

Safeguarding Mental Well-Being:



Practical
Guidelines
for Individuals
and
Organizations to
Better Navigate
Disruptive Events

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Marva Bailey-Davis

OBJECTIVES

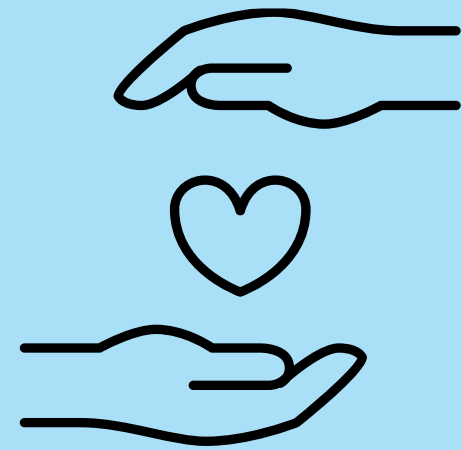


What is Safeguarding?

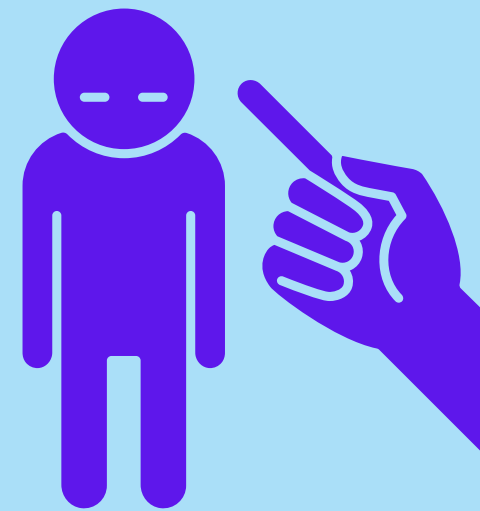
Safeguarding means creating conditions where people are:



Protected from harm



Supported when they struggle

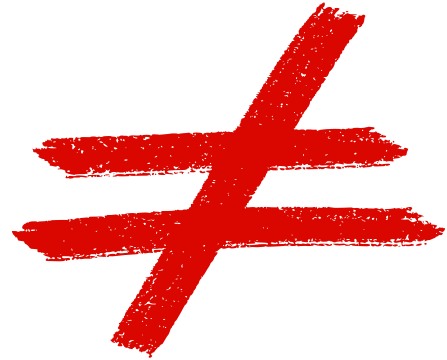


Not punished for being human—especially after a crisis like Hurricane Melissa.



Safeguarding in the Workplace

Safeguarding



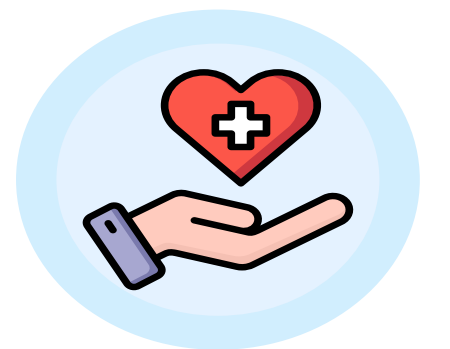
therapy



Safeguarding



prevention, protection, and support



Applies to mental, emotional, and psychosocial safety

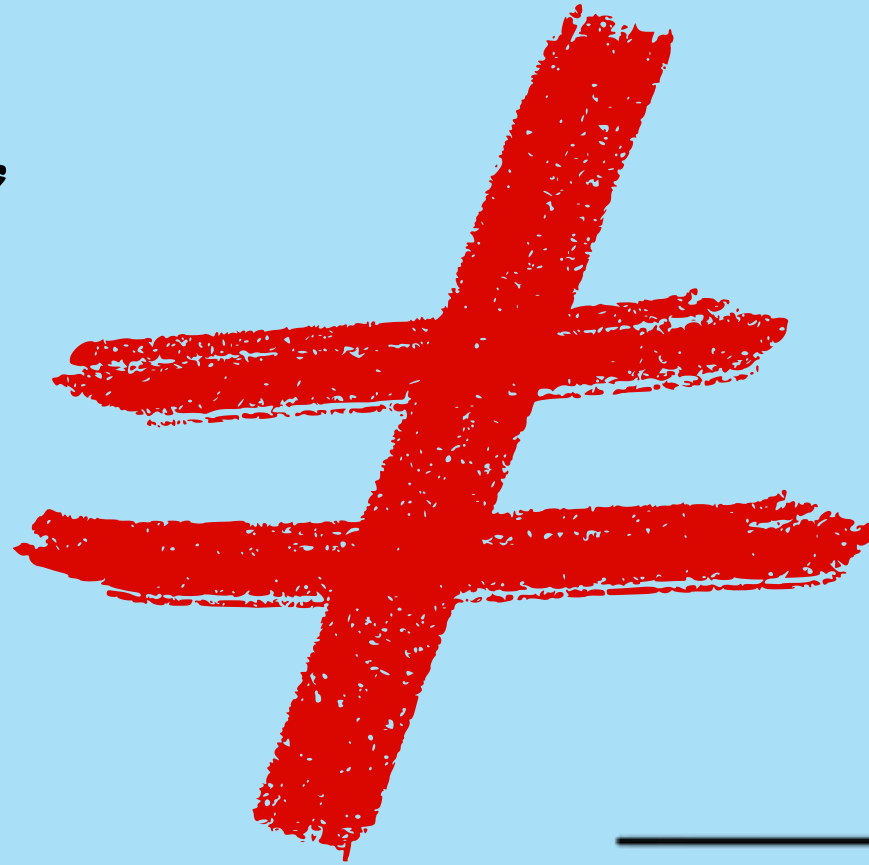
Why Safeguarding Matters After a Disaster

Persons may be:

- Displaced
- Financially stressed
- Grieving losses
- Living in unstable environments



Productivity



Wellness

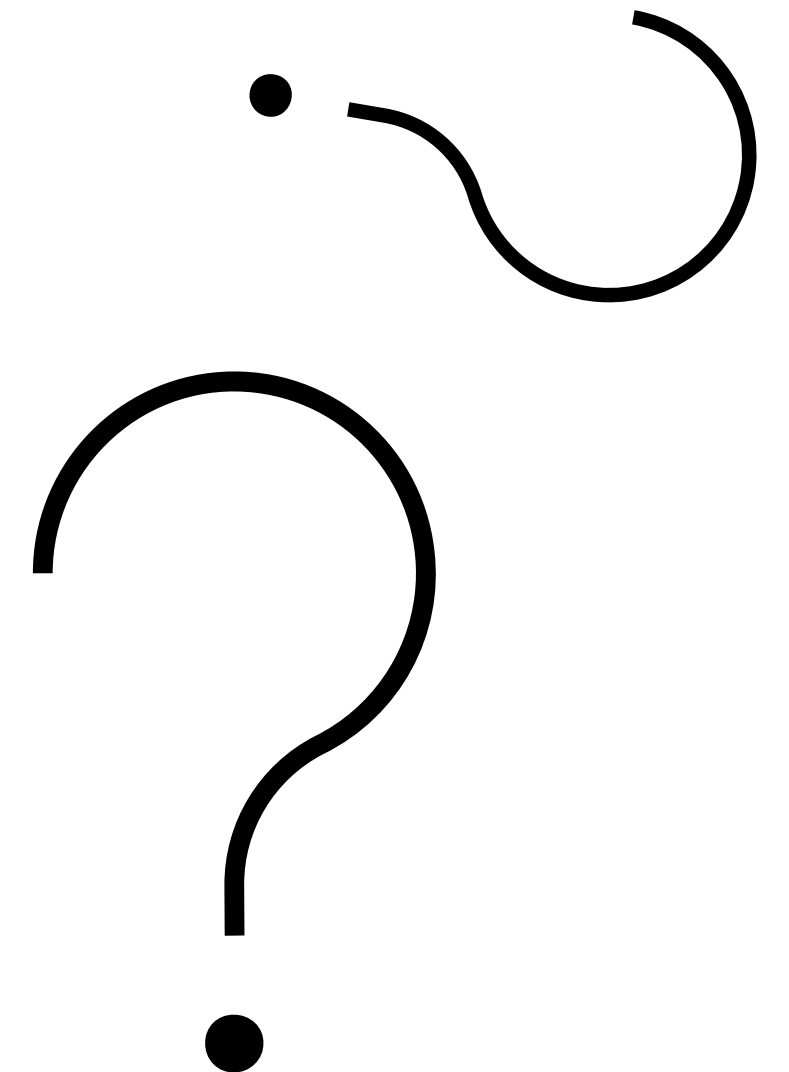
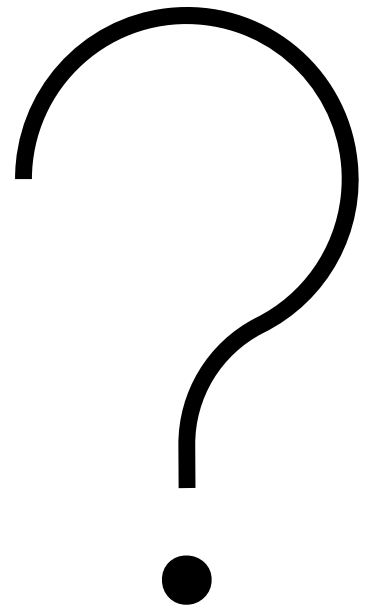


Individual Safeguarding - What You Can Do

1. Maintain routines where possible
2. Set boundaries (rest, workload, media exposure)
3. Use healthy coping strategies:
 - Physical movement
 - Social connection
 - Talking, not numbing

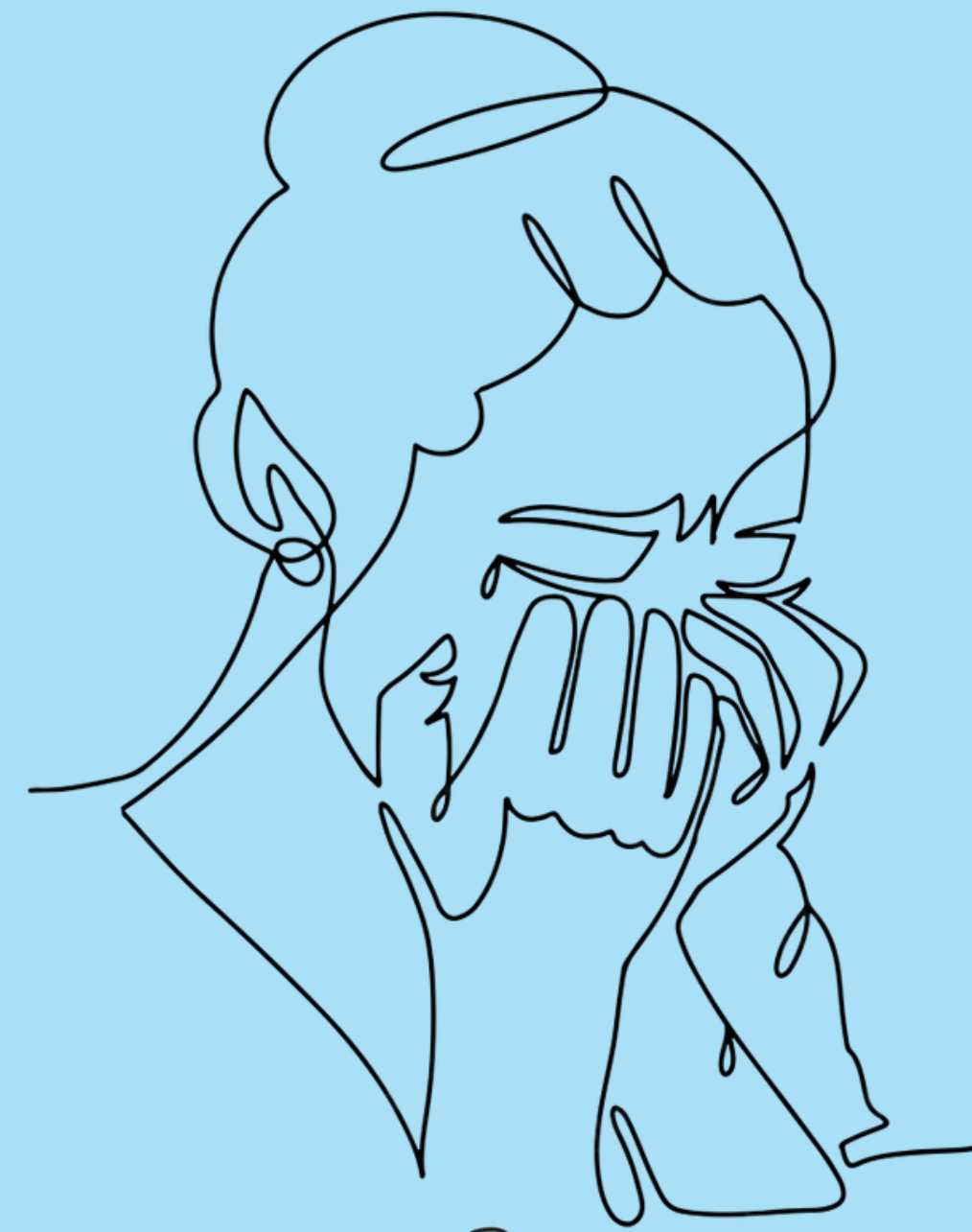


Ask for help early



Warning Signs You May Be Overwhelmed

- Emotional: irritability, tearfulness, withdrawal
- Behavioural: lateness, absenteeism, errors
- Physical: fatigue, headaches



Signs of Risk

- Increased drinking
- Gambling talk or behaviour
- Aggression or detachment



How Colleagues Can Offer Support

- Check in privately
- Listen without fixing
- Avoid judgment or minimizing



How Colleagues Can Offer Support

What Not to Say:

- ✗ “Others have it worse.”
- ✗ “At least you are alive.”

What to Say:

- ✓ “I’m sorry that you are going through this.”
- ✓ “It is understandable that you feel upset.”



Addressing Risky Coping Behaviours at Work

- Alcohol and gambling increase after trauma
- They are coping strategies, not character flaws

Workplace role:

1. Set boundaries
2. Offer support
3. Refer appropriately



Organisational Safeguarding Responsibilities

1. Clear policies (wellness, EAP, referral)
2. Trained supervisors
3. Safe reporting channels
4. No retaliation for disclosure



When to Escalate Concerns

Escalate when:

1. Safety is at risk
2. Substance use affects performance or safety
3. Behaviour changes sharply
4. Employee requests help



Useful Contacts

RISE Life Management Services

For persons who need help dealing with drinking or gambling issues

Phone: (876) 392-3736 (WhatsApp) or (876) 967-3777 – 9

Email: info@risejamaica.org

Ministry of Health and Wellness Mental Health Support

For persons who need mental health and suicide prevention support

Phone: 888-NEW-LIFE (639-5433)

ODPEM/Support Jamaica Portal

For official updates and incident reporting

Phone: 888-225-5637

<https://supportjamaica.gov.jm>

Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS)

To self-report on household damage & schedule assessment

Link to access form: <https://mlss.gov.jm/hurricane-melissa-reporting-form/>

Phone: (876) 922-8000-13

Email: clientcare@mlss.gov.jm

Useful Contacts

National Housing Trust (NHT)

For housing repair and recovery support (relief grant/loan/mortgage moratorium)

Phone: (876) 929-6500-9

Email: wecare@nht.gov.jm

Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA)

To report gender-based violence and for information on counselling, referral, and psychosocial support and legal protections

Phone (Males): (876) 553-0387

Phone (Females): (876) 553-0372 and (876) 236-1713

Child Protection & Family Services Agency (CPFSA)

To report child abuse or neglect and get urgent child protection support

Hotline: 211

Phone: (876) 878-2882 or (876) 822-7031

Email: report@childprotection.gov.jm

Dress for Success -Jamaica

For professional clothing

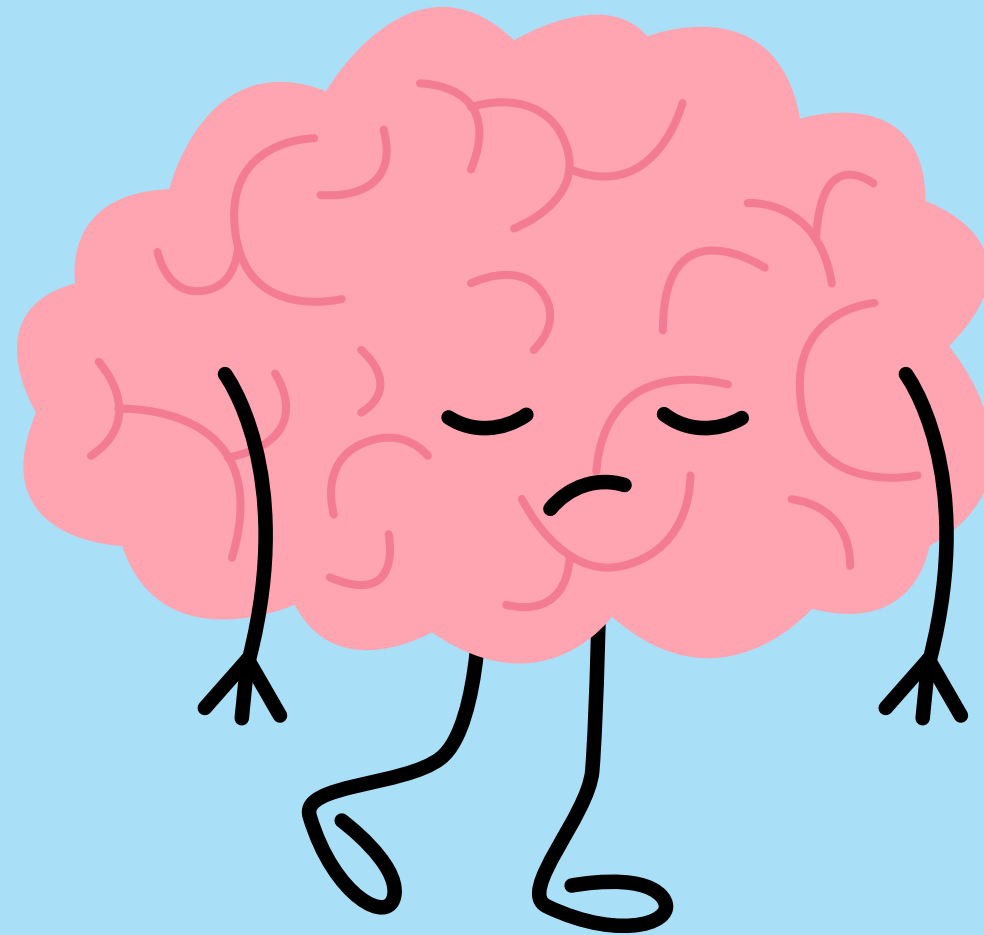
Phone: (876) 483-1038

Email: jamaica@dressforsuccess.org



TRAUMA, STRESS & CLINICAL INSIGHT

Presenter: Marva Bailey-Davis

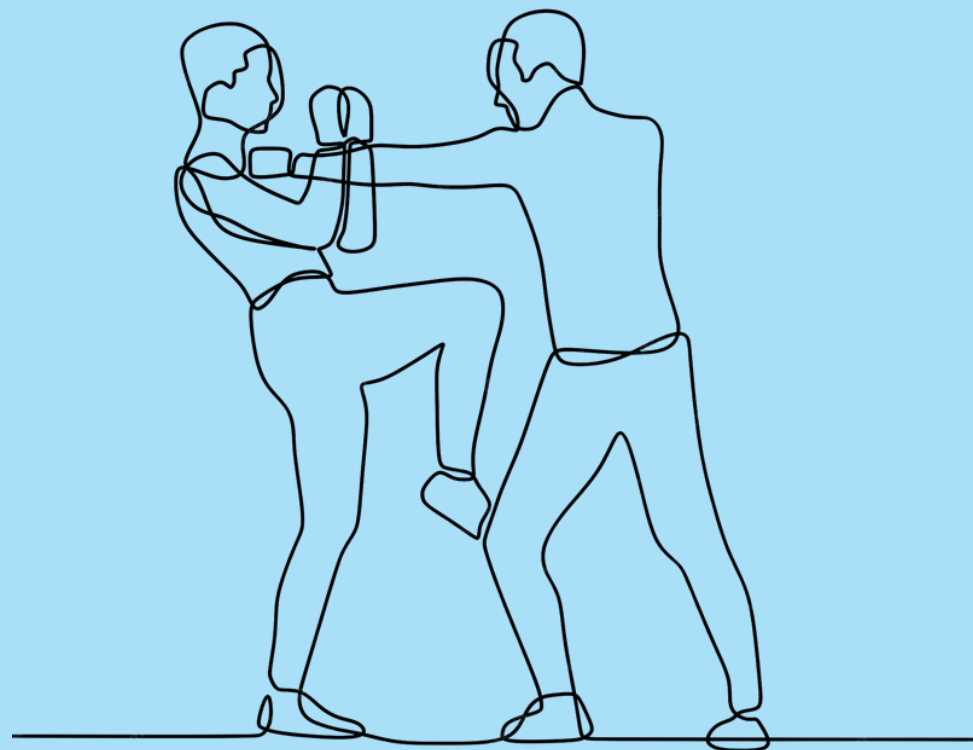


How Humans Respond to Traumatic Events

Trauma overwhelms coping systems - chemicals are released to help us respond to stressors.

Our responses may vary:

- Fight-fighting, struggling or protesting
- Flight-hiding or moving away
- Freeze-feeling paralyzed or unable to move
- Fawn-trying to please someone who harms you



Common Post-Disaster Reactions

1. Anxiety
2. Hypervigilance
3. Sleep disturbances
4. Difficulty concentrating



5. Emotional numbing
6. Increased risk-taking
7. Depression

Trauma and the Brain

Types of Trauma

1. **Acute:** one-time, intense traumatic event that overwhelms a person's ability to cope e.g., **natural disasters.**
2. **Chronic:** prolonged trauma exposure, often occurring over an extended period of time, e.g., **domestic violence, living in an abusive relationship.**
3. **Complex:** exposure to **multiple or repeated** traumatic events often starting from childhood.



Trauma and the Brain

- Survival brain overrides thinking brain
- Reduced decision-making capacity
- Increased impulsivity



Why Gambling & Alcohol Become Appealing After Trauma

- Temporary relief
- Dopamine and escape
- Illusion of control
- Social normalisation



Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Response

Safety

Choice

Collaboration

Trust

Empowerment



Supporting Recovery Without Overstepping

Don't:

- Diagnose
- Interrogate
- Promise confidentiality you can't keep



Supporting Recovery Without Overstepping

Do:

- Refer
- Accommodate reasonably
- Follow policy



When Professional Help Is Needed

Indicators:

- Persistent symptoms (30+ days)
- Escalating substance use
- Safety concerns
- Withdrawal from work or life



Building a Culture of Psychological Safety

1. Normalize conversations about stress
2. Train leaders
3. Model boundaries
4. Partner with experts

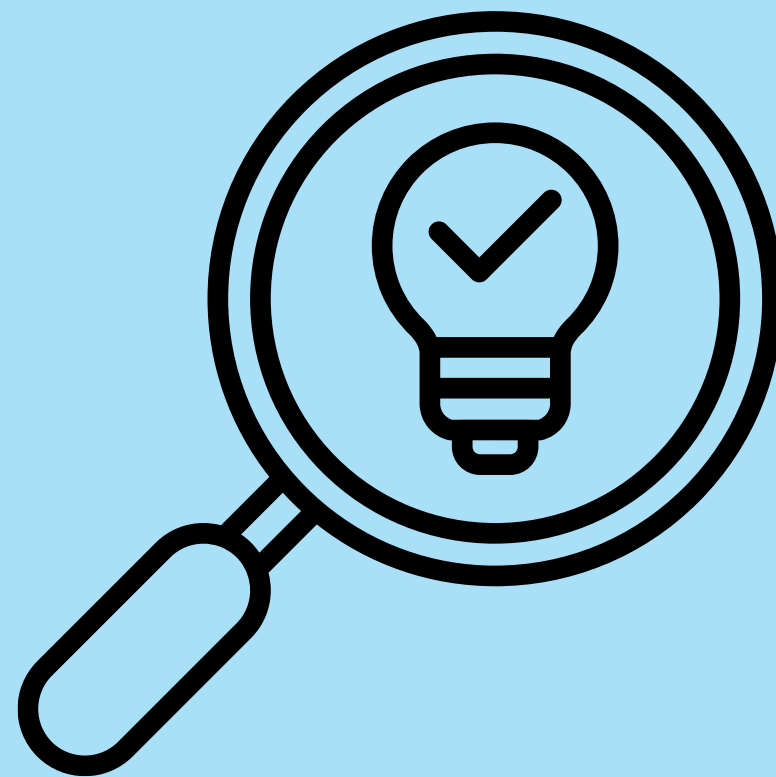
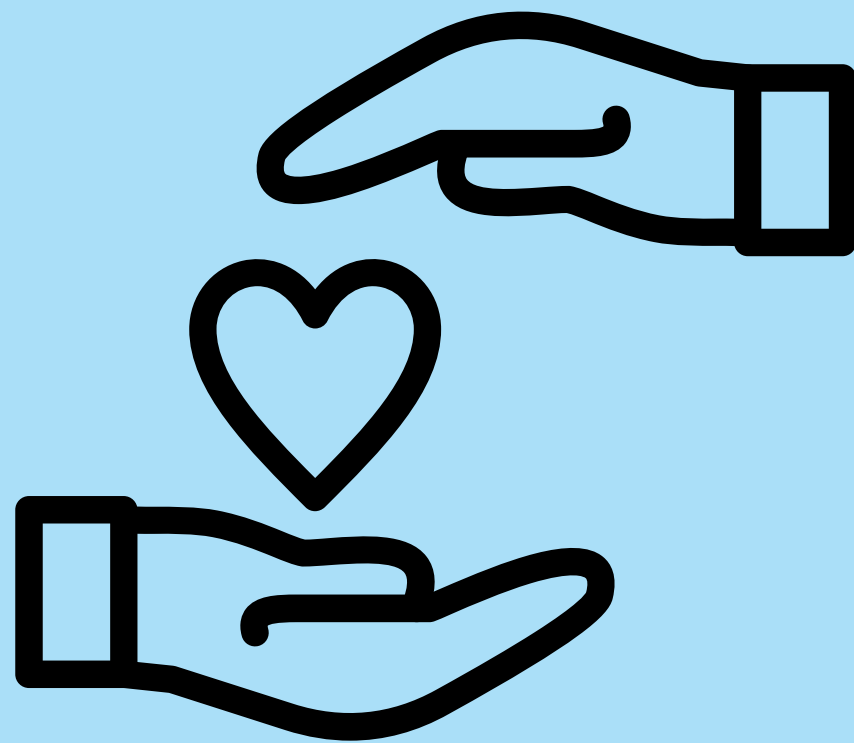


Key Takeaways

- Safeguarding protects people and performance
- Trauma responses are human
- Early support prevents escalation
- Organisations play a critical role



Safeguarding is not about doing more—it is about **RESPONDING BETTER**, with compassion, clarity, and responsibility.



Thank You

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