

What to do if a concern/allegation is reported to you

Even the most experienced coach or volunteer may feel a sense of anxiety when receiving information about an incident or allegation that has occurred or is being reported; your Lead Safeguarding Officer is there to help.

You should make sure that you understand and work within the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that are in place in your area. In doing so, you should be guided by the following key principles:

- Children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect;
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility;
- It is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging; and
- Children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.

You should not let other considerations, like fear of damaging relationships with adults; get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. If you think that referral to children's social care is necessary, you should view it as the beginning of a process of inquiry, not an accusation."

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, March 2015

Occasionally you may receive a call from an agency e.g. Children's Social Care or the Police, asking you for information about an incident that has been reported to them. You should fill in the **Conversation Recording Sheet**. This will help you to be clear about the details and you should follow the same procedures.

Actions to Take	Actions to Avoid
<p>You should try to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm • Find a quiet and discreet place to have the conversation. • Use the Conversation Recording Sheet to make brief notes about what is being said. • Initially keep questions to the minimum. • Read back to the caller what you have written to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. • Make and agree an immediate plan as to your next action, including a timescale. 	<p>You should try not to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panic. • Make promises or agree to keep confidentiality. • Allow expressions of shock or distaste to show. • Speculate or make assumption. • Make negative comments about the alleged incident. • Be judgmental. • (Do not) ask leading questions.

Remember you are not expected to be a Child Protection expert and it is not your responsibility to determine whether or not the abuse has taken place, rather to record the details; seek guidance if necessary.