

The following information is an abridged version of the Foundation Module of Safeguarding training. The text in boxes has been added to reflect the Warm Spaces initiative.

This course should only be completed by people who meet the following criteria:

- Warm Spaces Volunteer
- Serving refreshments with limited interaction with group participants
- Not providing a 'listening ear' (as described in the Warm Spaces Briefing Paper)

Everyone else should be Safely Recruited as per Methodist Policy.

Alison Hill  
District Safeguarding Officer  
28.11.2022

# CREATING SAFER SPACE

## Foundation Module 2020 Edition (Modified 2022)



## Introduction

### So why do Warm Spaces volunteers need to know about Safeguarding?

In the past few months the UK population has experienced compounded cost of living increases among soaring costs and decreases in real income. The current cost of living crisis is making life ever more difficult for families living on the knife edge of poverty, and we know that poverty is bad for your health. Health inequalities are caused by a wide range of factors, such as income, housing, and transport, which are all being targeted by price rises. This slide into increased poverty and health inequalities is deeply worrying for healthcare professionals who see the direct impact on their patients' lives.

### FUEL POVERTY

With spiralling fuel prices and a planned scrapping of the energy price cap in the autumn, industry experts warn that up to 40% of households could fall into fuel poverty. Fuel poverty disproportionately affects older people, among whom colder homes lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, respiratory illnesses, and falls.

The Methodist Church, alongside other community groups, recognise the need to provide practical help and support to those who may experience fuel poverty. Fuel Poverty is defined as having to spend over 10% of net income on fuel.

Writing in February 2022, Action for Warm Homes at that time suggested that roughly 6.5 million UK households were in the grip of fuel poverty. The University of York, writing in August 2022 suggests that more than three-quarters of UK households will be in fuel poverty by 2023 which equates to roughly 53 million people – a significant increase. All UK media sources are all projecting a dramatic rise in the number of people experiencing fuel poverty and therefore susceptible to the impact this can have on families.

Cold homes can damage people's health and affect their quality of life. It can cause or worsen serious health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, bronchitis and asthma. Statistics already show that around 10,000 people die as a result of living in cold homes. Fuel poverty can also have a significant impact on mental health and is also a known risk factor for suicide.

Cold homes are also preventing children from thriving. Without a warm, quiet place to do their homework, they can fall behind at school. A lack of hot water means they might avoid personal care, leading to bullying and social isolation. With no warm space to spend time with their family they can spend hours of the day alone in bed. Some resort to using public places like libraries or friends' houses to stay warm in. All this is disruptive and damaging a time crucial for their development.

Eighty women's organisations who have signed an open letter calling for urgent government action to prevent domestic violence in the cost of living crisis.

"Women are being forced to make the unthinkable decision of staying in dangerous situations because they fear they are unable to survive economically on their own," the letter warns. "The cost of living crisis is putting more women at risk of harm, destitution or death."

Women's Aid found that almost three quarters (73%) of victims who live with or have financial ties to their abuser find it harder to leave because of the cost of living crisis. This is supported by recent research by Refuge, which shows a spike in victims finding it harder to leave their abuser or returning to their abuser because of the cost of living crisis.

## Context

### **Sheffield to open 'warm places' to go across city for people to save on heating bills**

Sheffield Council is finalising its plan to open up Welcoming Places around the city to help people to cope with the cost of living crisis and keep warm. The council's cost of living crisis strategy group has been working with Voluntary Action Sheffield, community organisations, faith groups and businesses on a plan to open up libraries, community centres and other buildings for people during the day.

The Darnall Labour councillor said that the authority was making use of a whole social network set up to help people cope during the pandemic. Cllr Iqbal said that the cumulative effect of soaring energy and fuel costs, inflation, supply issues affected by Brexit and the Ukraine war and the impact of the government's mini budget on the economy "pushes people further into destitution, poverty and hardship".

### **Warm Spaces Grants from the Sheffield Methodist District - Neil Harland, District Mission Enabler**

Although a significant financial intervention has now been announced by the UK government, for those who were already struggling to make ends meet this winter will be very difficult. In many communities support is still desperately needed.

Many churches across Sheffield Methodist District are preparing to offer Warm Spaces this winter in response to the cost of living crisis. At its simplest, being a Warm Space is about simple non-stigmatising neighbourly hospitality. Providing a warm welcome, a hot drink or bite to eat, a listening ear, and being ready to help people access further specialist support.'

05 September 2022      **Church at the economic margins**

"My sense is that the time is now for our Church to focus on the millions in our nations who are experiencing poverty." Deacon Eunice Attwood, Church at the Margins Officer for the Methodist Church

Methodists are being encouraged to join together and become communities where people experiencing economic hardship are welcomed, affirmed, and valued.

In the face of the cost of living crisis such communities are needed more than ever says Deacon Eunice Attwood who leads on the work and who has over twenty years' experience of ministry amongst marginalised and vulnerable communities:

"Jesus was very clear that to abandon people experiencing poverty, is to abandon the gospel. The cost-of-living crisis will impact everyone, but not everyone will experience poverty.

"Having spent the last few months travelling the country, what I am hearing is a growing concern about fuel costs where people are having to make choices between heating or cooking, soaring numbers of people with mental ill health, fears of what the future may bring, and a plea for the Church to see hidden pockets of poverty in its communities."

In the **Warm Spaces Briefing** paper, written by Deacon Tracey Hume, Deacon Eunice Attwood and Emma Nash, help and advice is given to churches wishing to be part of the Warm Spaces scheme.

As part of the paper we are reminded of the need to consider safeguarding, and several areas for consideration are given.

This training will provide you with the tools you may need to fully support people attending your sessions and, if people do open up about the struggles they are experiencing, you will hopefully feel empowered to help them further.

Some may have experience of safeguarding and training in other walks of life and professions. That training will be valuable today and many of the fundamentals are likely to be similar. However, this training is different because it focusses on those unique challenges of safeguarding in the context of the Church and creating a safe space for all within our church communities where those who are vulnerable are respected, valued, protected and listened to. This is at the core of our faith.

Within our church communities, different groups of people all share a rightful place.

In regards to the Warm Spaces initiative we will focus on four groups of people:


**Children; Vulnerable Adults; Those who have experienced abuse**  
and then **Church leaders, staff and volunteers.**

## Children & Young People

**Definition**

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2020 Edition (Modified 2022)

Children and Young People



Anyone who has not yet reached 18 years (or 16 years in some contexts in Scotland)

The Methodist Church Safeguarding

**Good practice: how we safeguard**

Foundation Module  
2020 Edition (Modified 2022)

Children and young people



- promote a safeguarding culture
- be vigilant to risk and protect children and young people from harm and promote their welfare
- take action if concerned
- understand and follow policy and procedures
- make sure the premises are safe
- know who to ask for guidance if you are not sure about what to do

The Methodist Church Safeguarding

In England, a child is defined as being anyone who hasn't reached their 18th birthday and in Scotland it's their 16th. Children are inherently vulnerable due to their age, degree of development and emotional maturity, and dependence upon adults to take care of them. Their age and level of maturity may mean that they have no control over what happens to them. However, they may also have other vulnerabilities too, such as being disabled, being a young carer, or not having English as their first language.

Faith organisations are among those named in legislation and statutory guidance as having a specific duty to safeguard and keep people safe. This means having appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, having relevant policies and procedures, training staff so they know how to respond appropriately to concern and working collaboratively with other agencies.


In order to safeguard within our churches, we need to follow the guidance on the slide.

## Vulnerable Adults

**Definition**

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Vulnerable adults



Any adult aged 18+ (16+ in Scotland) who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

The Methodist Church Safeguarding

An adult may be defined as being vulnerable if they are aged 18 or over and are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse. This vulnerability may be because of a mental or physical disability, age, illness or traumatic event. The Methodist Church has deliberately chosen this term because it recognises that although everyone is vulnerable in some way and at

certain times, some people will have higher levels of vulnerability than others.

## Those who have experienced abuse

**Those who have experienced abuse**

Abuse includes:

- any form of abuse suffered
- abuse suffered as a child or an adult
- one-off or prolonged abuse

Labels such as 'victim' and 'survivor' may be unhelpful

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The term 'survivor' is often used in relation to those who have suffered abuse, but just because someone identifies as a 'survivor' does not necessarily mean that their recovery is complete. So often, labels and terms are not helpful as they can't accurately represent an individual's experience or personal journey. Therefore, we must be mindful of the language we use and remember that experience of abuse is very

individual; it may relate to a one-off event, or multiple episodes, it may relate to abuse as a child or as an adult, occurring within the church or elsewhere and to whether support has been sought and how positive, or otherwise, the responses received were.

There will be adults and children within our Churches who have experienced abuse and are living with the impact it has on their lives and, as a Church, we have a responsibility to welcome and support them. This responsibility is not just for those who have experienced sexual abuse, nor only for those who have experienced church-based abuse, but for all.

The impact of abuse will be specific to each individual. It will depend on their personal circumstances, now and at the time of the abuse, as well as the nature of the abuse suffered and the identity of the abuser. Some will openly show the scars of their experience where other will not, some may appear to cope well with life where others do not. Nonetheless, the abuse will have a lasting impact on the rest of their life.

## Church Leaders, staff and Volunteers

**Church leaders, staff and volunteers**

The Church values all those who give generously of their time and energy in roles that are both paid and voluntary.

*Thank you.*

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It's only right that we start by recognising the value of Church leaders, staff and volunteers and the support they give to the church's position within society and the community. For that we give grateful thanks to each and every one of you.

Even though we may not recognise it ourselves we, as Church leaders, staff and volunteers, may be viewed by others as having a degree of power and authority simply due to the roles we hold. This in turn can potentially lead to an imbalance of power within our relationships. Therefore, we need to be aware that our words and actions carry weight and significance and to ensure that trust in us well placed, and that we serve as positive role models.

**Church leaders, staff and volunteers.....**

abuse, bully, manipulate or denigrate

show kindness, heal, sustain others and harness their strengths

should be aware of how they use their position to influence others as their opinions have weight and significance.

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As in the example on the slide, we need to be aware of the risks if the boundaries of our roles slip, even if this is underpinned by good intentions, so it's really important to recognise how and when what we do may make us more vulnerable, or our actions open to misinterpretation.

Therefore, we must remain alert to any potential risks, such as having Mrs Smith's bank card and PIN above and remember always to refer to and follow policy guidance.

If you feel you may be vulnerable or if something changes within your role, even temporarily, you must speak with someone as soon as possible. This may be your minister, someone who coordinates Warm Spaces in your church, the church or circuit safeguarding officer.



The slide shows some of the resources we have within the Methodist Church to support us, and it is important to remember that policies etc are in place to keep us and the wider Church safe.

Safer recruitment means we have a robust procedure and clear steps to follow when employing someone, whether paid or voluntary. It also means that the individual knows the scope and expectations of their role, stops them drifting

into other areas of activity and ensures they receive regular support and review. By following policy and remaining vigilant, we are better placed to identify and screen out those whose intention is to abuse.

And it is important to recognise the dual challenges faced. Firstly, of hearing disclosures of abuse, and ensuring an appropriate response and secondly of managing the impact when a church leader, member of staff or volunteer is accused.

## Good Practise

So how can we demonstrate good practice in terms of creating a safer space? This is where the 4 Ps of good practice come in.

Our Methodist safeguarding policies offers a framework to enable us to meet our safeguarding responsibilities whilst procedures tell us how we will do this practically within specific situations.



In order that our premises remain accessible to all, there are other aspects of church life with which safeguarding dovetails, such as health and safety and property. And we have already mentioned the importance of getting the right person for each role, using the safer recruitment principles to achieve this and give people more confidence in their role.

In this way we are supported in developing a culture of safety within which we transparently manage situations when things go wrong and are recognised as a learning Church.

Again, this is a great opportunity for you to identify your own responsibilities and whether there is anything that you need to go away and look up after this session.



Please remember that whenever you have a question about what to do or how to respond to a situation or challenge, the policies, both local and Connexional, are available with many of the answers. You don't have to figure it out on your own, you can instead go back to the policy – it will be your friend!

## Four Steps to good practise



We are now moving on from the 4Ps of good practice to look at the 4 Rs, which are universal in safeguarding and help us to act if we have concerns about someone's safety or welfare. These are covered within p 21-26 of your handbook.

These 4 steps are:

- Recognise the concern
- Respond well by doing what we need to do at the right time and acting in an open and transparent way
- Record what has been seen, heard or said
- Refer/Report or share the concern with the appropriate people

And perhaps we should also add a 5th: Responsibility, because safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

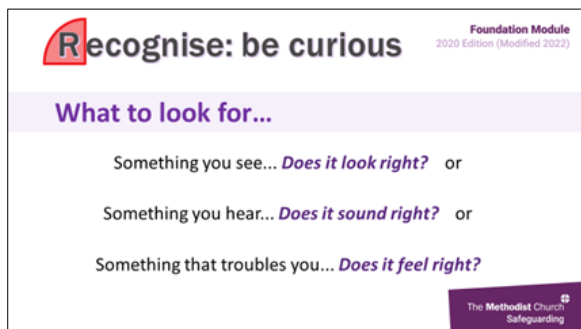
Because we never know who will attend our Warm Spaces sessions we need to be ready to act in whatever way necessary: we need to act if someone is already experiencing abuse and we need to act to prevent abuse happening altogether.

### Recognise:

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It comes from the misuse of power and control that someone has over another. Harm is the result of this mistreatment or abuse. Abuse may consist of a single act or many repeated acts, and it can occur in any relationship at any time of life. Any, or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

Abuse can take many forms.

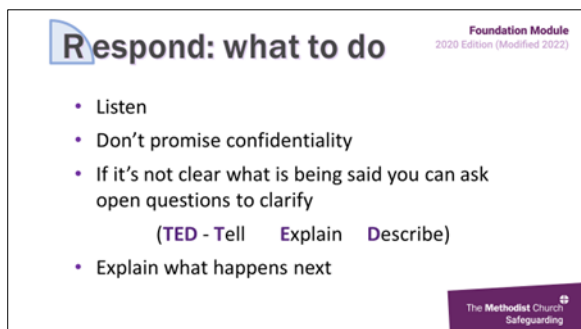
physical	sexual
emotional	neglect (including self-neglect)
spiritual	financial (or material)
institutional	discriminatory
domestic	online
modern slavery	exploitive
radicalisation	bullying and harassment.



The key thing to remember is that any individual, from any background, can be at risk of abuse, but that some people are more vulnerable than others and at different times. For example, when a family is going through a tough time, parents and carers might find it more difficult to meet all the physical and emotional needs of their child/ren for a short period, whilst they adapt to their own change in circumstances. This is where

the support of the family of the church may be required.

## Respond:



Research and reviews tell us that the most important thing we can do is to provide a listening ear, hear well and give someone the choice to tell their story in their own way.

Remember this is not about promising to keep secrets but being clear and transparent about what information may need to be shared and with whom to manage the situation safely.

With adults it is always best practice to seek and record their consent to share information but be clear that this information may have to be shared, even if they don't consent, if there is a risk of significant harm or it is in the public interest. Consent is not required in respect of children, but again best practice is that the family be told.

If you're not clear about what you think you are hearing, then ask open questions. These are to help the individual relate their story, not to get more information – do not try to investigate. For clarification, feedback by saying something like “am I right in thinking you said...” or “so you mean that.....”

Then you need to explain what will happen next, what you are going to tell and to whom and give them a timescale. Remember that you should always seek advice if you have any concerns and don't know what to do.

## Record:

Records are an important aspect of the safeguarding process. They provide a history of what happened, summarise what church workers did, and ensure that when people move on the account is not lost.

### Record: what to do

- Who was involved – the names of key people, including actual or potential witnesses.
- What happened – record facts not opinions. Use the person's own words where possible.
- Where it happened – specific location and address.
- When it happened – date and time.
- Whom you referred it on to – what happened next including full names and contact details.
- Sign and date the account – put the full name beside the signature for clarity.

Records should be written up as soon as possible after the event. They should be clear and concise and, above all, legible. Don't worry about using a specific form etc, a black piece of paper is fine.



## Refer / Report



This slide shows how concerns should be shared appropriately, often called referring or reporting so it is important that you know who this is within your own churches and circuits.

If someone is at immediate risk your first action must be to notify the emergency and/or statutory services, then let your DSO know. This can provoke huge anxiety for us but remember that you can always access support.

Thereafter, or if there is no immediate risk, you need to record your concerns and inform within 24 hours the relevant people. These may be one or more of the Minister, church or circuit safeguarding officer or District Safeguarding Officer.

### Early Help

The above information is important to know and understand as we each have a duty of care to protect these suffering at the hands of others.

But equally important are the steps we can take to prevent a situation reaching crisis point in the first place.

Often spoken about in relation to children, Early Help, is about intervening as soon as possible to tackle problems faced by people. Providing Early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of people than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges.

Churches are ideally placed to offer Early Help and many already do as part of their outreach. Early Help can be broken down into 6 key principles:

#### LOCAL SOLUTIONS, LOCAL DECISIONS

- 1) Work with the whole family, ensuring they are central and key partners in processes that affect them.
- 2) Identify problems early and intervene quickly with effective solutions, at the right time, by the right organisation.

#### PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE

- 3) Promote early intervention and prevention, offering help to families with emerging problems to prevent them getting worse.
- 4) Help change behaviours and build resilience at a family and Community level.

#### DRIVING GROWTH AND ASPIRATION

- 5) Improve life chances and aspirations of children and families.
- 6) Provide responsive and flexible support based on 'what works' to ensure better outcomes for all, sharing learning so that what we do is based on good evidence.

Providing Early Help is as simple as providing sharing details of the nearest foodbank or advising people at seek advice from the Citizens Advice etc.

## Case Study

Time and again, people doing the Safeguarding Foundation Module comment that they find the case studies at the end of the course the most helpful.

Therefore, to finish this 1 hour modified session I would like to present you with 1 case study and ask you to consider the questions in each box. Some appropriate answers are on the next page.

### KYLIE AND ASHER

*At the Christmas Toy Service, you see one of the stewards asking Kylie and Asher (aged 9 and 7 years) if they have brought any gifts to be donated. They look down and shake their heads before walking off, visibly shivering, into the sanctuary. As you walk past, the steward mutters to you about those selfish children not bringing toys for less fortunate children, not to mention the lack of effort made in their appearance. "I mean, fancy coming to church in some tatty shorts and t-shirts, what are their parents thinking!" they exclaim. You know that Kylie and Asher's dad drops them off every Sunday and rumour has it that he goes to visit another woman while they are at church.*

What do you RECOGNISE that causes concern?

How would you RESPOND to your concern?

What would you RECORD?

To whom would you REFER this?

**RECOGNISE:** Issues of concern you would hope to hear in feedback:

- Children inappropriately dressed for the time of year
- Dad just dropping the children off – no supervision while in church
- Possible neglect
- Steward needs safeguarding training
- Concern about behaviour of the steward
- Steward not expressing welcome to all

## **RESPOND**

Feelings

- Anger, frustration, distress, disgust, pity, sadness
- Concern for the children
- Judgement against dad
- Judgement against the steward
- A desire to rescue the children and warm them up and properly cloth them.

## **RESPONSES**

- Make sure the church heating is on
- See if there are any suitable clothes or blankets in the church / lost property to offer the children during the service
- Talk to the minister, or Church Safeguarding Officer.

## **RECORD:**

- Date and time of the concern
- Details of the conversation
- Personal observations – not including hearsay or rumour
- Any actions taken.

**REFER:** Answers you would hope for:

- The minister
- The Church Safeguarding Officer.

## **Unhelpful answers:**

- Confronting the dad when he comes to pick the children up after church
- Agree with the steward and reinforce their attitude
- Investigate further by going round to Kylie and Asher's house
- Do nothing because it is probably just the children's choice of clothing, which they may now be regretting.

We have also provided you with two further electronic documents.

The **Handbook** goes into more details and may be a good resource if you need further information.

The **Quick Reference Guide** is an excellent, practical resource. Please take time to cut out and complete the back page – your church safeguarding officer will be able to give you all the names and numbers you need. The card folds in 3 making it small enough to pop in a purse or wallet etc.

If you are faced with a safeguarding concern at one of your session, having the card close by will act as a good reminder of the information shared in the booklet; enable you to follow best practise, and more than anything offers you advice and reassurance.

**Thank you for taking time to read through the information provided.**