

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Level 2 Providing a positive
customer experience in the
fitness environment

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Describe what is meant by safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Describe the instructor's responsibilities and limitations in regard to safeguarding
- Identify the types of abuse
- Identify possible signs of abuse
- Describe typical reporting procedures

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Describe the procedures to follow to protect oneself from accusations of abuse
- Identify the statutory agencies responsible for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Explain when it may be necessary to contact statutory agencies
- Describe how to maintain confidentiality of information relating to possible abuse

Safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults - definition

‘Ensuring their safety; protecting them against maltreatment and removing any risk of harm, neglect or abuse’

Child and vulnerable adults - definitions

A child is

‘everyone under 18 unless, ‘under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier’

A vulnerable adult is one

‘who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’

Legislation

An instructor should be aware of the legislation that exists to protect children, young adults and vulnerable adults including:

- The Equality Act, 2010
- The Children Act, 1989, 2004
- The Police Act, 1997
- The Protection of Children Act, 1999
- Every Child Matters Initiative
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), 1995, 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006

Legislation – The Equality Act 2010

Protects children, young people and adults against discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to housing, education, clubs, the provision of services and work

Discrimination is broadly unfair treatment related to any of the protected characteristics

Legislation – The Children Act 1989, 2004

Ensures that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm

The act serves to:

- Re-enforce the autonomy of families through definition of parental responsibility
- Provide for support from local authorities, in particular for families with children in need
- Legislate to protect children who may be suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm

The 2004 amendment improved the legal powers and official functions and made official provision for children better and safer

Legislation – The Police Act 1997

Contains the disclosure and barring service for England and Wales

Under this act, it is a criminal offence for an employer to:

- Not check an employee working with children or vulnerable adults
- Give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children or vulnerable adults when they know this to be the case

Legislation – The Protection of Children Act 1999

Childcare organisations, ‘concerned’ with the provision of accommodation, social services or health care services to children or the supervision of children, must make use of the disclosure service in their recruitment and reporting process

Legislation – Every Child Matters 2003

This initiative and the 2004 amendment to the Children's Act resulted from the report into the death of Victoria Climbié after numerous agencies including the police, NHS, social services, NSPCC and local churches failed to follow up evidence of abuse

The four key themes include:

- Increasing the focus on supporting families and carers
- Ensuring necessary intervention takes place before crisis point and protecting children from 'falling through the net'
- Addressing the underlying problems identified in the report
- Ensuring that the people working with children are valued, rewarded and well trained

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Came about from the Bichard Inquiry report following the 2002 Soham murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman

This act provides a more effective and streamlined vetting service for potential employees and volunteers including a single list of people barred from working with children and a separate but aligned list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults

- The children's barred list.
- The adults' barred list.

This is run by the DBS, and decisions on who should be placed on the barred list lies with the Independent Safeguarding Authority

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Came about from the Bichard Inquiry report following the 2002 Soham murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman

This act provides a more effective and streamlined vetting service for potential employees and volunteers including a single list of people barred from working with children and a separate but aligned list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults

- The children's barred list.
- The adults' barred list.

This is run by the DBS, and decisions on who should be placed on the barred list lies with the Independent Safeguarding Authority

The Disability discrimination Act 1995, 2005

It is unlawful to discriminate against people in respect of their disabilities in relation to employment, the provision of goods and services, education and transport

- It is unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- 'Reasonable adjustments' must be made for disabled people
- Service providers may have to make other 'reasonable adjustments' in relation to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access (e.g. installing an appropriate lift)

Safeguarding responsibilities and limitations

Instructors must:

- Have a current DBS
- Be aware of their organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures
- Keep up to date with any changes in relevant legislation
- Be aware of what possible abuse looks like
- Know who to report information to
- Act upon any information regarding possible abuse immediately

What is abuse?

‘The violation of an individual’s human rights’

A single act or repeated acts in many forms:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Bullying
- Sexual abuse

Physical signs of abuse

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, lacerations, abrasions
- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained fractures, lacerations, abrasions
- Swollen areas
- Delayed or inappropriate treatment for injuries
- Personal hygiene issues
- Lack of adult supervision on a daily basis
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- A variation in eating habits (overeating, loss of appetite)

Behavioural signs of abuse

- Stilted conversation, vacant stares, overly watchful
- Wariness of adults
- Arrives early, stays late for sessions, reluctant to go home
- Flinches if touched unexpectedly
- Overly compliant and eager to please
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Depression
- Sudden outbursts of temper/aggressive behaviour
- Inappropriate sexual awareness

Reporting procedures

A person should be appointed to deal with allegations or suspicions of abuse and it is essential that they get the correct training for safeguarding children or vulnerable adults

All employees should be clear who this is and they should be told of any concerns. This person will:

- Appropriately record an allegation or reported incident
- Be responsible for contacting the statutory child protection agency (local Safeguarding Children Board, police) if necessary
- Ensure that the policies and procedures are implemented

Statutory agencies

Ofsted - Government agency who inspect and regulate the care of children and young people. Ofsted check:

- Places where children and young people are looked after
- People who look after children and young people
- Schools and colleges
- Adult learning and training
- How teachers are trained

Statutory agencies

Local Authority (LA) - Different departments deal with different policies and areas of local concern. Each LA have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults through departments such as social services. Most cases of abuse will be reported to the Local Authority in the first instance.

Police - Provide the mechanisms for agreeing how organisations will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They enforce law relating to the protection of children and vulnerable persons. They work closely with Local Authorities to protect the local community.

Statutory agencies

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) - Statutory bodies set up by Local Authorities. Their aim is to make sure that key agencies work together effectively to ensure that children are properly safeguarded. Members of the LSCB may include Local Authorities, health bodies, the police and others

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) - An independent statutory body whose aim is to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults

When is it necessary to contact statutory agencies

- If abuse is suspected
- If abuse is observed, i.e. you witness bullying, harassment or physical abuse taking place
- Signs or indicators of abuse are seen
- Another person reports their concerns
- A child or vulnerable adult discloses abuse directly

Maintaining confidentiality

- Instructors are under a legal obligation under the Data Protection Act 1988 to ensure, where possible, that any data including computerised, electronic and manual records are stored securely and not disclosed to any party without the individual's consent
- Where reports have been written in relation to an allegation or incident of abuse, these reports may be given to appropriate statutory agencies in accordance with legislation protecting children and vulnerable adults