something those with safeguarding roles need to do something about

Is optional or a distraction from our 'real' task

Who are we safeguarding?

The short answer is everyone!

Organisations have a duty to safeguard the people they serve and their own staff and volunteers. We have responsibilities towards vulnerable groups - those who, for a variety of reasons, are less able to protect themselves from harm or abuse.

Who is 'vulnerable'?

We all find ourselves vulnerable or in need of extra care and support at various times in our lives.

This may be because of ill health, challenging life circumstances, or because we're at a particular stage in our age or development.

Safeguarding laws apply to two distinct groups: Children and Adults at Risk.

Safeguarding Children

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Vulnerabilities

At different stages of our childhood, we are vulnerable for different reasons – from the dependence of babyhood to the exposure to new experiences of adolescence.

Because of these vulnerabilities, we recognise that all children need protecting. Sadly, statistics tell us that children with disabilities, additional educational needs or communication needs are at greater risk of harm.

Safeguarding children means: preventing harm from occurring to them, keeping them safe from abuse and responding well to any concerns about the child's safety.

Signs and indicators – Children

How might we recognise that a child needs safeguarding? What are the signs and indicators? These might include either things that you have seen or heard, also called the signs or indicators of abuse. Or, a child telling you directly about their experience of abuse, or coming to you for help. We call this a disclosure of abuse. Indicators of abuse can be physical, behavioural, or emotional. It isn't an exhaustive list. Noticing something that could be an indicator doesn't automatically mean somebody is being abused. We live in a beautifully diverse world, and everyone's life is different. What is typical for me, my family, my life and culture, may not be for you. This isn't about judging each other, but about raising our awareness and listening to our instincts when we are worried about someone. If you're worried someone might not be safe, please talk to your Safeguarding Lead. It's better to pass on your concerns to the appropriate person rather than acting rashly, or keeping it to yourself for fear of getting it wrong.

Physical indicators

Physical indicators in children might be visible injuries. These can be unexplained marks, scars or other injuries. Pay particular attention to injuries to unexposed parts of the body or injuries that are not consistent with the child or carer's explanation. Changes in weight, or being

excessively under or over weight could be an indicator of abuse, although we know there can be many reasons for this. It's important to say that injuries caused by accidents in children are common. These usually occur to the bony or prominent areas, such as knees, shins and elbows which are much more likely to become injured through accidental trips or falls. Abusive injuries tend to involve the softer tissue areas that are harder to damage accidentally. For example, upper arms, forearms, chest, back, abdomen and thighs. It's important to be aware that some injuries look different on different colour skin tones.

Behavioural indicators

Behavioural indicators in children can include poor school attendance, poor peer relationships, substance misuse and concerning interactions with other children or adults, such as being overly critical or demonstrating inappropriate levels of affection. Sexualised behaviour, or sexually explicit knowledge or language that is not age appropriate should also be noted. Early experiences of abuse can affect behaviour, both at the time of the abuse, and in the future. Experiencing abuse in childhood is an example of an Adverse Childhood Experience, also known as ACEs. The charity 'Young Minds', describes ACEs as, "Extremely stressful experiences, either a single event or a prolonged situation, that threatens a young person's safety, security, trust, or

causes them harm.” ACEs can have a long term effect on a person’s physical and mental health and development.

Emotional indicators

Emotional indicators of abuse in children can include extremely low views of their own worth, attachment issues, depression, self-harming and eating disorders. Signs of distress, tearfulness, anger or reluctance to be alone with a particular person. Most of us can think of children or young people who display some of these indicators for reasons other than abuse. However, this shouldn’t stop us passing on our concerns to our Safeguarding Lead, as abuse can happen to anyone at any time and we want to do everything we can to ensure our children and young people are safe and well.

Perpetrators of abuse

Perpetrators of abuse can come from all backgrounds and walks of life, men and women, those in positions of trust, and faith or race, and are usually known to the child. Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody and struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion, particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend.

Safeguarding Adults

An adult is anyone over the age of 18.

Vulnerabilities

There are some circumstances, situations and times in people's lives that increase the risk of a person experiencing harm, abuse and neglect.

Some examples include: homelessness, being a refugee or asylum seeker, substance misuse, ACEs, dementia, poverty, isolation, past experiences of abuse, and more.

Organisations are expected to make sure they safeguard adults who can't protect themselves. Deciding when people fall into that category is complicated, but we encourage you to have a caring curiosity towards all adults and to pass on any concerns to your Safeguarding Lead.

Adults at Risk / In Need of Protection

Safeguarding adults at risk of harm means protecting adults who may be:

- Less able to take care of themselves
- Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.

Signs and indicators - Adults

The factors we've already looked at that relate to children also apply to adults. But there are some additional signs and indicators that relate primarily to adults that are worth mentioning.

Physical indicators

In addition to the physical indicators for children, other signs in adults may include malnutrition and / or dehydration and extremely poor personal hygiene or unkempt appearance.

Behavioural indicators

Behavioural signs of abuse in adults may include indicators such as alcohol or drug dependency; limited access to money; unexplained withdrawals of money from accounts or personal possessions going missing; living in dangerous or squalid conditions; hoarding or lack of basic facilities such as gas or electricity and isolation: someone not seeing friends or family or being discouraged from having visitors or very few recreational activities.

Emotional indicators

Emotional indicators in adults may also include fear of outside intervention, becoming withdrawn or isolated. Again, none of these indicators on their own necessarily mean abuse is taking place. Some

adults may have had negative experiences with outside intervention and their reluctance stems from that rather than an experience of abuse.

Adults also have the right to make choices about their lives that others who care about them may consider unwise. So, knowing what to do with information about what you have seen or heard is important.

Categories of Harm and Abuse

Physical - Harm that occurs to the body.

Emotional - Harm that occurs to the emotions or the mind.

Neglect - Harm that is done by not meeting someone's basic needs.

Sexual - Harm caused by sexual acts [children] or sexual acts that were not consented to [adults].

Module 2 - Respond

Responding well to a disclosure of abuse

When we know or suspect abuse is or has happened, we want to respond well. The below video helps you to start thinking about responding well.

‘Disclosure’ means when a person tells you directly about their experience of abuse, or comes to you for help.

It's important to mention that you may be the only person someone feels safe to speak to. Bear in mind that for a victim to share anything with you takes a level of risk and bravery. It cannot be overstated that when a person has found the courage to speak out, it is vital that they are taken seriously at that point.

The recent IICSA (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse) report of 2022, recognises the experience of victim-survivors of child sexual abuse. Many of these survivors were participants in the Truth Project which took place between 2016 and 2021. 47% of participants who told someone about their abuse at the time said that no action was taken, and many spoke of their desperation to be taken seriously. One Truth Project participant said ' Honestly, the social worker, I did tell her, I did write her letters, I did communicate, but I was always told I was attention-seeking or 'no don't be saying that', 'no, no, they wouldn't do that''. The initial response to a disclosure can have a lasting impact so it's important we have the skills we need to respond well.

Challenges to responding well

There are many reasons why you might struggle to respond well and pass on concerns.

Disbelief: You might find it hard to believe the story you are being told.

Relationship: You may have a close relationship with the person who has been accused of abuse, or it could be someone in a position of authority whom you really respect and admire.

Painful: It can be painful to acknowledge that someone is experiencing harm; it can be more comfortable to ignore or find other explanations for the changes that you notice.

Uncertainty: You might feel you don't have enough information and are concerned about making a mistake or getting someone into trouble.

All these things are understandable, and it is important to acknowledge them. However, children, young people and adults have the right to live free from harm, abuse and neglect and safeguarding is a responsibility we all share. If you are worried, pass on your concerns.

Why someone might not disclose harm and abuse

It can be tempting to think that if something was really wrong then a child, young person or adult in our community would just tell us.

However, there are many reasons why this may not be the case.

Common reasons include:

Fear: A person experiencing abuse might be scared of the consequences of telling someone what is happening. For example, if it is a member of the family who is abusing them, they might be terrified of

splitting the family apart. They also might be scared that they won't be believed, that they will be thought of differently, or labelled a troublemaker. They may even have been threatened by their abuser.

Not knowing it's abuse: A person might have been taught that this is 'normal' behaviour. If this is all they've ever known then they may think this is what family members or friends do together, or how they treat each other, and not realise they are experiencing abuse.

Feeling embarrassed: They may feel embarrassed, ashamed or even that they are to blame for what happened.

Challenges communicating: They simply might not have the language to tell us what is happening – they may be too young, speak a different language, not know the terms or there may be other communication barriers.

These reasons, and many others, mean that it is important we pass on any concerns, however small, so that people can be kept safe.

Module 3 – Record

The third step is to record your concerns or the disclosure you have heard. The next short video introduces you to the important elements of recording.

When you have a concern or have been told about harm or abuse that's happened, which we call a disclosure, you need to make a written record of it.

As soon as you can, write down exactly what you have observed or what you have been told. Record the place, date, time, who was there, and what was said. This will mean you won't have to try and remember it all later and will give the Safeguarding Lead the information they need to look into the concerns properly.

If you are writing down what somebody told you, use their own words as much as possible to avoid misinterpretation.

Safeguarding records should contain facts, not opinions. For example, 'Person A struck Person B on the face with their open palm', rather than 'I think Person A must have been really stressed lately and Person B was winding them up. They slapped them on the face, but I don't think it was hard enough to really hurt.'

When you have written your record, sign and date it and pass it to your Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours. Don't leave it on their desk or in another public place. It's important to make sure that all records are stored safely and can only be accessed by those that need them.

If writing is a barrier to you making a report, talk to your Safeguarding Lead and they can make a record from your verbal report.

Sample Record

It can be hard to know how much or how little you should write down.

The example here shows roughly the amount of information you might need to note. It doesn't need to be very long. It does need to be factual and clear.

Module 4 - Report

In this unit, we're going to look at why we report concerns and who to report them to.

Why we report concerns

We report concerns so we can keep people safer.

We have a duty of care towards the vulnerable people at our events, we can recognise this in the values and aims of our organisations and it is also written into law. Faith communities and charities are named in legislation as having safeguarding responsibilities. You don't need to know the details of safeguarding law but your Safeguarding Leads will make sure your policies and procedures reflect the legal requirements.

How to report concerns and who to report them to will be a key part of your policy.

Who we report to

We always report to our Safeguarding Lead. Sometimes we also report to others.

In your role, your primary responsibility will be to share any concerns, however small, with your Safeguarding Lead. They will decide what actions need to be taken and whether statutory services (for example, social services) need to be informed. If there is immediate danger or to prevent a crime, please call the emergency services as a priority and then let your Safeguarding Lead know afterwards what has happened.

What is a Safeguarding Lead and what role do they play?

Every organisation should designate a person (or a small team of people) to take a lead on safeguarding. We refer to this person as a Safeguarding Lead (in some organisations they may be called a Safeguarding Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Champion or another title). They are trained in the next steps when responding to concerns. It is important that you bring your concern to them, rather than talking to other members of your

community about it, to uphold confidentiality and to enable them to be fully informed about any situation.

When you have a single point of contact for any concerns, patterns can emerge. Your concern may seem small on its own, but put together with observations from others, it can form part of a bigger picture. The Safeguarding Lead will decide whether to involve the police or social care services and, if the concern involves a child, the child's parents/carers. This is not your responsibility.

Remember, no piece of information is too small or too insignificant to be shared with your Safeguarding Lead. Whether it's something you've seen or heard, a sign or indicator of abuse, or whether it's a disclosure that's been made to you, share this information with your Safeguarding Lead. They will decide what should happen next. If you don't know who your Safeguarding Lead is, now is the time to find out. The name and contact details of your organisation's Safeguarding Lead, and any deputy or out of hours cover should be publicly available. For example, on your organisation's website, or displayed at your premises. Make sure you know when and how they can be contacted so that you're properly prepared should the need arise.

Whistleblowing

Your organisation should also have a whistleblowing policy. This lets you know how you can escalate issues if you are not satisfied with the internal response to a concern about a risk of harm.

It's worth remembering that people have specific safeguarding roles because knowing how to respond CAN be difficult.

Safeguarding information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis. At this level, your role is to pass your concerns - big or small - to your Safeguarding Lead and if someone is in immediate danger call 999.

Module 5 – Reflect

Reflection means taking time to learn from our experiences and it is really important when it comes to safeguarding.

When things go well, reflection helps us recognise the 'formula' so we can repeat it. When we have near-misses or things go wrong it can be tempting to avoid thinking about it and just move on. If we do this, we miss important learning opportunities and risk the same problems occurring again. Reflection really can help keep people safe. Many of the laws around safeguarding came out of serious case reviews – painful reflections on how and why mistakes were made, or where

safeguards were insufficient, and somebody died or was seriously harmed as a result. The lessons learned during these reviews informed policies designed to stop the same thing happening again. On a much smaller scale, we can close gaps in our own procedures through reflection – minimising risks and improving our practice. If we have a positive, safe, proactive culture where staff and volunteers are able to reflect together and learn from experience, we can create an environment where everyone is safer, well supported and able to thrive.

Preventative Safeguarding

As well as reflecting on things that happen, we can also reflect upon the preventative safeguarding we do in our organisations – the day-to-day things that make our communities safer places:

Codes of conduct: guidance about what is expected of people in certain roles so everyone is clear about boundaries, behaviour etc.

Training: opportunities to learn, gain awareness and skills.

Teamwork: Working together with others in the same role, enabling support and accountability.

Policies: Documents that give information and procedures about your organisation's work.

Final Reflection

That brings us to the end of unit 5, and your eLearning course. Before doing the final assessment, try putting into practice what you just learnt about reflection.

Reflecting on the whole course, what have you learned or been reminded of through this training? Name one thing you will do as a result of this training.

Conclusion

Well done. You've now completed this Gateway to Safeguarding course.

Next steps

- Download your certificate and complete the feedback form.
- Find out who the Safeguarding Lead is in your organisation, and how to contact them. Make sure you have these details readily to hand should you ever need them.
- Get a copy of your organisation's safeguarding policy and any safeguarding procedures that relate to your role.
- Read it and ask any questions to your Safeguarding Lead.

You may want to consider further training. **Remember, if your role involves direct responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults or involvement in safer recruitment and other safeguarding tasks, you will need more in-depth to be able to fulfil these responsibilities safely.** Thirtyone:eight has a full range of safeguarding training from foundation level to advanced and specialist courses, which can be viewed on our website.

Finally, talk about what you've learned to others, both within your organisation and outside. Talking about these things helps to create openness and allows people to think about their own experiences and how we can all play our part in creating safer places together. Thank you.