

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is a term that is used to describe the protection of the health, safety, well being and rights of individuals.
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We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well being of others and in particular children, young people and vulnerable adults.
As a sponsor, you need to know what to do in situations where you may have a concern about the safety or well being of your guest(s).

This is particularly important where children and vulnerable adults are concerned.

What to do if you have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult?

As a basic rule, if you have any concerns about a child or a vulnerable adult staying in your home or attached to your support group, telephone Devon councils safeguarding team. There is one number for concerns about children and another for adults.



What To Do If You Have Concerns About a Child Or Vulnerable Adult?

For Children:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **0345 155 1071** or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.

For Adults:

If you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, or you are being abused yourself and live within Devon Local Authority boundaries, please contact us by:

- calling Care Direct on **0345 1551 007** (Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 8.00 pm and Saturday 9.00 am to 1.00 pm)
- calling the Emergency Duty Service on **0345 6000 388** (outside of the hours above or on bank holidays)
- emailing csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk

In an emergency or where you are worried that someone is in immediate danger, telephone **999** and ask for the Police.

Advice To Keep You And Your Guests Safe

- Consider how you want your guest(s) to use your home. For example, are your Guests having access to all of your home or just particular areas? Be aware of everyone's need for some privacy.
- If you're a member of a support group you will need to complete a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service, which highlights if you have had any criminal convictions before, particularly relating to vulnerable people). DBS checks can take a while to come through under normal conditions, so we would ask you to follow these guidelines on how you conduct yourself in relation to keeping everyone feeling safe:
 - Do not take children out without their parent
 - Do not initiate physical contact unless in an emergency for safety reasons
 - Do not take pictures or video of family members
 - Do not transport children unless in the company of their parent
 - Do not spend time with children alone. Stay in communal areas with others
 - Where possible do things as pairs of volunteers
 - If you are concerned about the actions of another person in the support group, then raise your concern and pass on the information if you continue to be concerned
 - Think about your relationship with your guest(s) and be mindful to keep appropriate boundaries. For example, in terms of financial dealings etc
 - Be aware that your guest(s) may have particular vulnerabilities because of their recent experiences, lack of their usual support from family and friends and language barriers.
 - Misunderstandings and frustrations will inevitably happen as they do in most households or close knit groups. If you are unable to resolve a particular issue that arises with your guest(s) and need help or advice, there are resources available in North Devon to assist you. You do not have to deal with everything on your own.

Useful Safeguarding Resource

Finally, there is a wealth of information about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults available to you through online resources like the following;

NSPCC

Social Care Institute For Excellence

NHS - Getting Help For Domestic Violence

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Online Cyber security Guidance