

KNOCK CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

DOMESTIC ABUSE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Knock Child Contact Centre (KCCC) believes that everyone has the right to live safely and without the fear of violence and cruelty. We recognise that domestic abuse is unacceptable and that it occurs throughout society, irrespective of class, income, race, culture or religion. Its effects are far-reaching and can impact on others, notably the children. We recognise that every child has the right to grow and develop in an environment free of domestic abuse, whether directly as a victim or witness of abuse in their own home or community.

The Management Committee of KCCC accepts that some families using their Centre will have experienced varying levels of domestic abuse. They also accept that the Centre needs to be organised and run in a way which allows these families, other Centre users and volunteers/staff to feel safe. In order to meet these requirements the Management Committee of KCCC will ensure that:

1. The Centre's intake documentation will ask one or more questions about domestic abuse;
2. Save in exceptional circumstances, information forms will be completed by the Co-ordinator prior to the family using the KCCC or as soon as possible thereafter;
3. Any information concerning domestic abuse or the abuse of drugs/alcohol will be treated seriously;
4. Use of the Centre will be denied to individuals or families where the Co-ordinator feels their presence is likely to present a threat to the wellbeing of other Centre users and volunteers/staff;
5. Once a family has been accepted the Co-ordinator will consider their needs and develop a means for them to be addressed. This will include:
 - Parents being invited to visit the Centre separately in advance of contact commencing;
 - Parents being given clear instructions about arrival and departure times and arrangements;
 - Where appropriate, resident parents being asked to explore the possibility of someone other than themselves bringing the child(ren) to the Centre;
 - The contact waiting room doors being kept closed and precautions taken to ensure parents do not visit the refreshment area or toilets at the same time;

- Asking one parent to wait at the end of contact until the other has left the Centre and the area immediately around it;
 - Ensuring that addresses, telephone numbers and other sensitive information always remain strictly confidential.
6. Any distress to children or adults brought about by bullying or pressure to disclose information will be dealt with promptly and firmly.
 7. If an individual or family's behaviour is threatening, causes distress or is disruptive they may be asked to leave and if necessary the Child Protection procedures will be followed.
 8. If an individual or family refuses to leave, the police will be called.

Volunteers

1. There will be a minimum of three volunteers on duty at all times and this number will increase depending upon the number of families using the Centre and rooms to be covered.
2. In accordance with the NACCC Code of Practice volunteers will be made aware "of the particular needs of each family attending the Centre".
3. All volunteers will receive training in the areas of domestic abuse, child protection and conflict management.
4. Volunteers will have immediate access to a telephone when the Centre is open.
5. The Centre will have an agreed procedure to follow in the event of an incident or an emergency.
6. The Centre will have a recognised and easily accessible system for offering support to volunteers who have become involved in stressful or violent incidents.

General

1. Referrers and families using the Centre will be made aware of its policy in relation to domestic abuse and conflict management.
2. Any individual or agency wishing to challenge how the Centre is implementing its policy in relation to domestic abuse and conflict management should be referred to the Centre's complaints procedure.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN CONFLICT ARISES

- Make sure all the children are safe and out of the way.
- Move those involved to a quiet area if possible.
- Never back them into a corner, either physically or psychologically.
- Remain polite and respectful and never lose your temper.
- Keep the tone of your voice down and lower than the person who is angry.