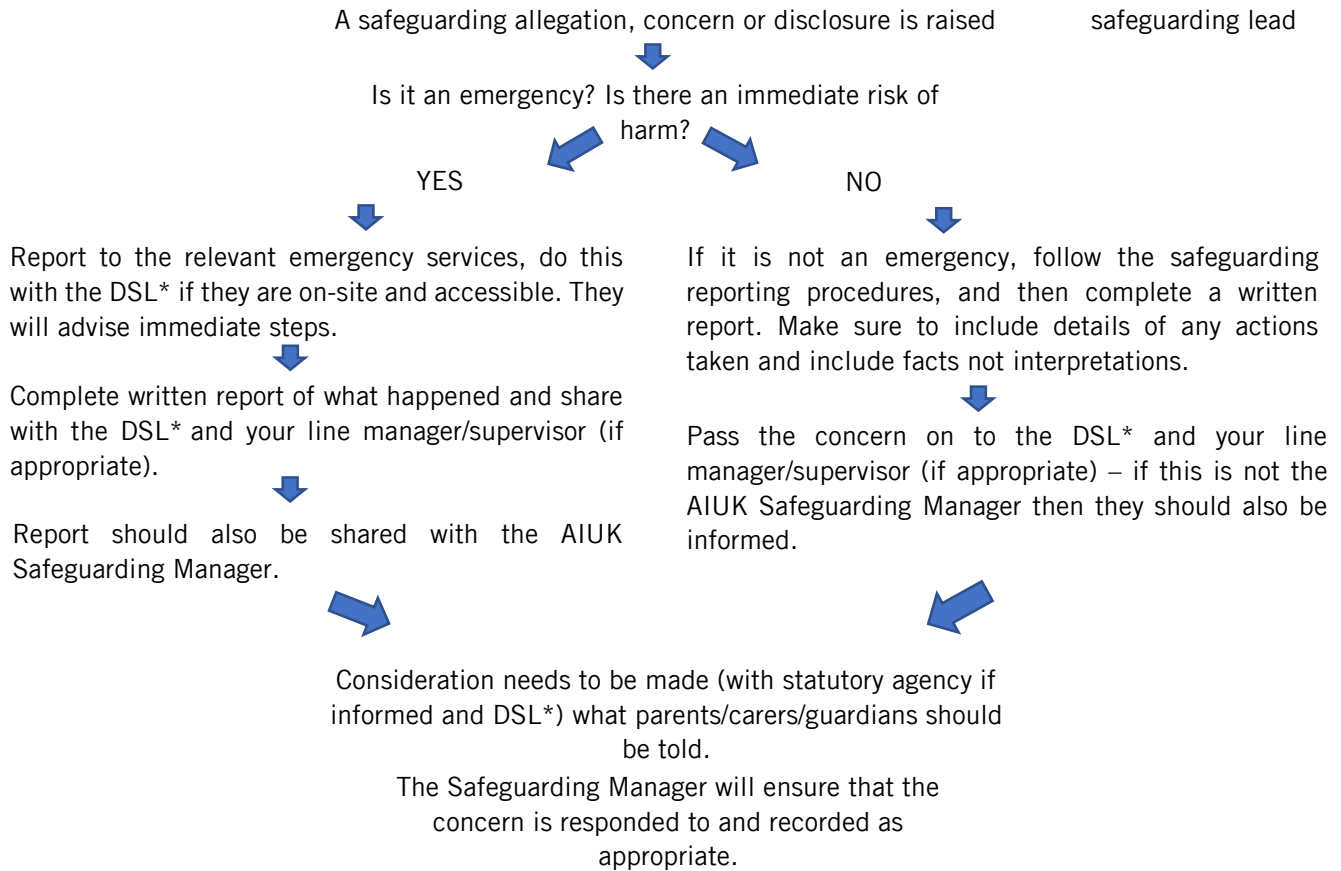


# Amnesty International UK (AIUK) Safeguarding Procedures

**REVISION** February 2024  
**DISTRIBUTION** All Colleagues & Activists  
**OWNER** Safeguarding

## Summary of safeguarding procedures

\*DSL = designated safeguarding lead



*If you are unsure if it is a safeguarding concern, contact the safeguarding manager anyway and you can talk it through.*

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## **1. Purpose and aim:**

- 1.1 AIUK aims to be an inclusive organisation where all individuals can join with our work to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness, freedom, and truth are denied. Ensuring AIUK is a safe place for everyone, and has clear procedures in how to respond to abuse and harm, is an integral part to making sure all people can safely engage. We want to centre safety and include everyone, rather than creating barriers to under 18 activists and adults-at-risks participation in AIUK's work on human rights. The aim of this procedure is to put in place the safeguarding policy and ensure that we can safely include adults-at-risk and activists under 18 in our work.
- 1.2 This procedure provides clear direction to staff, volunteers, and activists at AIUK on what to do if they have concerns that an adult or an under 18 is at risk of harm.
- 1.3 At AIUK we recognise that a lot of safeguarding practices are not child-affirming, or child-centred and at times are based on prejudices. We therefore aim to consider prejudice in decision making and avoid adultism where possible. Adultism is where adults make most of the decisions about children's lives because it's assumed that children can't, this is not the same as treating them as adults, but treating their opinions and needs as equally valid as the opinions and needs of adults.
- 1.4 This procedure applies to
  - AIUK Staff
  - AIUK Section and Charitable Trust trustees/board members
  - AIUK Volunteers – those who have been recruited to work as volunteers in AIUK offices and shops.
  - AIUK Activists - anyone who carries out unpaid activity on behalf of AIUK, including fundraising, campaigning, training, teaching in schools, or providing support to other activists.
  - Staff and representatives of other agencies and any other individual guests of AIUK who will participate in activities that involves them having contact with individuals under 18 or adults at risk, unless it has been agreed expressly that the partner organisation may enforce its own safeguarding or protection policy. The policy should be shared with them when there is an agreement made to work together.

## **2. What is Safeguarding and what are your responsibilities?**

- 2.1 Safeguarding is the actions we at AIUK take to...

- a. promote the welfare of,
- b. engage safely with,
- c. and do everything we can to prevent abuse occurring to

children, young people, adults-at-risk, and anyone who engages with AIUK.

## 2.2 Safeguarding means:

- protecting adults-at-risk and children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

2.3 Individuals under 18 and adults-at-risk may experience abuse regardless of their age, gender, religion or other beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural background, ability, or any other defining characteristic.

2.4 AIUK recognises that some people are particularly vulnerable because of the intersections of these minoritised identities and characteristics, as well as the impacts of discrimination, various lived experiences, levels of dependency, communication needs or other issues that affect how someone navigates any given space. We also recognise that some safeguarding practices are inherently prejudiced, and we commit to considering these in our processes.

2.5 This is particularly important to consider when assessing how best to respond to a concern or how you create a safe environment for that person to disclose their concern. In particular, people with disabilities or identifying as part of the LGBTQ+ community may find it harder to speak out about concerns due to community pressures, taboos, or past experiences of disbelief or neglect. People of colour may also be more at risk of feeling unsafe in disclosing concerns due to stereotypes, biases, and varying expectations of behaviour. For more information about addressing systemic discrimination and unconscious biases, and ensuring we are equitable in safeguarding all those involved in AIUK, you can refer to the AIUK's [IDEA policy](#).

2.6 Whether you are paid to or are voluntarily working with individuals under 18 or encountering adults-at-risk, you have a safeguarding responsibility to be an active and protective individual. You must report any safeguarding allegation, concern, or disclosure within 24 hours of finding out about it, or sooner if it is an emergency. If you are not sure about the concern, report it anyway.

- 2.7 It is important that if you are in a role with a position of trust, that you understand how to respond to a safeguarding concern, including what to say and not say, and how to behave. You can find out more information about this below, but also through the safeguarding training all staff, trustees/board members and lead activities should have completed, and through looking at “Best Safeguarding practices when engaging with individuals under 18”

### **3. What to do and how to report?**

- 3.1 Before any event, project or activity, a risk assessment should be completed which includes any safeguarding risk and what the escalation process is for if/when a safeguarding concern is raised. This can always be discussed with the Safeguarding Manager in advance.
- 3.2 It is important to be particularly aware that when working with under 18 activists with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) their additional needs may make them more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to speak out if something is not right.

### **3.3 Responding to a concern about a child**

- 3.4 The [NSPCC gives advice](#) on what to say to a child who has disclosed a concern and how to respond;
- a. **Listen carefully to what they are saying**  
Be patient and focus on what you are being told. Try not to express your own views and feelings. If you appear shocked or as if you do not believe them, it could make them stop talking and take back what they have said.
  - b. **Give them the tools to talk**  
If they are struggling to talk to you, show them [Childline's letter builder tool](#). It uses simple prompts to help them share what is happening and how they are feeling.
  - c. **Let them know they have done the right thing by telling you**  
Reassurance can make a big impact. If they have kept the abuse a secret, it can have a big impact knowing they have shared what has happened.
  - d. **Tell them it is not their fault**  
Abuse is never a child's fault. It is important they hear, and know, this.
  - e. **Say you will take them seriously**  
They may have kept the abuse secret because they were scared, they would not be believed. Make sure they know they can trust you and you will listen and support them.
  - f. **Do not confront the alleged abuser**  
Confronting the alleged abuser could make the situation worse for the child.

g. **Explain what you will do next**

For younger under 18s, explain you are going to speak to someone who will be able to help. For older under 18s, explain you will need to report the abuse to someone who can help. Never offer confidentiality or make promises you cannot keep, such as their parents will not find out, but always be open and honest about next steps, and explain rationale.

h. **Report what the child has told you as soon as possible**

Report as soon after you have been told about the abuse so the details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly. It can be helpful to take notes as soon after you have spoken to the child. Try to keep these as accurate as possible and make sure you share them with the appropriate individuals and keep them confidential.

- 3.5 If the disclosure is made in a school setting, the school teacher, or the schools DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) should take responsibility and follow their procedures, however as a representative of AIUK, you should still complete a written report and share it with the AIUK Safeguarding Manager so we can follow our procedures and follow up as needed.

### **3.6 What counts as an emergency and if there is immediate risk of danger what to do...**

- 3.7 If you are worried the child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, and they are at an event/activity with you, try to not let them leave and call the police for further guidance on next steps.

- 3.8 *Immediate danger* means that you are worried that if they were to return to the care of the individual causing the harm, there is a high-risk further harm will occur immediately. If you are unsure if the danger is immediate, it is best to call the police and/or children social care and consult with the experts.

- 3.9 Other actions to consider are;

- If the under 18 activist is elsewhere and you have been informed about risk of harm, contact the police, and explain the situation to them.
- If the under 18 activist needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider.
- If the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the under 18 activist.
- Contact the designated safeguarding lead to let them know what is happening, if it is out of hours, you can send an email, or if you wish to have further guidance you can contact the [NSPCC helpline](#) and update the AIUK Safeguarding Manager after.

- If you are working in a school, all actions should be carried out with their designated safeguarding lead.
- Always consider your own welfare and do not put yourself in danger when managing an emergency.
- It may be that you are at event/activity where you are also in charge of other under 18s. You should ensure that another adult is present or brought in to supervise the others whilst you manage the concern and try not to be left alone with an individual under 18 activist but be in a space where others can see you.

3.10 Once any immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, make sure to inform the relevant designated safeguarding lead, and if this is not the AIUK Safeguarding Manager, they need to be informed.

3.11 *If you are unsure what to do and you cannot contact the AIUK Safeguarding Manager for advice, you can call the police, [contact the NSPCC](#) or the relevant local authority's social services for advice and guidance.*

### **3.12 Informing parents/carers**

3.13 A decision will need to be made in conjunction with your line manager and/or the designated safeguarding lead, about who should inform the under 18 activist's family and when they should be informed.

3.14 If you have involved the police, health services or children's social care, they should be part of this decision.

3.15 Consider the welfare of the under 18 activist in your decision making as the highest priority, but you must also be aware that if there is no immediate risk of harm, parents/carers have the right to know, and children's social care may ask that they are informed prior to any referral being made.

3.16 We also want to make sure we are centring the under 18 in any decision about telling parents/carers and make decisions based on their best interests. This means being child-affirming and consulting them about any decision. You may not be able to abide by their wishes, but they deserve to be consulted and have any decision explained to them.

### **3.17 Reporting a concern about an adult**

3.18 It is important to recognise that those with care and support needs, such as older people or people with disabilities, are more likely to be abused or neglected. And those with communication difficulties are even more vulnerable because they may

not be able to alert others. It is therefore important when working with adults to be mindful of these risks and respond appropriately if concerns arise.

- 3.19 If you are concerned about the wellbeing or safety of an adult-at-risk, you should
- Talk to that individual. You should give them time to explain and should always ask for consent from an adult before sharing your concerns with others. However, if there is an emergency or life-threatening situation, sharing of relevant information with the relevant emergency services may be warranted without consent.
    - Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) gives more details about this [here](#).
  - Once consent is sought or emergency action is taken, a written report should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead/ AIUK Safeguarding Manager to ensure follow-up actions are taken and the concern is recorded appropriately.
  - With the consent of the adult, the Safeguarding Manager may make a referral to the relevant adult services or provide some further suggestions of places of support for the adult.
- 3.20 In some cases, you may be concerned about an adult you are working with who is not considered an 'adult-at-risk'. This could be concerns about their wellbeing, mental health or about their home situation, for example, concerns about domestic abuse. In these cases, if a disclosure has been directly made to you, and you feel able to have a conversation about it, it is good to give the individual time to talk before asking for their consent to contact their line manager and/or the AIUK Safeguarding Manager. If you are concerned about someone, but they have not said anything, then pass it on to your line manager or contact the Safeguarding Manager to talk it through and consider the best next steps. Remember to always consider your own wellbeing when managing concerns about someone else and don't take on more than you feel able to handle.
- 3.21 The Safeguarding Manager may be able to provide some helpful support and advice for you to pass on to them, or with their consent contact them to discuss the concern and next steps together. There is also a page on supporting someone with their mental health, which you can access, and support may be able to be provided for staff by AIUK's mental health first aiders.
- 3.22 It is also important to recognise the distinction between those referred to as 'adults-at-risk' within this document and the work that AIUK does with 'individuals-at-risk' and beneficiaries. These individuals that AIUK work with, will be supported by the teams and practices specifically in place. There may be safeguarding concerns that arise when working with them and the Safeguarding Manager should be consulted as and when needed.

### **3.23 Reporting a concern about an adult who poses a risk**

3.24 If you have a concern about an adult who is working with individuals under 18s or adults at risk, you need to inform the appropriate designate safeguarding lead and if that is not the AIUK's Safeguarding Manager, they also need to be informed. They will decide if immediate action is needed and where necessary consult with the relevant statutory agencies, such as the police or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

### **3.25 Keeping a record of your concerns and next steps**

3.26 Use the [safeguarding incident reporting form](#) to record the concern and how it is dealt with. The relevant sections of the form should be completed and signed. It may be used to forward information to the relevant statutory agencies if a referral to them is needed.

3.27 The form should be signed and dated by all those involved in its completion and the AIUK Safeguarding Manager will keep these in line with data protection regulations. Once the Safeguarding Manager confirms receipt of the information, the reporter should make sure that they no longer hold the information about the concern.

3.28 Once the Safeguarding Manager is informed of a concern, they will ensure that appropriate follow up actions take place. This could include reporting on to other agencies (e.g., the police, LADO, social services), and/or escalating an incident within AIUK. The Safeguarding manager will inform the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary of any serious incident, and they will be responsible for ensuring that serious incidents are reported to the designated safeguarding lead on the Section and Trust boards and together with the Chair of the Trust Board ensuring that Board approves the content of information being reported to the Charity Commission in line with their [requirements](#).

## **4. Ways that abuse or harm might be brought to your attention**

- A under 18 activist or adult-at-risk might make a direct disclosure about themselves.
- A under 18 activist or adult might make a direct disclosure about another under 18 activist or adult at risk.
- A under 18 activist or adult might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure.
- A member of staff or volunteer might be concerned about a under 18 activist's appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent, carer or Amnesty staff member or volunteer towards a under 18 activist.



- A parent might offer information about a under 18 activist that is worrying but not a direct disclosure.
- A low-level concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, such as being over-friendly with a child, or being alone with a under 18 activist in a secluded area or behind a closed door might be reported.
- A member of staff or volunteer might become aware of risk of harm to a under 18 activist during their engagement with AIUK.
- A disclosure may be made about something concerning which happened in the past.
- A concern may be raised about a significant relationship someone in a position of trust has with someone who is involved in an investigation which relates to an under 18 activist or adult safeguarding allegation, concern, or disclosure.

## 5. Definitions:

- 5.1 Child abuse** is significant harm caused to any child (including third party abuse) by neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional damage.
- 5.2 Neglect** is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- 5.3 Physical abuse** is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.
- 5.4 Sexual abuse** is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child, it is when they are forced or tricked into sexual activity. This can happen in person or online.
- 5.5 Emotional abuse** is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore a child.
- 5.6 Immediate risk of harm:**

If someone is at an immediate risk of harm, contact the emergency services before you contact the designated safeguarding lead:

Someone would be at an immediate risk of harm if, for example:

- They have said they intend to make a suicide attempt immediately.
- They are about to go to the place where the alleged abuse or harm happens, like their home.
- They have a life-threatening physical or psychological injury or condition.

- A person who causes them harm is coming to collect them at the end of the activity/event.

If the risk of harm is not immediate, you must still report the concern to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **5.7 Position of trust:**

'Position of trust' is a legal term defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. In section 22 it is explained as an adult "caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge" of a child under the age of 18.

### **5.8 Adult-at-risk:**

An adult-at-risk is defined by the Care Act 2014 as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves.

An adult-at-risk is different to what AIUK refers to as an 'individual-at-risk.'

## **6. Signs and symptoms of abuse to be aware of:**

- 6.1 These signs do not necessarily mean that an individual is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but are good to be aware of and report to the Safeguarding Manager if you are concerned. For more information about the signs of abuse you can look at the [NSPCC](#), [Ann Craft Trust](#), or [SCIE](#) .

It is also important to be mindful of unconscious bias and its influence on your assessment of a situation. For more information on how prejudice can influence assessment of safeguarding risk, read '[Radical Safeguarding for Practitioners](#)'.

### **6.2 Some signs of physical abuse for CYP**

- Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- Bite marks
- Anti-social behaviour
- Problems in school
- Fear of adults
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Self-destructive or suicidal behaviour
- Depression or poor self-image

### **6.3 Some signs of physical abuse in adults**

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps
- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP

### **6.4 Some signs of emotional abuse in CYP**

- Apathy
- Depression
- Hostility
- Lack of concentration
- Eating disorders

### **6.5 Some signs of psychological or emotional abuse in adults**

- Enforced social isolation
- Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance
- Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs
- Preventing the expression of choice and opinion
- Failure to respect privacy
- Preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation, or activities
- Intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse
- Addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Cyber bullying

### **6.6 Some signs of sexual abuse in CYP**

- Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts

- Seductiveness
- Avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or bodies
- Nightmares and bed wetting
- Drastic changes in appetite
- Over compliance or excessive aggression
- Fear of a particular person or family member
- Withdrawal, secretiveness, or depression
- Suicidal behaviour
- Eating disorders
- Self-injury

### **6.7 Some signs of sexual abuse in adults**

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- The uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude
- Self-harming
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance
- Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships
- Fear of receiving help with personal care
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

### **6.8 Some signs of neglect in CYP:**

- Unsuitable clothing for weather
- Being dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Lack of supervision

### **6.9 Some signs of neglect in adults:**

- Poor environment – dirty or unhygienic
- Poor physical condition and/or personal hygiene
- Pressure sores or ulcers
- Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- Untreated injuries and medical problems
- Inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care organisations

- Accumulation of untaken medication
- Uncharacteristic failure to engage in social interaction
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing

## **7. What happens when a concern is reported?**

- 7.1 Once a concern is reported to the Safeguarding Manager, you should get a response confirming they have received the report with 5 working days.
- 7.2 Once the report is received the manager will review the concern and assess the risk, before deciding on the next steps that need to be taken. These steps may include escalation to statutory agencies such as the police, children social care or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Alternatively, it may require more local support being offered and/or other actions needing to be taken which will be decided by the Safeguarding Manager and relevant managers.
- 7.3 Depending on the concern, you may not be given specific details about the outcome of what happens but should receive a response to your report explaining next steps which will be taken.

## **8. Useful contact details**

### **8.1 AIUK Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

AIUK Safeguarding Manager: Charis Belcher

Email: [safeguarding@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@amnesty.org.uk)

Phone: 07879 123938 (only available during managers work hours)

### **8.2 AIUK People & Culture Director:**

Director of People & Culture team: David Prince

### **8.3 NSPCC Helpline:** 0800 800 5000 or [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **8.4 ChildLine:** 0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222) or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **8.5 Out of hours:** If you have an event which is happening out of core working hours, a risk assessment for the event/activity should have been put together and have considered who a concern should be escalated to. However, in general if you are seriously concerned about immediate risk of harm, concerns should be escalated to the police or the relevant children services Emergency Duty Team.

## **9. Related policies, procedures, processes forms, guidelines, and other resources:**

9.1 This policy is supported by the following policies and process, to enable our staff to implement this policy.

### **9.2 Policies**

- Safeguarding Policy
- Criminal Record Check Policy
- Lone working policy
- Privacy notice

### **9.3 Procedures/Guidelines**

- Procedure under 18's taking on Lead Activist Role
- Staff, Board and Activist Codes of Conduct's
- Best Safeguarding Practice when engaging with under 18s
- AIUK Shops Operational Handbook
- AIUK Social Media guidelines
- Mental health support guidance
- Digital Safeguarding Guidance
- Event guidance
- Quick safeguarding guide
- Parent/carer consent guidance
- Safeguarding lead description
- Communicating with under 18s guidance

### **9.4 Templates**

- Risk assessment template
- Reporting concerns form
- Parental consent form