

Student Safety and Support Policy

Project Success abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognize the welfare of children and young people is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we make
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, caregivers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Purpose

Project Success will:

- Protect children and young people who receive Project Success' services from harm.
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Project Success, including directors, managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, contract staff and students. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organization.

Definitions

Child or Children: Anyone under 18 years of age.

Neglect: Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment. The harm results from what the parent or caretaker fails to do to provide a child with needed care and protection.

1. The failure to supply the child with the necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical or mental health care, education, or appropriate supervision.
2. The failure to protect the child from conditions or actions that endanger the child.

Abuse: Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives. There are 3 main categories of abuse:

1. **Physical abuse** - Physical abuse is when a parent, guardian or other person responsible for the child's care hurts a child, causing any physical injury, other than by accident.
2. **Sexual abuse** - Child sexual abuse is sexual conduct with a child by a person responsible for the child's care, a person who has a significant relationship to the child, or in a position of authority.
3. **Emotional abuse** - This kind of abuse is the consistent or deliberate infliction of mental harm on a child by a person responsible for the child's care, that results in observable, sustained, adverse effect on the child's physical, mental or emotional development.

Harm: Can occur between students, or students and adults (not caregivers), and can include

- **Physical Incidents** – student confrontations, fighting, or assault
- **Sexual Incidents** – unwanted comments, interactions, or touching

Self-Harm: When someone intentionally damages or injures their own body.

Bullying: Unwanted, aggressive verbal, physical and/or social behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and repetition.

Safeguarding children and young people:

- protecting children and young people from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's and young people's health or development.
- ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Training and Awareness

Project Success will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its directors, managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers, contract staff and any other relevant persons linked to the organization who requires it (e.g. contractors).

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children and young people
- Recognize any child and young person potentially in need of safeguarding and take action
- Understand how to report a safeguarding Alert
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children and young people
- Have knowledge of the Student Safety and Support Policy.

All employees, contractors and volunteers who work with our students are required to do Mandatory Reporting training for child abuse and neglect. Staff who work directly with students receive a Student Services training delivered by the Director of People and Strategic Operations (DPSO) which includes Mandated Reporter training, information on process & policies, information on student issues, and provides guidance on how to have these conversations with students.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Project Success expects all employees, volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality. However, information should be reported the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or **contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.**

Safe Recruitment & Selection

Project Success is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Project Success has policies and procedures that that cover the recruitment and hiring of all trustees, employees, contractors and volunteers. Anyone working with students has a background check run prior to the start of their services. All staff have a background check run prior to their offer of employment and repeated on an annual basis. Our background checks include a county criminal search (past 7 years), MVR, national criminal database, sex offender registry, SSN tracing, state criminal database, global watchlist, and online presence.

Social Media

The Project Success Technical and Social Media policy provides guidelines regarding appropriate communication. All employees, contractors, trustees, and volunteers should be aware of Project Success' social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct for behavior towards the children and young people we support.

Safeguarding Policies and Practices

- If any Project Success staff knows, or has reason to believe, that a child is being neglected or abused – they are to report that directly to the Director of People & Strategic Operations (DPSO).
- If there is immediate danger to the child, Project Success staff will first call emergency services (911). After that, staff is to report the situation directly to the DPSO.
- The DPSO will then work with the reporting staff member(s), the Executive Director, and other involved parties to file any reports (as necessary). Follow-up will be determined on a case-by-case basis and led by the DPSO. Discussing the situation with other staff, students, parents, or teachers is prohibited, unless specifically approved.
- Follow-up individuals could include students, families, other PS staff, partner staff, school staff, social workers, school leadership, etc.

The Project Success Staff Handbook provides guidelines on appropriate interactions between adults and children. Each program that hosts overnight opportunities has separate policies regarding one-on-one interactions to safeguard our students.

Students engage in behavioural agreements for all programs and sign behavioural expectation agreements before participating in Project Success programming. They are informed by staff of any expectations and who they can talk to prior to the programming. Parents/Guardians receive safeguarding practices via their registration form and waiver liability, and the Student Support and Safety Policy is on the Project Success website.

Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology

The Project Success Technology & Social Media policy provides guidelines regarding appropriate communication. All employees, directors, and volunteers should be aware of Project Success' and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it

is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities.

Whistle Blowing

It is important that people within Project Success have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organization. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by Project Success to protect whistle blowers.