

## SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES FOR HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

### The purpose of these guidelines;

To raise awareness of safeguarding issues within a homestay setting.  
To ensure that you know what **you must do** if a disclosure is made, or if you suspect abuse or neglect.

*UN convention of the Rights of the Child, defines someone a child or young person up to their 18th birthday, however Safeguarding also covers the protection of vulnerable adults.*

As a homestay provider you have a duty of care and responsibility to do whatever is reasonable to ensure the safety of the young / vulnerable adults you are responsible for.

You also have an obligation to inform the relevant persons if you feel that the person you are responsible for have disclosed an allegation of abuse, neglect or are in danger to themselves or others.

### What constitutes abuse?

There are 4 main categories, these are....

1. **Physical:** physical abuse can be difficult to spot simply because the victim is often embarrassed of any bruising / marks on their body and will go to great lengths to hide it. Often the abuser is aware that if the marks on their victim's body are visible, this will raise attention and concern.
2. **Neglect:** Neglect is when a child is not being given the natural requirements for minimum comfort; food, shelter, clothing, warmth etc
3. **Sexual:** Sexual abuse is the most recognised category, be aware that this also includes any pornographic-related offences along with grooming. Be especially aware of the dangers of social-networking sites on the internet.
4. **Emotional:** emotional abuse is when a child is being emotionally bullied, for example, they are constantly told that they are unwanted, useless, and so on. Over a long period of time this can be extremely damaging.

### Identification of abuse – Signs to look out for:

- Changes in behaviour

- Changes in physical behaviour
- Fluctuations in performance
- Withdrawal
- Attention seeking
- Decrease in self-esteem

All of the above could be associated with your average teenager, however if you witness any changes in behaviour (It may not mean they are being abused) it probably means that something is going on in their life that you may be able to help with.

If you have any concerns about the emotional state of the learner(s) living with you, please contact us.

### **Dealing with a disclosure**

If a young person discloses to you that they are or have been abused, they will fall into one of the following categories:

- They want something done about it
- They want help to overcome something in their past.
- They just want to talk to someone but don't want you to do anything about it.

No matter which category the young person falls under, you must remember that you are no longer bound by confidentiality, you have a legal duty to pass this information on.

### **ACTION SHOULD ALWAYS BE TAKEN**

- **Listen** carefully and calmly
- **Ask** questions only to understand what the child is telling you. No closed questions, no putting words into the child's mouth.
- **Re-assure** – tell them that they have done nothing wrong.
- **Inform** them that because of the nature of this information you have to pass it on to a member of staff at the college. Tell them exactly who you will be telling.
- **Note** the main points carefully. Make note of the details; dates, times, places, what they said in their words, and any questions you may have asked them.
- **Inform** the relevant member of staff. You must try and do this within 12 hours of speaking with the young person