

KNOCK CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The Knock Child Contact Centre (KCCC) recognises that the contact process requires explicit confidentiality which all Child Contact Centre workers are obliged to observe. Therefore, we will ensure that:

1. Volunteers undertake not to discuss or disclose any details relating to a family outside of the KCCC.
2. Volunteers do not make verbal or written reports in any family proceedings.
3. The dates and times of a family's attendance will be made available to referring agencies upon request. No other information will be released unless
 - a) a child is felt to be at risk of harm either inside or outside of the KCCC.
 - b) anyone using the KCCC or a volunteer or staff member is at risk from physical violence.
4. A parent's details such as his/her address and telephone number will not be passed to any other person or agency without their permission. The only exceptions to this will be if
 - a) a child is felt to be at risk of harm; or
 - b) anyone using the KCCC or a volunteer or staff member is at risk of violence.
5. Unless there is an agreement which allows them to do otherwise, solicitors, social workers or any other individual or agency will not be allowed to carry out family assessment on KCCC premises.
6. All potential volunteers must have an Enhanced Access NI check performed. The results of this check will be made available to the Co-ordinator and the Chair of the Management Committee. The form will then be destroyed and no copies of it will be retained.
7. All information relating to families and volunteers will be kept in a secure place at all times.
8. All information relating to families and volunteers which has not been used for three years will be treated as confidential waste and disposed of as such.
9. KCCC users, referrers, volunteers and staff will all be aware of the existence of this policy and have access to it upon request.
10. This policy will be reviewed and updated as required.

Confidentiality issues will be overridden by the need to act for the welfare of the child.

Some basic rules for Child Contact Centre volunteers/staff with relation to confidentiality

- Volunteers should not disclose information about what they have seen or heard in the KCCC to outsiders.
- Volunteers should never give out their own telephone number or address to users of the KCCC.
- Volunteers should only talk in general terms about themselves and avoid disclosing personal or intimate information.
- Volunteers should not make arrangements to meet individuals or families outside of the KCCC.
- If a volunteer meets an individual or family away from the KCCC they should not introduce them to their family or friends.
- A volunteer should tell the KCCC Co-ordinator or another member of staff if somebody known to them comes to use the KCCC.
- Volunteers must not commit themselves or others to make verbal or written reports in any family proceedings.
- Unless a child is at risk of harm through further contact or there is a risk of physical violence only dates and times of attendance will be disclosed to referrers by the KCCC Co-ordinator.

If a volunteer feels a child has either suffered or may suffer any physical, sexual or emotional harm, the matter should be discussed with the KCCC Co-ordinator, or another volunteer, in advance of a possible referral to Social Services. If it is feasible, parents themselves should be advised to make such a referral and a check then made as to whether they have done so.