

Safeguarding 2025

Norwich Foodbank Basic Awareness Training – Jon Moule

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What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding adults

“Protecting a person’s right to live in safety and free from harm, abuse or neglect”.

Safeguarding children

“The action taken to promote a child’s welfare and to protect them from harm”.

Safeguarding in practice at food banks

“Creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is kept safe from harm, neglect or abuse”.

Safeguarding in a food bank context

- Our services are accessed by people who are in need and who are often vulnerable
- Our guests are often using a food bank at a point of crisis in their lives, so may be more at risk of harm or abuse
- Food banks are often the “eyes and ears” that interact with people regularly and often, in person. We can spot the signs of harm or abuse
- What we see, record and report might be a “puzzle piece” needed to keep someone safe and to help them access vital support
- Safeguarding is everybody’s business, and we all have a duty of care towards everyone that interacts with a food bank

Safeguarding at food banks is everyone's responsibility



Board of trustees

Safeguarding responsibilities

- Ensuring there is an up-to-date safeguarding policy in place at the food bank
(this may be delegated to the food bank Safeguarding Officer)
- Taking reasonable steps to protect everyone associated with the foodbank from harm
- Reporting safeguarding incidents to the charity regulator for the country your food bank operates in

Safeguarding officer

Safeguarding responsibilities

- The Safeguarding Officer is the main person responsible for safeguarding at the foodbank and should be easily contactable in the event of any concerns
- Implementing the safeguarding policy, keeping it up to date and ensuring everyone at the foodbank is trained on how to follow this if they have concerns
- Acting as an advocate on behalf of individuals in need and make necessary referrals to support or protect them

Employees and volunteers

Safeguarding responsibilities

- Recognising, recording and reporting concerns to the food bank Safeguarding Officer
- Know where to find, and how to follow the food bank's safeguarding policy and procedures
- Never conduct investigations, make decisions or to deal with concerns yourself
- Know who their food banks Safeguarding Officer and/or deputy are and how to report concerns to them
- Always share concerns – don't keep them to yourself

Types of abuse and indicators - adults

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate use of physical force by one person against another, to cause harm.

Indicators:

- A history of unexplained injuries
 - Inconsistent explanations for injuries
 - Recurring injuries
 - Subdued or changed behaviour
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Emotional/Psychological abuse

Emotional / psychological abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment that causes severe and long-lasting adverse effects on someone's emotional development.

Indicators:

- Signs of distress
- Low self-esteem
- Withdrawal or a change in demeanour
- Aggressive behaviour

Neglect

(or “Acts of omission”)

Neglect is the failure to meet a person’s basic physical or emotional needs which is likely to have a serious negative impact on their health or wellbeing.

Indicators:

- Poor physical condition
- Poor personal hygiene
- Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- Untreated injuries or medical problems

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding.

Indicators:

- Fear of or withdrawal from relationships
- Fear of receiving help with personal care / physical touch
- Fear of being alone with a particular person

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Financial/Material abuse

Financial (or “material”) abuse involves the misuse of a person’s money, property, benefits or other assets. It can include things such as theft, fraud and coercion in relation to an adult’s finances.

Indicators:

- Unexplained lack of money
- Unable to afford food or heating without explanation
- Personal possessions going missing
- Unusual activity regarding appointing power of attorney

Self-neglect

Self-neglect describes when a vulnerable adult lives in a way that puts their health safety or wellbeing at risk.

Indicators:

- Poor personal hygiene
- unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat injuries

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement and holding of a person by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploitation or abuse.

Indicators:

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing malnourished or unkempt
- Hesitance to talk to strangers
- A lack of personal effects or ID documents

Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is when a person is treated unfairly, bullied or abused because of a particular characteristic.

Indicators:

- Expressions of anger or frustration, fear or anxiety
- The support on offer to the person does not take account of their needs

Organisational abuse

Organisational abuse is when a person is abused or mistreated within an institution, such as a care home or hospital. It can include one-off incidents or long-term mistreatment.

Indicators:

- A lack of choice in the services a person receives
- Patients in receipt of care appearing dehydrated or hungry
- Inappropriate staff behaviour or neglect
- Staff not involving patients in decisions about their care

Faith-based (or “Spiritual”) abuse

Faith based abuse is when a religious or spiritual leader uses their authority or position to manipulate, control or dominate people who may need their help.

Indicators:

- This is also sometimes referred to as “spiritual” abuse
- It is not defined as a type of abuse within UK legislation, but it is increasingly common and is certainly one to be mindful of in providing the support that we do as food banks

Types of abuse and indicators - Children

Physical abuse

Physical abuse against children or young people is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose.

Indicators:

- Regular or recurring injuries
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Identifiable patterns to injuries
- Physical evidence of injuries

Emotional/Psychological abuse

Emotional / psychological abuse against children or young people involves the emotional mistreatment of a child or young person.

Indicators:

- A lack of confidence and/or self-assurance
- Difficulty controlling emotions
- Difficulty maintaining relationships

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse against a child or young person takes place when they are forced, tricked or manipulated into sexual activities.

Indicators:

- Fear of being alone with a particular person
- Overly sexualised language or behaviour
- Changes in mood / demeanour

Neglect

(or “Acts of omission”)

Neglect of a child or young person takes place when there is an ongoing failure to meet a child’s basic needs.

Indicators:

- Poor physical condition and personal hygiene
- Health and development problems
- Repeated injuries
- Housing or family issues
- Changes in mood or behaviour

Definitions

Concerns

Your intuition, a niggles or a worry that you have about a situation.

Disclosure

When someone else tells you about an event or situation they have seen experienced.

Safeguarding Incident

Something that you witness happen yourself, or someone tells you had happened, where someone experiences or is placed at risk of harm.

Reporting your concerns

- Remember – don't keep concerns to yourself – you need to tell someone.
This should always be your Safeguarding Officer (or their Deputy if not available).
- If it's an emergency – always call 999 first, then contact your Safeguarding Officer.
- You should always fill in a safeguarding alert reporting form as soon as possible.

Reporting your concerns

You need to record the following information:

- Date, time, location of any incidents or events
- People involved
- What was observed
- What was heard
- What was disclosed/said to you – a clear accurate record of what people said, using their own words
- What was said in reply
- Details of any actions taken
- Who you have passed the report onto and when
- Date and sign the report

Additional safeguarding support

Thirtyone:eight

Phone: 0303 003 111 - select Option 2

Email: helpline@thirtyoneeight.org

Trussell Safeguarding Team

Email: safeguarding@trussell.org.uk

Align

Phone: 01722 580 358

Email: modernslavery@trussell.org.uk

Responding to a safeguarding disclosure

Be patient

- Give the person time and space to talk
- Don't interrupt them

Be attentive

- Give the person time and space to talk
- Don't interrupt them

Be accepting

- Reflect the words used back to the person

Be calm

- Try to stay calm, even if you don't feel it.
- Try not to act shocked angry or upset

Be honest

- Don't promise to keep it a secret
- Let the person know you have to tell someone

Information sharing

- Never promise to keep a disclosure a secret
- Share information on a “need to know” basis
- You can let the person know who you need to share this information with
- If a child is involved – you must always share your concerns
- If an adult is at significant risk of harm – you must always share your concerns
- Remember – don’t keep it to yourself