Safeguarding Training

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Spring 2019
Part 2
What will we be doing

• Creating safe spaces and relationships
• The volunteer relationship
• Important boundaries and good practice
• Recruiting, training and managing the team
Creating safer spaces
Creating a ‘safe space’

Creating a safe space means we keep people safe while they are with us.

A ‘safe space’ is one where we build relationships where individuals can learn, feel supported and build resilience.
Working safely

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage them, reporting to managers if there are any issues.

- Plan and organise the work and the workplace to minimise risks.

- Create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues or concerns.

- Foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially inappropriate or harmful behaviour can be challenged.

- Respect each vulnerable person’s boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel that there is a problem.
The volunteer relationship
The main challenge is the transition from volunteer to friend
Have a plan

Provide support and encouragement to the family for one year so that they can live securely and independently.

• Welcome to the UK
• Initial support – accessing finance, education and other services
• Integrating into the community
• Moving to independence

Involve the family in every step of the plan.
From volunteer to friend

• Volunteers offer a commitment of time, to fulfil a role.
• Once that role is complete, or no longer needed, the relationship can change, if management feel this is a safe thing to do.
• Be flexible and adaptable, but try to make the transition part of the wider plan.
• Transitions may be difficult for some volunteers, so a debrief and clear guidance is important
• Create a transition agreement and monitor
Be clear on what role volunteers will be doing

• Initial welcome
• Befriender
• English language tutor
• Advice and support team – benefits, housing and practical arrangements
• Childminding
• School support
• Engaging with community
Transition agreements and records

• Discussion with volunteer and family (separately) about the change in relationship and how to manage the transition.
• Monitor the transition – check in with volunteer and family about any challenges or worries.
• Remind everyone they can still report concerns if they have them.
• Keep a record of any decisions, communications or meetings.
Important boundaries and good practice
Empowerment and Integration

• Our purpose is to empower families to live independent lives
• Integration is a journey which we are helping families to take
• We are not in control of this journey, but are there to guide and support
• We can help them understand any barriers they are facing, and how could overcome them, and reflect on the progress they think they have made
• We should always be guided by the family on how and when they would like to be introduced to the wider community.

For more information: RESET Communities and Refugees
Principles of empowerment

1. **Empower** families to make their own choices
2. **Provide** families with enough information to make informed decisions
3. **Encourage** families to be independent

- Families make decisions for themselves and set their own goals they work towards
- We work in partnership with families – they are not dependent on us
- Sometimes, families will make decisions you disagree with and sometimes they will make mistakes
- Some families may need more encouragement than others
Importance of boundaries for volunteers

During the first phase of resettlement boundaries define the ‘professional’ role that volunteers play.

• Families are vulnerable, and volunteers are in a position of power.
• Boundaries set clear expectations on what the relationship is and is not, keeping everyone safe.
• Good boundary setting at the beginning helps ensure healthy and sustainable relationships.
• If we are not consistent with our boundaries, it can become confusing for the family.
Managing expectations

• Families often arrive with high expectations about life in the UK and the opportunities it presents. They may not be prepared for, or aware of, all the challenges that they may face.

• Volunteers may need help understanding what can realistically be achieved, and in what timescale.

• Families may also have high expectations of the support that they can expect to receive from the sponsor group and, in some cases, this could be unrealistic.
Brief the family

• Families will have an induction, but there is a lot of information they may not remember.

• Each volunteer should remind the family what their role is when they meet.

• Don’t be afraid to clarify boundaries if the family ask you to do something which is not your role.

• When the role changes, help families understand what has changed, why and what that means.

• Make sure families know how to raise any concerns they may have about volunteers.
Safer practice – the first few months
Planned activities with the family

All activities and meetings with the family should be planned and agreed in advance.

• Where possible, there should always be two people present.
• If working alone, managers should be aware before it occurs, so the appropriate risk assessments are in place.
• Where possible try to arrange activities in public places so families can get out into the community.
• Keep meetings in family homes to a minimum.
• Safer practice means volunteers should never visit a family home alone or unannounced.
• Volunteers should only welcome families into their homes as part of a pre-arrange, authorised activity.
Paying for things and gifts

You need to be realistic about what support can be provided to the family, both with the family and with volunteers. Where possible have a central fund where the family can access financial help if needed.

• Any gifts given to the family should be agreed with your manager in advance.
• Volunteers should not give personal money to the family.
• Talk to the family about what’s acceptable as a gift, and what they would normally expect to do. Explain what you will accept and why. Many families will want to show their gratitude, but it can be costly – in time and money.
Communication

All communications should take place within clear and explicit boundaries, whether face to face, written, on the telephone or online.

• Talk to families about how they would normally communicate, and what your expectations are.
• Safe practice is to have a group phone that can be used for communication.
• Key volunteers should be the main contact points, and you should make it clear when the phone will be monitored – you need to have boundaries too.
• Share emergency numbers with families so they know where to get help when they need it.
• Volunteers should not share personal number without first agreeing with managers.
Social media

Consider personal and professional boundaries when engaging with families online.

• Do not use personal social media/instant messaging accounts to communicate with families.

• Set up ‘group’ social networking/instant messaging accounts that managers can also view to monitor and review the conversations.

• Do not use outside of ‘working hours’.

• Do not have private contact with the family.
Photographs and videos

It may be appropriate on occasion to record photographic and video images as part of a group activity.

• only record images when it is agreed and understood that this will be done, and you have the consent of everyone involved
• report any concern about inappropriate or intrusive photographs being taken or subsequently found.
• do not post images on your private social media accounts
Giving advice

Unless its part of your role, volunteers should signpost families to the organisations best placed to give them professional advice.

• It's ok to share your knowledge about the local community or family life in the UK.
• It's not OK to give families professional advice outside of your knowledge.
Confidentiality

• Treat confidential information with due care and respect, do not share it casually in conversation with others.

• Do not share confidential information about the family with anyone outside of the group.

• Make clear at the beginning of any activity or conversation, the limits to confidentiality, and explain what and how information will or could be shared and why.
Volunteer self awareness

Setting boundaries is difficult!

• Pay attention to situations where you lose energy, feel a knot in your stomach or get upset.
• Set appropriate boundaries with time – and stick to them.
• Do not feel pressurised into spending more time than you can afford.
• If you have any worries or feel overwhelmed, talk to your manager.
Anything else?
Recruiting, training and managing the team
Volunteer recruitment and agreement

• Before you start recruiting people, think about what they need to do
• Create a volunteer role description. It can be simple, but it should outline what they are expected to do, and what experience or skills they need.
• Have a recruitment process which people apply for, and include an interview. This could be a simple conversation, but you need to check their motivations and explore the challenges they will encounter.
• If anyone will be working with children or spending a significant amount of time in family homes, consider getting a Criminal Record Check.
Training

• Decide what training people need to fulfil their responsibilities.
• It’s a good idea to include training that helps you understand the refugee experience.
• Safeguarding training should include identifying and responding to concerns, but also volunteer safety and wellbeing.
• Rather than formal training, consider running teambuilding sessions, where you can identify some of the challenges and think about how you will respond to them.

External training:

RESET Communities and Refugees
Managing the team

• Even though you have planned – when your family arrives, it probably won’t go according to plan!

• Arrange regularly opportunities as a team, to talk about what’s going well and any concerns. This is a great way to support volunteer’s mental wellbeing.

• It’s good practice to debrief after any meeting with the family. Check in with someone else and record any key discussions.

• If you are worried you may have ‘crossed a line’ with regard to boundaries in personal relationships, it’s important to tell someone.

• Be aware of the potential for misunderstanding or conflicts of interest – there will be many!
What have you covered

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• The volunteer relationship
• Important boundaries and good practice
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For any further help or support:
communitysponsorship@citizensuk.org