

**Talking Out**  
Ltd

# CHILD PROTECTION & SAFETY POLICY

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Date written:

19<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Due to review:

19<sup>th</sup> October 2021

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## What is child protection?

Child protection is the response to the different ways in which a young person's or child's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.

## Talking Out Ltd

Talking Out Ltd values young people and children as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow, mature and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.

The role of Child Protection Officer will be carried out by the directors of the company, Ben Bolton-Grant and Teresa Howarth, and a copy of this child protection policy will be held on [www.talkingoutresidential.com/policies](http://www.talkingoutresidential.com/policies) and be available to clients, shareholders and employees.

## Purposes

The purpose of Talking Out Ltd is to offer children and young people who stammer a safe and welcoming environment with fun activities where the children and young people can grow and learn. Whether this be through Talking out Ltd's activities or through other independent groups working in partnership with Talking Out Ltd.

## Aims

- To provide activities for children and young people who stammer to help them develop from childhood into adulthood and to provide support for them.
- To enable the children and young people to express themselves.
- To assist the children in integrating into the community.
- To help children/young people appreciate the diversity of their cultures.

## Services

Talking Out Ltd's services include, but are not limited to, the Talking Out Residential and Talking Out Online.

## Staff

Talking Out Ltd carries out activities in partnership with other organisations. All staff working during these activities are expected to work within this policy. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Talking Out Ltd Staff
- Independent Speech and Language Therapists
- Active Training and Education (ATE) Staff
- North Yorkshire Outdoor Learning Service
- Speech and Language Therapy Students
- Volunteers
- Representatives from funding organisations (e.g. Charities)

It is acknowledged that partner organisations will have their own child protection policies. However, during activities commissioned by Talking Out Ltd (e.g. during the Talking Out Residential or Talking Out Online) all staff will follow the Talking Out Ltd Child Protection and Safety Policy and procedures.

#### Requirements for all staff:

1. All Speech and Language Therapy staff and volunteers will have an up to date DBS check.
2. All Speech and language Therapy staff will be members of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and therefore hold appropriate professional indemnity insurance.
3. Speech and Language Therapy students will carry out work whilst on placement as part of the requirements of their course. This provides appropriate training and insurance.
4. All staff and volunteers will be asked to provide proof of recent child protection training (with the last 2 years).
5. All new staff will be asked to read the child protection policy before beginning work.

#### Participants

1. Referrals to Talking Out Ltd's services are accepted for children and young people who stammer from across the UK.
2. Each child and young person should be formally registered within the group. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete. These forms have vital information about health and emergency contacts and should be kept securely and brought to each session. This information is gathered via an online parent booking form, which can be viewed at [www.talkingoutresidential.com](http://www.talkingoutresidential.com)
3. Attendance register: a register should be kept for each session.

#### Child Protection Representative

Talking Out Ltd has appointed child protection representatives, whose names are displayed on [www.talkingoutresidential.com](http://www.talkingoutresidential.com) and shared with all employees and staff from partner organisations. If any worker has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with him/her. He/she will take on the following responsibilities:

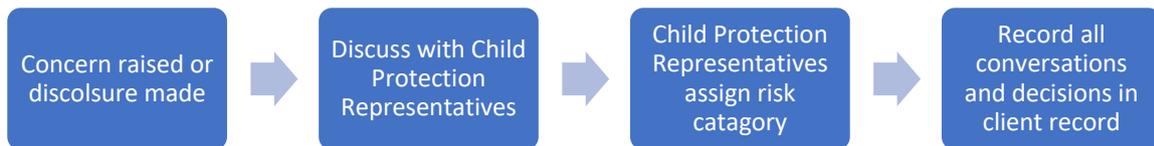
- Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- Bringing any child protection concerns to the management team from funding organisations (if appropriate) and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representatives.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.

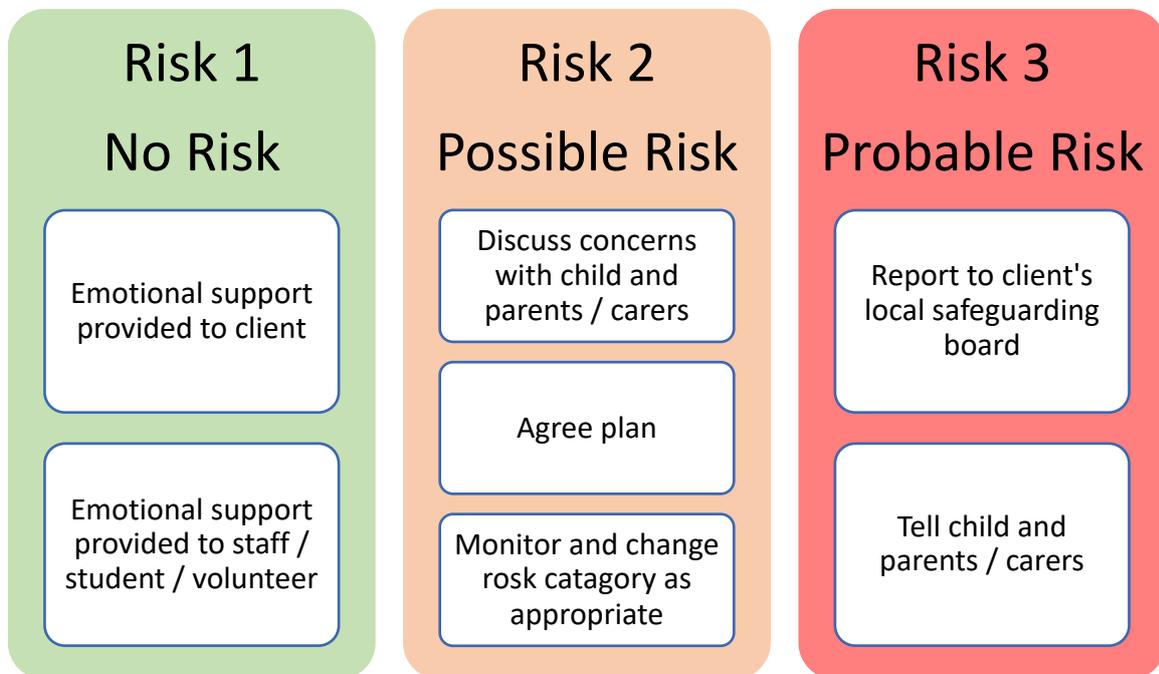
## Dealing with concerns

All concerns or disclosures should be reported and documented by following the below procedures and principals. It is not the role of individual staff or volunteers to investigate the matter, but to follow the procedure below to report it to the appropriate person.

### Stage 1



### Stage 2



### General principals

Whilst engaged in a discussion with a child or young person all staff should follow the following recommendations.

### What you should do

1. Listen to the child/young person
2. Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone
3. Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.

4. It is not the role of the worker to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.
5. Speak immediately to the Child Protection Representatives.
6. Write up notes as soon as possible following the conversation. Report what was said objectively.

#### What you should *not* do

1. Project workers/volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
2. Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
3. Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

#### Things to say or do:

- 'What you are telling me is very important'
- This is not your fault'
- 'I am sorry that this has happened/is happening'
- 'You were right to tell someone'
- What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you'
- Make notes soon after the event. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

#### Things *not* to say or do:

- Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
- Do not say 'Are you sure?'
- Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
- Do not make false promises

## Keeping Children Safe during residential trips

### Trips/Outings

1. When organising a residential trip ensure all participants have returned a 'booking form'. This includes details about the trip and a section for parents to give their consent, as well as relevant medical and social intervention. These forms must be returned before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip with the completed group information/consent forms.
2. Ensure that there is adequate insurance for the work and activities.

### Personal/Personnel Safety

- A group of children or young people under sixteen should not be left unattended at any time.

- Avoid being alone with an individual child or young person for a long time. If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) make sure that another worker knows where you are and why.
- At no time should a volunteer or worker from any external organisation arrange to meet a young person away from the activity without someone else being there.
- As such meetings should be planned and have the approval of the directors of Talking Out Ltd.
- Teenage assistants should always be supervised.

## Child and Young Person Safety

1. Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose, e.g. remove furniture, which could cause injury in energetic games.
2. Make sure that all workers and assistants know
  - Where the emergency phone is and how to operate it
  - Where the first aid kit is
  - Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book
  - What to do in the event of a fire or other emergency
3. Fire drills are led by the team at the residential centre.
4. Do not let children or young people go home at the end of the week without an adult unless the parent has specifically stated in writing they may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you in writing that this will happen.

## Keeping Children Safe Online

### The Risks to Children during Online Activities

Talking Out Ltd are aware that delivery activities online creates particular risks, these include:

- Online bullying, trolling through chat messaging and video chatting
- Indecent exposure by either a child or the background of a child's video
- Exposure to indecent content through screen and content sharing
- Exposure to indecent language by either a child or the background audio from a child's house
- Children being pressured into sharing personal data such as:
  - i. Names and addresses
  - ii. Emails and phone numbers
  - iii. Personal images
- Exposure to harmful language / ideas which may include: racist, sexist, extremist religious or political views.

### How we keep children safe online

Talking Out Ltd's Virtual Activities will adhere to the following steps to ensure that we keep children safe whilst they are attending our activities.

- Virtual Activities are crewed by trained staff. Staff are present and active in all online spaces including: the Waiting Room, the Main Meeting, Breakout Rooms and the Chat Windows.
- All staff in an online session are equipped with Host capabilities and, as such, can:
  - Lock Meetings so that no unwanted guest can enter after the meeting has started
  - Put participants 'on hold', temporarily disabling their audio and video
  - Remove participants from the virtual activity
  - Disable a participant's video
  - Mute a participant's audio
- Guidance is sent to families in advance of a Virtual Activity set out clear expectations to all participants, and making it clear the steps that Talking Out Ltd will take to ensure the safety of all involved.
- Children are disabled from chatting privately with one another.
- We ask participants to identify themselves via their name and first letter of surname prior to joining an activity.
- We use personal invitations to secure all our meetings. Activities are 'locked' once they have started so that no unwanted guest can enter.
- We closely monitor the chat windows, and don't allow private chat between individuals.
- We retain a log of any incidents that may occur during online activities.
- We thoroughly Risk Assess all our activities and share guidance with parents and children where appropriate.
- Provide clear channels of communication so that children and parents can raise any issues during and after a Virtual Activity

### Our Guidance to Children and their Families

Thank you for signing up to Talking Out Online. We're committed to keeping children as safe in our online activities. As such we have created a set of clear expectations so that you and your child understand what you can expect from Talking Out Ltd Staff and students and what we expect from you. Any breach of this guidance may result in a child being removed from the Online Activity.

To make sure children are safe during our events we will:

- Make all our events invite only and password protected
- Use Microsoft Teams and send invitations for each session to make sure only staff and participants can access sessions
- Designate one Event Leader who will have ultimate responsibility for the online safety of all children in a virtual activity
- Thoroughly Risk Assess all our activities and share guidance with parents and children where appropriate
- Use trained staff to supervise all aspects of a virtual delivery including chat window contents, breakout spaces, video content

In order to keep children safe during and after our Virtual Activities, we ask that:

- You do not share the activity invite or password with anyone else
- You use your child's real name and first letter of surname within the meeting software, so that we are able to identify all children
- The physical space where your child is taking part in the virtual activity is appropriate for viewing by other children through your video device
- Children are fully and appropriately dressed throughout the Virtual Activity

- Parents offer an appropriate level of supervision during the Virtual Activity