



SAFEGUARDING · POLICY 03

Incident Reporting and Escalation Procedure

What to do, in order, when a safeguarding concern is raised, witnessed or disclosed. Includes the CYEF incident report form.

Document	Incident Reporting and Escalation Procedure
Version	1.0
Owner	CYEF Safeguarding Focal Person, Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	CYEF Board of Directors
Date adopted	pending board adoption
Review cycle	Reviewed every two years, and after every serious incident
Companion to	Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Child Protection Referral Pathway

1. Purpose

A policy that states children matter is worth little without a procedure that tells an ordinary person what to do at eight o'clock on a Saturday morning when a child says something alarming. This document is that procedure.

It is written to be usable under pressure. Keep a copy at every activity venue.

If a child is in immediate danger

Call the police on **999** or **112**, or take the child to the nearest health facility if they need urgent medical care. Do this first. Tell the Safeguarding Focal Person as soon as the child is safe. Do not wait for internal approval before protecting a child.

2. What must be reported

Report anything that falls into these categories, whether you are certain or not.

- A child tells you they have been harmed, or that they are afraid of someone
- You see signs that make you worry about a child's safety at home or at an activity
- Someone else tells you they are worried about a child
- An adult breaches the Code of Conduct
- A child is harmed by another child, including bullying, hazing or sexual harassment
- A child is injured during an activity, or has a near miss that could have caused serious harm
- A child goes missing during an activity
- An adult behaves towards a child in a way that makes you uneasy, even if you cannot say why
- An allegation is made against CYEF personnel, a partner or a visitor
- Images of children are taken, used or shared outside CYEF standards

You are not required to be sure. You are required to pass it on. Deciding whether abuse has occurred is the job of the Department of Children Services and the police, and never the job of the person who received the concern.

3. The six steps

3.1 Step 1 — Make the child safe

Remove the immediate danger. Separate a child from the person of concern if that person is present. Get medical help if it is needed. Keep the child with a trusted adult in an open setting.

3.2 Step 2 — Listen, and stop there

- Let the child speak in their own words, without interrupting or filling gaps
- Do not ask leading questions, press for detail or ask the child to repeat the account
- Do not investigate, confront the alleged person or contact the family before taking advice
- Do not promise to keep it secret. Say instead that you will tell someone whose job is to keep them safe
- Tell the child they were right to speak, and that it is not their fault

3.3 Step 3 — Record it

Write it down the same day, while it is fresh, using the incident report form at the end of this document.

- Use the child's own words in quotation marks where you can
- Record facts and observations, and mark clearly anything that is your opinion
- Note the date, time, place and who else was present
- Describe any injury you saw. Do not photograph a child's injuries
- Sign and date the record

3.4 Step 4 — Report internally

Pass the form to the Safeguarding Focal Person within one working day, and sooner where there is risk. If the concern involves the Focal Person, report to the Board Chair. If it involves the Board Chair, report externally to Childline Kenya on 116.

3.5 Step 5 — Assess and escalate

The Safeguarding Focal Person decides within one working day which route applies, and records the reasoning.

Assessment	Action	Timescale
Child at risk of significant harm, or a possible criminal offence	Refer to police and to the Sub-County Children Officer. Notify the Board Chair	Immediately, same day
Concern about a child's welfare, no immediate danger	Seek advice from Childline 116 or the Children Officer. Agree a support plan with the guardian where safe to do so	Within 2 working days
Allegation against CYEF personnel	Remove the person from contact with children. Refer externally. Begin the disciplinary process	Immediately
Peer-on-peer harm	Support both children separately. Involve guardians. Refer externally if the conduct may be criminal	Within 1 working day

Assessment	Action	Timescale
Code of Conduct breach with no harm to a child	Handle through the disciplinary process. Record for trend monitoring	Within 5 working days
Injury or near miss	Record, review the risk assessment, change the activity if needed	Within 5 working days

An internal disciplinary process never replaces an external referral. Where a criminal offence may have been committed, both run, and the external referral is not delayed to wait for the internal outcome.

3.6 Step 6 — Follow through and close

- Keep the child and their guardian informed at a level appropriate to their age and to the circumstances
- Support the child through any external process, including accompanying them where appropriate
- Support the person who reported, and check on any staff member affected
- Record the outcome, the date and who took the decision
- Review what the incident says about CYEF practice, and change ratios, supervision or training where needed
- Report anonymised trends to the board

4. Roles

Who	Responsibility
Any person present	Make the child safe, listen, record, report. Nothing further
Activity lead	Ensure the immediate response happens, support the reporter, secure the register and attendance records
Safeguarding Focal Person	Receive reports, assess, refer externally, maintain the safeguarding record, support those involved, report to the board
Board Chair	Oversight, decisions where the Focal Person is conflicted, engagement with authorities on serious cases
Board	Reviews anonymised trends at least twice a year and holds the Foundation to account

5. Records and confidentiality

- Safeguarding records are held separately from general programme files, in a locked or password-protected store
- Access is limited to the Safeguarding Focal Person and the Board Chair, plus authorities entitled to receive them
- Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis, and never as news within the team or community
- Records are processed under the Data Protection Act, 2019 and the CYEF Data Protection Policy
- Child protection records are retained for seven years from the child's eighteenth birthday, reflecting the period during which a matter may still be raised
- Where a record is shared with authorities, note what was shared, with whom and when

6. Protection for the person reporting

Nobody at CYEF is penalised for raising a safeguarding concern in good faith, including where it turns out to be mistaken. Retaliation against a reporter is itself a disciplinary matter. Reports may be made in confidence, and anonymously where the reporter prefers, although anonymity can limit follow-up.

7. Incident report form

Complete the same day. Pass to the Safeguarding Focal Person. Do not keep a personal copy.

Date of report

Time

Your name and role

Child's name and age

Programme or activity, and location

Date, time and place of the incident or disclosure

What happened, in the child's own words where possible. Facts and observations only

Anything you observed directly, including injuries, behaviour or the state of the child

Who else was present or aware

Action you took immediately

Your signature

Date

7.1 For completion by the Safeguarding Focal Person

Date and time received

Reference number

Assessment and reasoning

External referral made to, and when

Support provided to the child

Outcome and date closed

Signature

Date

External contacts: Childline Kenya **116** (toll free, 24 hours) · Police **999** or **112** · Sub-County Children Officer, Machakos County · Department of Children Services, childrenservices.go.ke. Full routing is set out in the Child Protection Referral Pathway.