



SAFEGUARDING · POLICY 04

Child Protection Referral Pathway

Where a concern goes once it leaves CYEF, who is responsible at each step and how to reach them.

Document	Child Protection Referral Pathway
Version	1.0
Owner	CYEF Safeguarding Focal Person, Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	CYEF Board of Directors
Date adopted	pending board adoption
Review cycle	Contact details checked every six months . Full review every two years
Display	A copy is displayed at every CYEF activity venue

1. How to use this document

The Incident Reporting and Escalation Procedure covers what happens inside CYEF. This document covers what happens outside it: which external body a concern goes to, and how to reach them.

Referral decisions are normally taken by the Safeguarding Focal Person. Any person may contact the emergency services or Childline 116 directly where a child is in danger, and should never wait for permission to do so.

Emergency

Immediate danger, serious injury or a child who has just been assaulted: call **999** or **112**. For sexual assault, seek medical care within 72 hours so that post-exposure prophylaxis and emergency contraception remain available, and try not to wash the child or their clothing before examination.

2. External routes

Who to contact, and for what

Body	Contact	Use for
Childline Kenya National child helpline	116 Toll free, 24 hours childlinekenya.co.ke	Any child protection concern. Advice when you are unsure. Anonymous reporting. Run with the Department of Children Services, and cases are logged on the national child protection system
Police Including Child Protection Units and Gender Desks	999 or 112 Nearest station: Tala Police Station	Suspected criminal offences, including defilement, assault, trafficking and child labour. Immediate danger
Sub-County Children Officer Matungulu / Kangundo, Machakos County	Through the Department of Children Services county office	Statutory child protection response, case management, family assessment, alternative care
Department of Children Services	childrenservices.go.ke	Escalation where a local response stalls. Guidance on procedure
Nearest health facility	To be confirmed locally and written in below	Injury, sexual assault examination, post-exposure prophylaxis, mental health support

Body	Contact	Use for
School leadership where the child is a learner	Through the head teacher	Concerns arising in or connected to the school. Coordination of support
Office of the Data Protection Commissioner	odpc.go.ke	Breaches involving personal data, reportable within 72 hours under the Data Protection Act, 2019

2.1 Local contacts to be completed

The Safeguarding Focal Person completes and verifies these every six months. A pathway with an out-of-date number is a pathway that fails at the moment it is needed.

Contact	Name	Number	Checked
Sub-County Children Officer			
Nearest police station			
Police Gender Desk officer			
Nearest health facility			
Nearest facility offering post-rape care			
County child protection coordinator			

3. Which route applies

Concern	First route	Also inform
Sexual abuse, defilement or sexual exploitation	Police, and health facility within 72 hours	Sub-County Children Officer, Board Chair
Physical assault causing injury	Health facility, then police	Sub-County Children Officer, guardian where safe
Neglect or a child living in unsafe conditions	Sub-County Children Officer, or Childline 116	School leadership where relevant
Child labour or trafficking indicators	Police, and Childline 116	Sub-County Children Officer
Emotional abuse or persistent humiliation	Childline 116 for advice, then Children Officer	Guardian, school

Concern	First route	Also inform
Online grooming or image abuse	Police, and preserve the evidence without sharing it further	Childline 116, Board Chair
Child missing during an activity	Police immediately, and guardian	Board Chair, and a written incident record
Allegation against CYEF personnel	Police where an offence may have occurred, and Children Officer	Board Chair, partner organisations involved
Female genital mutilation, or a child at risk of early marriage	Police and Children Officer, urgently	Childline 116
Self-harm or suicidal disclosure	Health facility and guardian, unless the guardian is the source of risk	Childline 116 for counselling referral

4. Making a referral

Have this ready before you call. Give what you have, and do not delay because something is missing.

- The child's name, age, sex and where they are now
- Whether the child is currently safe
- What happened, when and where, in factual terms
- Who the concern is about, and whether that person has current access to the child
- Guardian details, and whether the guardian is aware
- Any injury or medical need
- What CYEF has already done
- Your name, role and a number you can be reached on

Record the name of the person who took the referral, the time and any reference number given. Confirm in writing the same day where possible.

5. Consent and informing the family

Guardians are normally told when a referral is made about their child. There are exceptions, and they matter:

- Where telling the guardian would place the child at greater risk
- Where the guardian or a household member is the subject of the concern
- Where doing so could interfere with a police investigation or lead to evidence being lost

In those cases take advice from Childline 116 or the Children Officer before contacting the family, and record the reason for the decision.

A child's consent is not needed to make a referral where they are at risk of significant harm. Explain to the child what will happen next, in language suited to their age, then be honest that you cannot keep it to yourself.

6. After the referral

- Keep supporting the child. A referral is not the end of CYEF's responsibility
- Follow up if you have heard nothing within five working days, and escalate to the Department of Children Services if a local response stalls
- Keep the record of contact, dates and outcomes on the safeguarding file
- Offer support to the person who reported and to any staff affected
- Review whether CYEF practice contributed, and change it where it did

This pathway is read alongside the Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Incident Reporting and Escalation Procedure. Legal basis: Children Act, 2022, Sexual Offences Act, 2006, Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act, 2010 and Data Protection Act, 2019.