

Child protection policy

Summary policy



United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland
Registered Charity No. 214779, and in Scotland SC009359



cover photograph stock.xchng

 **SAFE & SOUND**
The Salvation Army safeguarding children

- 1 Convinced of the truth that every human being is uniquely created in the image of God and belongs to him, The Salvation Army is committed to the spiritual, mental and social welfare of each individual regardless of race, religion, culture, gender; physical and mental ability and economic status. We seek to safeguard all involved in Salvation Army activities. It is the responsibility of each one of us to help to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect of children.

(A child is anyone under the age of 18)
- 2 The Salvation Army's child protection and best practice policy and procedures are contained in the *Safe & Sound* manual. Every adult working with children must agree to endorse and adopt the relationship parameters and best working practices contained within the policies.
- 3 The key principles of The Salvation Army's child protection policy are that:
 - the child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
 - all children have a right to be protected from abuse
 - all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
 - every child who is involved in Salvation Army activities should be able to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment with leaders who are fully aware of good practice and are confident in safeguarding issues
- 4 The child protection policy applies to everyone involved with working with children in a Salvation Army context*, whether in a voluntary or paid capacity. This includes all officers, children's and youth workers, senior local officers working with children, volunteers and helpers.

(*with the exception of government registered activities)
- 5 The Salvation Army's best practice guidelines for appointing children's and youth workers, local officers and volunteers consists of:
 - providing relevant job descriptions and ensuring clear roles
 - conducting interviews with potential children's/youth workers, in whatever capacity, before making an appointment
 - requesting and following up two references before making an appointment
 - requiring a criminal records check specific to work within The Salvation Army before making an appointment
 - ensuring *Safe & Sound* training is completed before making an appointment
- 6 The Salvation Army aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children through involvement in Salvation Army children's and youth activities. Although known sex offenders are welcome to belong to a Salvation Army corps fellowship, they must accept and abide by the conditions of belonging as presented in the child protection policy.
- 7 Any child, young person or adult who is concerned about the behaviour or attitudes of an officer or children's or youth worker with regards to their relationship with children can make their concerns known without fear of intimidation by means of the Notice of Concern procedures as outlined in the policy document.
- 8 Children's workers are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all children and adults so they can develop in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within The Salvation Army at any corps, event or activity. If bullying does occur, all children and adults should be able to tell about it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform a children's worker. To this end, the counter-bullying policy will be adopted in all corps and centres.
- 9 Wherever possible, a corps should appoint a children's advocate to be an independent voice for children and to represent issues that affect them, which may include safeguarding and child protection issues.
- 10 As each adult working with children and young people agrees to a code of conduct, accepting the responsibility and accountability of such a ministry, The Salvation Army has clear sanctions for those who choose to act outside these parameters.
- 11 Further advice on child protection matters can be obtained from:
 - The *Safe & Sound* manual 2012
 - The **Safeguarding Department**
020 7367 4772/4614/4757 Scotland
0141 779 5005 Northern Ireland
028 9067 5005
 - The NSPCC Child Protection 24-Hour Helpline
0808 800 5000
 - Police and Social Services Child Protection teams