**Safeguarding – Frequently Asked Questions**

**The Mighty Creatives**

**Feb 2025**

It is vital everyone stays vigilant with regards to Safeguarding, especially when adhering to Safeguarding policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct. At The Mighty Creatives (TMC), we recognise some scenarios may be unfamiliar and it is important we respond to the needs of our staff, volunteers and freelancers by providing simple but thorough procedures to ensure the safety and safeguarding of children and young people, staff, volunteers and freelancers.

Below are some frequently asked questions that will include procedures to follow in specific situations. **Please note, this is an addition to our Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct. Please refer to them as your main source of information and guidance and Safeguarding.**

You will see in this document we refer to TMC’s Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs). These are lead staff and trustees who lead on the Safeguarding of children and young people and at least one will be available when work with young people is taking place. TMC’s DSOs are:

Caroline Frankland, Business manager, caroline@themightycreatives.com 07889 645112 (lead responsibility for child protection)

Emily York, Head of Programmes, Emily.york@themightycreatives.com 07771 728163

James Bluth, Programme Manager, james@themightycreatives.com 07464 481363

Emrys Green, Trustee

To see the answers to the questions, click on the arrow to the left of each question and this will expand and show the answer. If you are a Mac user you may need to press the enter key as well.

**General Safeguarding:**

# **Risk Assessments:** Do I need a risk assessment when working with children and young people?

**Yes**, especially if you’re delivering bespoke activity.

We certainly do not wish to constrain staff and freelancers to enable learning or hinder the work with systems that are rigid and risk averse; we can however make our practice feel as secure as possible by risk assessing activity. TMC do have programme risk assessments for activity however **it is your responsibility to risk assess the bespoke activity you will be doing with your child or young person. Please also share these with TMC.**

The TMC Risk Assessment will be sent as part of your induction to the work. You will need to confirm you have read this as part of the process. A template Risk Assessment and guidance is also available upon request if required. Please liaise with your lead contact at TMC for this.

Our Risk Assessment is based on being able to do most things, and doing everything safely, with sensible exclusions/conditions e.g., safety around water, not going to high altitudes without trained person etc.

Please ensure you risk assess any activity that is **not** included in the TMC Risk Assessment. This includes using any specific tools, taking a young person out in your car and on walks and visits etc.

Here are some recommendations of where to start:

* + **Understand the needs of your child/young person:** Do they have specific access, medical or behavioural needs you need to take into consideration? Understanding these will help you ensure the space and activities are safe for them. These will always be provided by TMC upon starting to work with your child/young person.
	+ **Site Visits:** Visit the space your session is taking place beforehand, especially if you are unfamiliar with the space. This will help you understand the risks around the site i.e., access to public roads, any areas to avoid, stairs and lifts. You will also be aware of where the fire-exits are in case of an emergency.
	+ **First Aid:** You **must** consider how you will access first-aid during your session. On your site visit you will want to find out if they have first aiders on site and where to find the nearest first aid kits. This way you know where to go in the event of an accident or emergency. TMC do have travel first aid kits available if required by a first aider for an activity.
	+ **Safeguarding:** Who are the DSOs on site and at TMC? How would you contact them if an incident occurs, or a disclosure is made?

# **Working one-to-one:** I am working one-to-one with a child/young person, that might include me working in my own studio or in their home without any other adults present. How do I keep myself safe?

We recognise that some work may require one-to-one working. Whilst we advise to have another adult present where possible, this may not always be doable or appropriate, for example through our Creative Mentoring programme. There are a couple of steps you can follow to ensure you are keeping yourself and the child/young person safe:

* **Communication:** Ensure The Mighty Creatives and other relevant adults (Parents/Carers/Teachers/Social Workers etc.) are informed of the following:
	+ Where your session is taking place.
	+ How long the session is for.
	+ What happened during your session.
	+ Report any concerns immediately to the DSOs at TMC and the setting where your session took place.
* If working in your own studio or in the child/young person’s own home, please ensure you message your lead contact at TMC to let us know you or the child/young person has arrived safely and do so again at the end of your session. It is also important to debrief those adults who are taking over responsibility for the child/young person (i.e., carer, parent, home manager etc). This might include what activities you did during the session and how the child/young person behaved/acted for example.
* **Assess risks:** Assess the risks of this and conduct a risk assessment where appropriate. See FAQ 1 for further information.
* **Keeping logs:** Keep a detailed record of your activity during your session either using an action record template or otherwise and share these with your programme lead at points relevant to your contract and programme.

When working one-to-one, we ask for practitioners to not work in their own home with the child/young person. This ensures you are keeping yourself safe and limits the potential of safeguarding concerns to occur/allegations to be made when you are in your own home. Whilst our work is person-centred, adaptable and flexible, we still need to remain professional when working with children and young people and having a CYP in your home blurs this line.

If your studio is not at your home premises and is in a separate art space, please ensure you have the permission of TMC and/or the child’s parent/corporate parent/carer to deliver the sessions in your studio. If your studio is part of your home, sessions cannot take place here.

# **Working in a Public Place:** I am wanting to work with a child/young person in a public space. What do I need to consider?

We fully encourage where appropriate for staff and freelancers to work with children/young people out in the community, whether that is an art gallery, museum or local park. There are several things for you to consider when working in a public place:

* **Risk Assessments:** TMC will provide you with a risk assessment for the overall activity of the programme. You are responsible for risk assessing any specific activity you are organising with your child/young person. TMC have a guide to share as well as a template for you to use. Please refer to FAQ 1 for more information.
	+ **Communication:** Ensure TMC are kept in the loop with where you are going with your child/young person or group. Upon starting your work with them you will receive their permission/referral forms. This will include the contact details of emergency contacts. Save these in your phone or always keep them on you, so that in the case of an emergency or for any other safety reasons, you have their contacts to hand.

# **Driving with a child/young person:** Through my work with TMC, I require to drive my child/young person for the purposes of our session. What do I need to consider when doing so?

We understand, especially when working directly with children and young people, supporting their travel is a vital part of the work and it supports them to access our provision. This can be done via support with public transport but also having them in your own vehicle.

There are several steps you can take to ensure both the safety of yourself and the child/young person:

* **Insurance:** You **must** have Business Insurance on your vehicle and have shared your insurance information with TMC prior to taking a child/young person in your vehicle. If an external member of staff, you **must** also have your own Public Liability Insurance and have shared evidence of this with TMC.
* **Permissions:** Ensure you have the written permission of a parent/care giver prior to taking them in your own vehicle. Forward this onto your lead contact at TMC.
* **Communication:** Inform your lead contact at TMC when and where you are going to take the child/ young person. Message them at the start of your session and at the end of your session to confirm collection and drop-off.
* **Keeping logs:** Keep a detailed log of activity after your session and share this with your lead contact at a point relevant to your work or contract.
* **Safeguarding:** Ensure you have the contact number of a DSO at TMC in the case of a Safeguarding issue or accident/emergency.
* **Risk Assessment:** Risk assessments must be written for any journey.

# **Purchasing Resources:** My role requires me to purchase resources for my child/young person. Where is the line with resources and gifts?

We highly support and encourage staff and freelancers to purchase resources to enable their child/young person to engage in creative activity. **Please ensure you have these resources approved by The Mighty Creatives prior to purchase as dependent on programme, there will be budget available to support this.** This includes items such as tickets to events, screenings, cultural venues, admission costs, creative resources and refreshments where necessary.

However, you must only purchase resources that will help you to deliver your role and activity. Purchasing gifts that do not fit this criteria is **not permitted** and can either lead to the child or young person becoming reliant on this support or can be perceived as favouritism and acting inappropriately.

If you are unsure of any purchases, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

# **Completing Action Records:** Why is it important for me to complete session/action records?

Action records are a **compulsory** part of working with children and young people at TMC. Staff and freelancers **must** use these logs to detail the activity that had taken place during a session and any observations that were made. It should also document the date and time spent with them. You may also document phone call exchanges too.

Not only is this best practice for your own monitoring and measuring progress, but it also provides further context for TMC both from a programme and Safeguarding point of view. It helps us to ensure the correct activity is taking place and that both staff, freelancers and children/young people are safe during their sessions and that’s appropriate Safeguarding has not been compromised.

Action records will either be stored in a centralised and restricted place on SharePoint for internal staff. For external staff, these will be required to be shared at regular intervals across your time with the child/young person relevant to your work and contract.

# **Gut Feelings:** A disclosure hasn’t been made, but I have a ‘gut feeling’ about something, and I am worried about my child/young person’s safety?

Trust your gut feeling and talk to one of the Safeguarding leads at The Mighty Creatives. You may have observed something, or your child/young person may have said something that made you concerned or uneasy. Telling someone and talking through your concern is the best thing to do. It may be that the Safeguarding lead follows this up and you will be kept in the loop.

# **Safe Working Spaces:** How do I create a safe and comfortable space when working with children/young people?

It’s important that children/young people feel supported, comfortable and safe when engaging in our work. We can make the space as physically safe as possible, ensuring all Safeguarding needs are met, but making them feel comfortable in the space may take some work also.

Firstly, do have a read of our Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is a behaviour code for adults working with children and young people. It provides guidance on your role as a staff member or freelancer working with children and young people and covers the 4 R’s: Responsibilities, Rights, Relationships and Respect. Ensuring you following these will create a safe and open space for the child/young person.

Secondly, it’s important to consider the child/young person’s background and needs when working with them. This might include thinking about a physical space that they may be most comfortable as well as the activities you are introducing. You may want further information on any needs your child/young person may be experiencing, and you can find some further support on the [NottAlone resource.](https://nottalone.org.uk/)

Finally, you may also want to consider models of youth participation and think about whether you’re creating a safe space for them to communicate and share their ideas, such as [Lundy’s Model for Child Participation.](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/lundy_model_of_participation.pdf) This model explores 4 key elements to child participation, including space, voice, audience and influence.

# **Children/Young People’s Travel:** A child/young person I’m working with is under 16, but needs to travel by themselves to meet with me, what do I do?

Permission/referral forms will always be gathered prior to working with a child/young person.

If you anticipate your work to be in-person and not at the child/young person’s home or school, with the potential for travel, please ensure there is a clear question on the permissions form asking for the parent/carers consent for the child/young person to join/leave your session by themselves if under the age of 16.

If the child/young person is over the age of 16, they can travel by themselves without parent/carers consent.

If consent for independent travel was not gathered at the point of seeking participation permission, this must be gathered in writing (email or otherwise) prior to the child/young person travelling alone.

# **Out of Work Hours:** A child/young person I’m working with has contacted me about a safeguarding concern during out of work hours, what do I do?

In building trusting relationships with children and young people, they may trust you with certain aspects of their lives and may come to you if they feel down, upset, or in the case of an emergency. This is especially the case if they’re over the age of 16 and have your contact number (with permission).

It is important, when exchanging contact details, that you outline the boundaries of when you’re contactable and what you may need to do if they contact you about a Safeguarding concern. For example, that you cannot keep it a secret and you will need to pass this on to the relevant Safeguarding teams.

To prepare yourself for this, we ask you:

* **Contact emergency services by calling 999 if they’re in immediate harm and danger.**
* Have a conversation with the child/young person’s supporting adult about who it is you will need to contact out of hours. For example, are you able to contact the Carer, Social Worker or a Safeguarding lead within the child’s team.
* Find out and save the Local Authority’s safeguarding contacts. All LA’s will have First Response Children’s Duty contact, available 24/7. You can find these below:
	+ Derby City: 01332 641172
	+ Derbyshire: 01629 533190
	+ Leicester City: 0116 454 1004
	+ Leicestershire and Rutland: 0116 3050005
	+ North Northamptonshire: 0300 126 7000
	+ Nottingham City: 0115 876 4800
	+ Nottinghamshire: 0300 5008090
	+ West Northamptonshire: 0300 126 7000
	+ Staffordshire: 0300 1118007
	+ Telford: 01952 385385
* If the Young Person is over 18 please contact the following which are available 24/7:

* + Derby City: 01332 640777
	+ Derbyshire: 01629 532600.
	+ Leicester City: 0116 454 1004.
	+ Leicestershire and Rutland: 0116 3050005.
	+ North Northamptonshire: 0300 126 3000.
	+ Nottingham City: 0115 876 1000.
	+ Nottinghamshire: 0300 456 4546.
	+ West Northamptonshire: 0300 126 7000.
	+ Staffordshire: 0345 604 2886.
	+ Telford: 01952 676500.

Please then report any concerns to The Mighty Creatives’ DSO team (contacts above) of any action taken through our disclosure and reporting procedures.

# **Gambling:** A child/young person I’m working with shows signs of a gambling issue, where can I go to?

Unfortunately, gambling challenges in children and young people are on the rise. The increase in gaming and the popularity of mobile games with ‘in-app’ purchases, where players can purchase things like ‘coins’, ‘packs’ or ‘mystery boxes’, is having a negative impact on the number of young people developing challenges with gaming and gambling.

If you notice that the child/young person you’re working with has an issue with gaming and/or gambling, please notify the professionals working around the child/young person as well as one of TMC’s Designated Safeguarding Officers.

There are a number of organisations that specialize in educating and providing advice for gambling issues for children and young people. Take a look at these below:

* + - * [YGAM](https://www.ygam.org/) – Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust is an award-winning charity with a social purpose to inform, educate and safeguard young people against gaming and gambling harms.
			* [GamCare](https://www.gamcare.org.uk/outreach-and-training/youth-outreach-programme/#:~:text=A%20new%2C%20dedicated%20treatment%20pathway,treatment%20services%20developed%20by%20GamCare.) – GamCare and YGAM are working together to deliver a programme of education, training and support for young people across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

# **Using Sharp Objects:** I need to use sharp objects and/or tools in my sessions with a child/young person, what do I need to do?

We completely understand that some art forms require the use of sharp tools that can pose added risk to you, your Creative Mentee and others participating. **It’s important to note that our generic Risk Assessment for Creative Mentoring does not cover specific tools for these types of activities.**

You must, as a Creative Mentor, write your own risk assessment for your activity that sits outside of our generic risk assessment to ensure you have considered all the potential risks and hazards when working with sharp objects.

Some top tips you may want to include are:

1. To count the sharp objects and/or tools prior to going into the session, so you know how many you entered with.
2. Talking to the child/young person about the associated risks when using such equipment and the safety protocols they must observe and demonstrate when using them.
3. To remove these sharp objects/tools if the child/young person is showing any sign that they could potentially misuse the objects.
4. Count the sharp objects/tools at the end of the session before the child/young person is dismissed, so all are accounted for.
5. If any are missing, you can then work to find them and/or notify other staff if required.
6. If you are using sharp tools/objects that only you can use as a Creative Mentor or practitioner, you must ensure the tool/object is used away from children/young people and that it is always on your person. If the tool is too big, then that you are vigilant and keeping the tool away from your activity.

For help on writing risk assessments, please refer to Question 1.

# **Using Phones in Sessions:** I need to use my personal phone in a session with a child/young person, what do I do?

We would **always** advise Creative Mentors to not use their personal phones during sessions with children and young people, where possible. This is because you may be seen as putting yourself at risk during these sessions, for example having personal text messages or phone calls come up during your session that children/young people can see, personal photos being exposed, or it may be seen as blurring the boundaries in your relationship with the child/young person.

Think of Teachers for example, most schools have a no phones policy in the classroom. It is vital that, especially when in education settings, that we get to know the settings policies on phones and devices, so that you are not breaking any of their internal procedures, and therefore putting yourself at risk of disciplinary action or false and unfounded allegations being made against you.

If you **need** to use a device during your sessions, you can:

* Have a conversation with your setting if they have any in house equipment that you can use. Most schools will have access to iPads, computers and/or tablets that the child/young person can access.
* Have a conversation with your contract lead at The Mighty Creatives, who can offer you a piece of digital kit (Amazon fire tablet or Chromebook) for you to use during your sessions. All of these are protected for the safety of you and your child/young person.

This is also covered in Question 21.

# **Using Touch in Sessions:** Human-Human touch is a part of my practice, what do I need to do to keep myself and the child/young person safe?

Close contact and touch are important parts of establishing human relationships. It can be used to convey warmth, care and can share an array of emotions. It can be used as part of our practice, as part of leisure activities as well as providing direct physical care. However, touch can also be used in an oppressive, coercive, and punitive manner.

For care experienced children and young people, their perceptions of touch ***can*** be distorted. For example, previous trauma, lack of attachment, physical and sexual abuse, neglect, over-attachment etc. can all present themselves in different ways, especially in the way the child/young person interprets touch. Even if children/young people have not experienced any of these, they still may not be comfortable with touch.

We understand to deprive children/young people of physical contact in order to minimize risk could be damaging in itself. The responses to the child, **must** balance the need for protection with the need to create a positive environment.

If you are considering including an element of physical touch in your practice with children and young people, please consider the following:

* **Plan for the activity:** In order to work safely and minimize risk, information **should** be obtained first from the child/young person’s supporting adults and professionals as to whether physical touch is permitted in your work. Here, issues can then be identified, planned for, managed and discussed. **If at this point physical touch is not seen as appropriate, we cannot include it in our practice.**
* **Appropriateness:** As Creative Mentors or practitioners, we should only be including physical touch in our practice within the boundaries of our role. For example, if you are instructing a child/young person how to dance and providing guidance, if you are using play within your approach to working with your child/young person or if you are using touch to keep a child/young person safe. Touch like sitting a child on your lap, personal care and massages are **not** appropriate for our role as Creative Mentors or Practitioners, as that is not what we are there to do with our Creative Mentee. If they require that therapeutic support, a specialist can be brought in to do this.
* **Consent:** All physical contact should be with the child’s consent. **If consent isn’t gained, there should be no unwanted touch.**
* **Location:** All physical contact must take place in open locations where the contact can be observed or monitored intermittently by people located nearby and who are aware of the interaction. Doors should be kept open if one to one contact is occurring that could involve physical touch.
* **Allegations:** Children can misinterpret contact or make allegations for various reasons. For example, they may link physical contact with past experiences, it can be a way to obtain power or control over a situation, the child may think the allegation can remove the adult from their support circle or the contact may genuinely be misinterpreted. To minimize the opportunity for misinterpretation and false allegations, physical touch such as massages should be avoided. Whilst in some contexts, the use of massage and similar forms of touch are considered positive and therapeutic, when caring for children who have experienced inappropriate or abusive touch, such behaviours can be misinterpreted and at worst, provide a ‘cover’ for inappropriate or abusive touch.

**Creative Mentors and practitioners must also consult with their school or settings approach to touch, which should be in their safeguarding policy. If the school or setting does not allow any form of touch, this should be abided by.**

# **Working with Groups:** What happens if a child/young person I am working with, leaves the group during a session?

If a child/young person leaves your group during a session, if possible, take the other children/young people with you to find another adult. This adult (within the school setting or otherwise) can then either stay with the group for you to find the absent child/young person, or they can find them for you.

**We would always recommend for you to have a conversation with the Safeguarding lead at your setting to see how they wish for you to approach this.**

# **Communication:**

# **Communicating with a child/young person:** I only have a personal phone and require communicating with my child/young person directly. What do I do?

We understand that contacting a child/young person directly can help with delivery, however, it is best practice to use a work phone. Where this is not possible, you should always consider why you are contacting them directly- does your work with them depend on this? Is it in their best interest to be contacted directly? Do you understand the risks and can put measures in place to mitigate these?

If the answers to the above questions are ‘Yes!’, then there are some practical steps you can take to ensure you are keeping yourself and your child/young person safe:

* **Age of the young person:** A young person **must** be over the age of 16 for them to contact you directly, and only with the permission of a parent/care giver. This might also include the permission of a Social Worker or Corporate Parent if the child or young person is under the care of a Local Authority.
* **Keeping TMC in the loop:** Inform The Mighty Creatives that you are contacting the young person directly and have sought permission to do so. When in a group setting, include a member of The Mighty Creatives’ team in your conversations, you can do this via WhatsApp.
* **Keeping logs:** Keep a log of your conversations and messages.
* **Reporting concerns:** Report any Safeguarding concerns immediately to The Mighty Creatives’ Designated Safeguarding Officers.

# **Communicating with Young People Turning 18:** What happens if my young person turns 18 during the programme? Does this change how I contact them and how our one-to-one sessions run? Do I still need to email their parent/carer?

If a young person is under 18, we require all communication (email, texting and WhatsApp messaging) to be via or include the parent/care giver. If during your work with them, they turn 18 years old and wish to contact you directly, this is accepted. You **must** inform the parent/care giver on the changes in communication and if they ask to continue to be included in correspondence you must respect this.

If a young person is over the age of 18 and still wishes for another adult to be the main point of contact, this also must be respected.

# **Handing Over Responsibility:** At the end of my session with a child/young person, they were very unsettled and demonstrating harmful behaviours to themselves and others. How do I handle this situation?

**Communication is paramount when working with children and young people, especially in one-to-one settings.** You may find yourselves in situations where you are handing over responsibility to another supporting adult working with the child or young person. This may include but isn’t limited to parents/care giver, teachers and home managers for example. This can also be digitally and in-person.

A debrief at this point, with the supporting adult is vital. Not only does this provide an insight into your work with them, but it also provides handing over time and managing and supporting the emotions of the child/young person.

In the unlikely event that your child/young person is unsettled at the end of your session and demonstrating harmful behaviours, you **must not** leave them unsupervised. Stay with them until they are calm or when another supporting adult takes over responsibility. It’s important to share what led to the child or young person feeling distressed and to make a detailed log of this in your action record as well as inform the DSO of this too.

#  **Managing Endings:** How do I manage endings my work with a child/young person?

Managing endings is vital to our work with children and young people. Endings in themselves can be a traumatic experience for all involved and it is our job to ensure all endings are managed sensitively and safely, considering boundaries and expectations.

There are several endings you may experience when working with children and young people. These include but aren’t limited to the below:

* **Planned Endings:** This is when a programme has a set end date. This may be a project end date or the end of your contract. This is the most common ending you will experience when working with children and young people. With planned endings, transparency is key. It is vital that the child/young person is aware of when your work is going to be ending. You might want to consider the following approaches:
	+ Be clear with the child/young person of how many sessions you will have with them. This helps them manage expectations and process the ending.
	+ Embed approaching endings within your sessions. You may want to do this by reminding the child/young person what session you are on, or even involve them in crossing off the session in their plan.
	+ Create a clear and simple plan ***with*** the child/young person. You may want to plan a specific outcome or endpoint. Involving them in this process will be vital for them to be aware of what they’re working towards and when they might be closer to the end of your time with you.
* **Unexpected Endings:** The child/young person may be moved out of the area, may not wish to engage or another occurrence may have happened that means they can no longer engage. These can’t be helped and it’s important you do not take these personally. If you still have contact with the child/young person or professionals working with them, you might want to consider the following:
	+ Write them a letter/email to celebrate your work to date and make the ending less traumatic.
	+ Send them photos of your work together for them to keep.
	+ Share their progress with professionals working with them.
	+ Arrange a final online session to celebrate progress that has been made.
* **Natural Endings:** You may find a child/young person no longer needs your support, and this is fine. They may have moved to university or have moved on to another venture. It’s important a discussion is had with the child/young person and it is a mutually agreed decision that is communicated thoroughly with others working with the young person.
* **Open Ended Endings:** This is the least likely occurrence, but sometimes you just might not say goodbye! You may develop longer term relationships with children/young people through your work, where the child/young person trusts you and wishes to still have you in their life. It is important to consider your own boundaries and how you’re going to keep each other safe in this instance. If this is a route that you find yourself taking with a young person, please consider the pros and cons of keeping the relationship going and if you have the capacity and time to make sure it is a safe and appropriate relationship. You **must** communicate this decision with all professionals and parents/carers and seek approval for this to happen prior to agreeing with your child or young person.

It is worth noting that endings might not always be a nice experience. You may find the child/young person you’re working with avoids your sessions towards the end, goes quiet, or behaves different during your sessions. This might be because they feel uncomfortable about the ending of your time with them.

# **Setting Boundaries:** How do I set boundaries with my child/young person?

It’s vital we set boundaries and expectations when working with children and young people and this is often very personal and individualised to your work. It’s important to remember that working with children and young people is part of your job or wider work and to treat it in a professional way. Things to consider when setting expectations/boundaries are:

* Identify acceptable and appropriate behaviours with your child/young person. You may want to use a code of conduct or something like identify what you expect from them but also what they expect from you. This can be done as a simple activity.
* Set very clear boundaries for communication. For example, you may want to say that you’re only contactable between certain times and not in the evenings. Let the children/young people know when you’re on holiday/taking a break from work. You may also want to identify the way in which you wish to communicate, like via WhatsApp, text message or email.
* If a child/young person is under 16, explain to them that you cannot contact each other directly unless via an adult or with previous permission.

# **Communicating About a Child/Young Person:** What information can I disclose about the Child/Young Person with others?

Information, about children and young people, should be treated with the upmost confidentiality, especially if they’re in vulnerable circumstances. However, they may be instances where you will be communicating with other professionals by email, over the phone, text messages or face-to-face about them.

**When emailing and messaging about a child/young person, always refer to them by their initials and use they/them/theirs as pronouns, instead of he/him/his or she/her/hers.** This is so that information is secure and there is less danger of personal information being shared unlawfully. This is common and best practice, as used by schools and local authorities alike.

You should only refer to the child/young person by their name when it is appropriate to do so i.e.:

* Talking on the phone with a Parent/Carer or other professionals/Children and Young People working with them who already knows the information.
* When there is a Safeguarding concern of the Child or Young Person in question and the sharing of personal information is vital to the Child and Young Person’s safety.
* When communicating directly with the Child or Young Person themselves.

If you’re unsure, it is worth asking yourself the following:

* Does the person/s I am talking with already know the personal information?
* Does my task depend on me sharing this personal information or can it be done just as well with initials only?
* Am I putting the Child or Young Person at risk by sharing/not sharing this information?

As detailed in FAQ 25, all documents with personal information included, must be password protected.

# **Social Media:** What do I do if a child/young person follows/befriends me on Social Media?

You should **never** connect with a child/young person on your personal Social Media. If the child/young person you’re working with requests to do so, please decline and inform the professionals you are working with about this. We would also recommend having a conversation with the child/young person about why you cannot accept them.

We understand that many people have ‘professional’ Social Media pages that they use for work and their creative practice. These may not be private and there may be an occasion where the child/young person you’re working with may follow/befriend you.

We recommend, where possible, that you do not accept any friend requests, even on

professional/work Social Media accounts. This is for your own safety and helps keep the boundaries in your relationship with them.

Some platforms, like TikTok and Instagram do not give you the option to accept followers if your account is public. If the child/young person you’re working with follows you, we ask for you to:

* + - * Remove them as a follower.
			* Do not follow them back.

This is only so they cannot privately message you where permission has not been sought. **If the child/young person is over 16, please discuss this with their parent/carer or other professionals working with them and seek written permission for them to follow you on Social Media platforms.**

**Always be mindful of what content you’re posting and sharing on public Social Media account.**

# **Starting with a Child/Young Person:** What questions do I need to ask before I start working with a child/young person?

The information you wish to receive will vary from practitioner to practitioner. It’s important to recognise that some information is on a need-to-know basis and may not be able to be shared with you.

However, we would always recommend asking the question: ***What do I need to know about this child/young person before starting to work with them?***

The professional (Social Worker or otherwise), can then decide what information can be shared and what is relevant for you to know within the boundaries of your role.

# **Talking about Sex and Relationships:** My child/young person has started to talk about sex and relationships during our sessions. How do I approach this in my sessions?

It is normal when building a trusted relationship with a child/young person, that they may start to open up with you about personal experiences. They may even ask you some leading questions about your own experiences.

It’s important if they do open up to you, that you follow **6 simple steps**:

* **Educate yourself on signs of sexual abuse and how to spot these signs.** This is important in case the child is being groomed or experiencing other types of sexual abuse or exploitation. It’s also important to consider the age of consent in your approach, as if they are under the age of consent (16 years of age), this is something that will need to be flagged with professionals as a cause for concern. It’s also important to consider the child/young person’s vulnerabilities (for example, previous trauma, SEN needs or disabilities) that make them more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation.
* **Listen openly and non-judgementally.** They’re opening up to you for a reason, that they trust you. Please do listen openly and non-judgementally. It’s normal for them to be curious about such topics, especially as they get older.
* **Let them know that they can talk to you if anything has happened that they’re upset by.** They may be testing the water to see what ‘normal’ sexual behaviour is, or what a healthy relationship looks like. Let them know that if they’re ever worried about anything that they can share this with you, or their trusted other adults in their support circle. It’s important we support them to understand we are there to support their best interest.
* **Do not under any circumstances, share any of your own sexual experiences or anecdotes with your child/young person.** It is not our job as Creative Mentors or practitioners to open up about our own experiences. Under no circumstances should we be shared private discussions of our own experiences with children and young people. This is a breach of our Safeguarding policy and will be followed up accordingly.
* **Find additional expert support for your child/young person.** NSPCC have some expert guidance on how to have conversations, which can be found on their website, that are mainly focused on schools and educational professionals: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services/talk-relationships.
* **Report and record any discussions of this nature.** As with all of our concerns and disclosures, you must report any discussions or concerns of a worrying nature to TMC’s Designated Safeguarding Officer, to keep you and your child/young person safe.

# **Personal Information and Photos/Videos:**

# **Taking Photographs/Videos:** I only have a personal phone to document and measure progress via videos and photos. What do I need to do to ensure I am doing this safely?

There are a few things to consider when taking photos/videos of children/young people:

* **Safeguarding Policies:** It is important to understand TMC’s Safeguarding Policy and the Safeguarding policies of the setting you are delivering in. Each setting will have their own approach, with some having an absolute no-phones policy, of which you must respect and abide by.
* **Permissions:** Children and young people can only be photographed/videoed with written permissions in place. TMC have photography/video permission forms for individuals and groups that can gather this consent. Without this, you can only take photos/videos of the work you have created that do not include the child/young person’s face or other identifiable features (tattoos, piercings, school uniforms and identifiable clothing for example). A child or young person and their parent/carer can deny consent at any time and this must be respected and all photos/videos deleted safely and securely. **Images cannot be identified with the child or young person’s name unless specifically agreed.**
* **Equipment:** TMC, as well as a lot of other settings, have access to inhouse cameras, iPads and tablets that you can use to collate photos. If you do not have a work phone or your own equipment, this is the best and safest way to capture photos.

In the event of using your own personal phone where equipment isn’t available, you must consider why the photo/video is being taken and if it is a vital part of your delivery. If so, be sure to obtain permission, follow policies, store the photos in a secure space (i.e., a computer that isn’t shared in a protected folder) and delete them after your time working with the young person.

# **Storing and Sharing Photographs/Videos:** How do I store photographs and videos of the child/young person I am working with?

As above, informed and written consent from a parent or a person with legal parental responsibility must be given for a child or young person to do the following:

* Be photographed or filmed if under 16.
* Use ICT and internet equipment if under 16.
* Take part in engagement activity if under 18.

Photos may only be taken if the right permission has been gathered. Please see FAQ 20 for more information.

We know it is important to document the journey when working with a child or young person through photos and videos. You **must** store these safely and securely.

* **For internal staff:** these must be stored within the comms folder in our central folders on SharePoint and not on any personal devices.
* **For external staff:** Only take and store photos that are valuable to yours and the child/young person’s experience. These must be stored in a password-protected folder where possible and **never** on a public device. These photos must be shared with your lead contact at TMC for the purposes of this work and deleted at the end of the project.

# **Personal Information:** Do risk assessments and permission/referral forms include all the information I need to know about the child/young person?

Yes. TMC will always share personal information that is relevant to the programme and work only. It is important to only gather and share information that is going to be used inform your practice. To give you an idea, here’s what information you can find on each form:

* **Permission form:**
	+ Child/young person’s…
		- Name
		- Gender
		- Pronouns
		- Address
		- Postcode
		- Email address
		- Telephone number
	+ 2 Emergency Contact details
	+ Further details on:
		- Needs
		- Disabilities
		- Medical conditions
		- Dietary recruitments
	+ Permissions:
		- Permission to participate in activity
		- Permission for photographs/videos
* **Risk Assessments:**
	+ Contacts of DSOs
	+ Hazards and risks to do with activity and needs
	+ Safety measures put in place to reduce harm
	+ Details of First Aiders
	+ Venue specific information

If you’re a Creative Mentor, you will receive a referral form instead of a permissions form. This will include more detailed information due to the needs of the children and young people.

If you require more information than what is included on the forms provided, ask yourself ‘Do I require this information to enable me to work with the child/young person?’ and ‘Will this improve the quality of my work?”. If the answer is still yes, your lead contact at TMC can facilitate further information to be shared or put you in direct communication with a supporting adult who can help.

# **Storing and Sharing Information**: How do I store and share personal information about children/young people?

Informed consent will always be gathered by children and young people (and their parent/care givers if under 18) to collect, store and use their personal details. Only necessary data should be collected when:

1. Meeting children/young people for the first time at an event or through our website enquiry.
2. Or, when children/young people are taking part in our activities.

This personal information must always be kept digitally and password protected. For internal staff, this will be stored in central restricted folders on SharePoint. This is never stored in hard copy, on individual laptops or open folders. One exception is when participants contact details are required to directly contact individuals. In this instance, contacts can be held on outlook/phonebooks and must be deleted at the end of the project.

If you are an external member of staff, information will always be shared with you in a password protected document. This **must** stay this way, so no personal information is compromised. There are other ways you can keep this information safe:

* Ensure it is **not** saved or stored in a non-password protected document.
* Ensure personal information is stored on a private device and not on a shared device that is accessible by other people.
* To delete the information and documents as soon as the project is complete.

# **Digital Working:**

# **Working Digitally with Under 18s:** What do I do if a parent/carer is not available at the start and end of an online one-to-one session with a young person who is under the age of 18? What do I do if the video call was started, and the expected adult is not there but the young person is?

If a child/young person is under 18, a parent/care giver must be present at the start and end of an online session, as a way to check-in and check-out. This is to ensure full transparency and communication about your work with their child/young person. If you arrive to an online call and the expected supporting adult is not there you **must:**

* Ask where the parent/care giver is at this moment in time.
* If they’re unavailable to attend, assess the safety of the child/young person in the first instance.
	+ If not safe, please immediately inform the DSO whilst on the call to the child/young person and stay online with them. The DSO may decide to call the parent/care giver in this instance and will take appropriate action from this point.
* If the child/young person is safe, remind them of the policy and explain as a parent/care giver is not present, that the call will have to end.
* Remind the parent/care giver of the policy and arrange a suitable time to meet again.
* Make a log of this in your action record.

# **Emergency When Working Digitally:** If I need to make a call to 999 during an online one-to-one Zoom session (because the young person needs the help of an ambulance for example), should I keep my camera and audio on to the young person whilst making the call to 999?

In the rare event of an emergency during a digital call, **do not end the call.** Stay on the call and leave your camera on. Inform the child/young person that you are calling 999 and stay unmuted. That way the child/young person knows you’re still present. Keep talking to the child or young person whilst making the call and stay on the call until emergency services arrive, and you are informed of their next steps.

If you feel like you are considerably distressed, the call may be uncomfortable for the child or young person and may panic them, mute your mic but continue to unmute and make your presence known in a calm and reassuring way.

In a real-life setting, you would be making the call near the child or young person. It’s important they know you’re there and supporting them.

# **Supporting Organisations:**

# **Where can I go for additional support?**

There are lots of organisations and charities available to support with Safeguarding children and young people, including mental health support. See below for a list of organisations you can signpost your child/young person to. Remember, there is lots of support out there.

You might want to familiarise yourself with any local organisations/support schemes locally to the young person you’re working with too.

**National Organisations:**

* [**Action for Children**](https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/): An organisation supporting children and young people by providing practical and emotional care and support.
* [**Anxiety UK:**](anxietyuk.org.uk)Providing advice and support for people living with anxiety.
* [**Barnardo’s:**](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/)Barnardo’s protects, supports and nurtures the UK’s most vulnerable children through helping families, supporting young people, working in fostering and adoption etc.
* [**Beat:**](beateatingdisorders.co.uk) An under 18s helpline, webchat and online support groups for people with eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia.
* [**Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM):**](thecalmzone.net)Providing listening services, information and support for anyone who needs to talk, including a web chat.
* [**Care Quality Commission:**](https://www.cqc.org.uk/)The independent regulator of health and social care in England. Here you can find information around the fundamental standards, what to expect from good care services and information on safeguarding people.
* [**Centrepoint:**](centrepoint.org.uk)Providing advice, housing and support for young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in England.
* [**Childline:**](https://www.childline.org.uk/)A free, private and confidential service where children and young people can talk about anything, online, on the phone, anytime.
* [**Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service:**](https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/about)CAFCASS advice family courts about what is safe for children and in their best interests.
* [**Family Lives:**](https://www.familylives.org.uk/)Family Lives provide targeted early intervention and crisis support to families who are struggling. The issues they support families with include family breakdown, challenging relationships and behaviour, debt, and emotional and mental wellbeing.
* [**FRANK:**](talktofrank.com)Providing confidential advice and information about drugs, their effects and the law.
* [**Galop:**](https://galop.org.uk/)Support for LGBT+ people who have experienced abuse and violence.
* [**Hope Again:**](hopeagain.org.uk)Support for young people when someone dies.
* [**Hub of Hope:**](hubofhope.co.uk)A national database of mental health charities and organisations from across Britain who offer mental health advice and support.
* [**Kids of Colour:**](https://kidsofcolour.com/)A platform for young people of colour to explore race, identity and culture.
* [**Kooth:**](kooth.com)A free, safe and anonymous online counselling service for young people.
* [**Me and My Mind:**](meandmymind.nhs.uk)Advice and support for young people struggling with unusual experiences, such as hearing voices.
* [**Mencap:**](https://www.mencap.org.uk/)An organisation dedicated to improving the lives of people with a learning disability and their families, and fighting alongside them for a better future.
* [**Mermaids:**](https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/)Helping gender-diverse children, young people and their families.
* [**MindEd:**](https://www.minded.org.uk/) MindEd provide e-learning to support health minds for children and young people.
* [**NHS Go:**](nhsgo.uk) NHS app with confidential health advice and support for 16–25-year-olds.
* [**NHS:**](https://www.nhs.uk/)Children and Young People’s Mental Health Services.
* [**No Panic:**](nopanic.org.uk/no-panic-youth-hub)A charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).
* [**NottAlone:**](https://nottalone.org.uk/?a=tp)A resource providing mental health support for young people, families and professionals.
* [**NSPCC:**](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/)The UK’s leading charity supporting the protection of all children and young people. You can reach out using the NSPCC Helpline if you’re worried about a child/young person.
* [**OCD Youth:**](ocdyouth.org)Youth support for young people with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).
* [**On My Mind:**](annafreud.org/on-my-mind)Information for young people to make informed choices about their mental health and wellbeing.
* [**Papyrus Hopeline UK:**](papyrus-uk.org)Confidential support for under-35s at risk of suicide and others who are concerned about them.
* [**Refuge:**](refuge.org.uk)Help and support for young people affected by domestic violence.
* [**Relate:**](relate.org.uk)Help and support with relationships, including counselling and telephone support.
* [**Rethink Mental Illness:**](rethink.org)Provides support and information for anyone affected by mental health problems, including local support groups.
* [**Safeline:**](safeline.org.uk)Helpline for adults and young people who have experienced sexual abuse and rape. It offers face-to-face services in Coventry and Warwickshire and another helpline specifically for male survivors.
* [**Samaritans:**](samaritans.org)Open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk.
* [**Scope:**](https://www.scope.org.uk/)Scope are a disability equality charity in England and Wales. They provide practical information and emotional support when it’s most needed, and campaign relentlessly to create a fairer society.
* [**Shelter:**](shelter.org.uk/youngpeople)A charity working for people in housing need by providing free, independent, expert housing advice.
* [**Switchboard:**](https://switchboard.lgbt/)An LGBT+ helpline.
* [**The Be You Project:**](https://thebeyouproject.co.uk/)Advice and support for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people and their families.
* [**The Mix:**](themix.org.uk)Support and advice for under 25s, including a helpline, crisis messenger service and webchat.
* [**The Proud Trust:**](https://www.theproudtrust.org/)Provides youth groups, peer support, mentoring programmes and the Proud Connections chat service for LGBT+ young people.
* [**Time to Change:**](time-to-change.org.uk)National campaign to end stigma and discrimination against people with mental health problems in England and Wales.
* [**TransUnite:**](https://www.transunite.co.uk/)A resource for people in the UK searching for support in the transgender community.
* [**Turning Point:**](https://www.turning-point.co.uk/)Provides services for people affected by drug and alcohol misuse, mental health problems, and those with a learning disability.
* [**UK Safe Internet Centre:**](https://saferinternet.org.uk/about)A partnership of three leading organisations: Childnet International, Internet Watch Foundation and SWGfL, with one mission- to make the internet a great and sage place for children and young people.
* [**Victim Support:**](victimsupport.org.uk)Provides emotional and practical support for people affected by crime and traumatic events.
* [**Voice Collective:**](voicecolleactive.co.uk)Support for people under 25 who hear voices, have visions or other unusual sensory experiences or beliefs.
* [**Women’s Aid:**](womensaid.org.uk)Information and support for women and children who have experienced domestic abuse, including support by live chat, a directory of local services and a forum.
* [**Young Minds:**](https://www.youngminds.org.uk/)A National Charity fighting for young people’s Mental Health.
* [**Young Stonewall:**](youngstonewall.org.uk)Information and support for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.
* [**Youth Access:**](https://www.youthaccess.org.uk/)Advice and counselling network for young people.

**CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)** are also a valuable resource. See below for regional links:

* [**Nottinghamshire CAMHS.**](https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs)
* [**Leicestershire CAMHS.**](https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/service/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/)
* [**Lincolnshire CAMHS.**](https://www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/lincolnshire/professionals/service-offer-and-referrals/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs)
* [**Northamptonshire CAMHS.**](https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/camhs/)
* [**Derbyshire CAMHS.**](https://www.derbyshirehealthcareft.nhs.uk/services/childrens-mental-health-services-camhs-derby-and-southern-derbyshire)

# **If you have further questions about Safeguarding that are not included in this document, please email James Blyth,** **james@themightycreatives.com** **Emily York,** **Emily.york@themightycreatives.com** **or Caroline Frankland,** **caroline@themightycreatives.com**