



PRECIOUS MOMENTS AND HEALTH LTD

Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy

Organisation

Precious Moments and Health Ltd is a private limited company providing Mentoring, Counselling and Training services to adults, adolescence and children. It also offers Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Play Therapy to individuals as well as groups.

Introduction to the safeguarding children/child protection policy

Although Precious Moments and Health Ltd is privately run, it encompasses multi agency working and will work with other counselling, mentoring and training organisations. Its child protection policy therefore takes account of its external as well as its in-house work. Its policy is outlined below. This is in the process of ongoing development, and changes will be notified on the website www.preciousmomentsandhealthltd. A review of the policy will be made every 3 years.

NOTE: The terms 'safeguarding children' and 'child protection' are used interchangeably throughout this document to reflect the growing trend towards the phasing out of 'child protection' and the 'phasing in of safeguarding children.'

Standard 1: Policy

This policy is based on the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of children, under the protection of children (up to age 18) from abuse and exploitation is paramount.

Precious Moments and Health Ltd is deeply committed to protecting children it works with, from all forms of abuse, including sexual, physical and emotional abuse. It will also seek wherever possible to protect children from neglect, abandonment and exploitation. Children need safeguarding where they live (family or care home) as well as any dangers posed in school, in the playground or elsewhere outside.

Precious Moments and Health Ltd recognises that when child abuse is suspected, children often experience unintentional abuse by being interviewed by social services or the police, or even separated from family members or placed in care. It will seek wherever possible to put the child's needs first in such situations by being involved as much as possible, working with the relevant statutory organisations.

Precious Moments and Health Ltd will seek to establish a good working relationship with social services children's teams and police child protection departments.

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Standard 2: Procedures and systems

Where abuse is suspected of or reported by a child in Precious Moments and Health Limited's services, the person with the concern will in the first instance discuss the matter with the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer Mauva Johnson-Jones. If the child is at immediate risk the officer will make a direct call to the children's team of the social services department seeking to work with them on a professional-to-professional basis. In cases where there is no immediate risk of harm to the child, the officer may call a case conference or seek further specialist advice. The case conference would consist of all those involved in the welfare of the child. This may include parents, teachers, social workers, counsellors and the relevant mentor. Further specialist advice may be sought from a specialist social work agency such as CCPAS (telephone 0845 120 4550).

Where it is clear that the matter must be reported, the officer will contact the children's team and seek to work with them on a professional-to-professional basis. If it is likely that a crime has been committed the police will be informed so that they can conduct an investigation. This will uphold the law and hopefully prevent further abuse.

All discussion of a child considered at risk will be written down with time and date and notes in a secure, locked cabinet. Confidentiality to protect a child's rights will be respected unless the child's safety is at risk. Everyone involved in discussion about a suspected incident of child abuse will agree to these levels of confidentiality.

Precious Moments and Health Ltd will aim to provide appropriate mentoring/counselling for the child and for others concerned. If the child is expected later to be called a witness, the mentoring/counselling will be conducted within the guidelines of the Crown Prosecution Service on provision of therapy for child witnesses (www.cps.gov.uk/publications/prosecution/therapychild.html), where therapy avoids direct discussion of details of the abuse until after the case has been heard in court.

Complaints about people working for or associated with Precious Moments and Health Ltd should be addressed to the designated child protection officer Mauva Johnson-Jones (mobile telephone 07956 874491). Any complaints regarding counselling should follow the BACP (British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy) complaints procedure on their website <http://www.bacp.co.uk/crs/complaints.php>.



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Standard 3: Prevention

Precious Moments and Health Ltd requires anyone wanting to work for them in any capacity to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. (See <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>). This was formerly known as Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) enhanced disclosure. If the check shows convictions that are likely to put children at risk, Precious Moments and Health Ltd reserves the right to refuse the services of the person, whether the services are voluntary or not. In addition, each person will need to provide at least two written character references about them from trustworthy people.

If abuse is later suspected by an associate, the person concerned will be suspended while a full investigation is conducted by Precious Moments and Health Ltd, the local social services and/or the police. If the abuse is confirmed, the person will be removed from Precious Moments and Health Ltd and recommended to undergo intensive therapy. He/she will be deemed a danger to children and steps may be taken to warn other groups of the person's danger to children.

Any photographs of children used by Precious Moments and Health Ltd on websites or in emails will seek not to give the name, identity or location of the child or provide other information that could be used abusively in any way. Where possible, permission from the parent/carer of the child concerned will be obtained in advance of the use of the photograph. Part of this permission is to inform the parent/carer exactly how the picture will be used, including any captions or digital change proposed.

Standard 4: Codes of practice and behaviour

Precious Moments and Health Limited's services are undertaken in a way that ensures safe, ethical practice. In many cases when undertaking therapy with a child, the person (such as a parent or translator) is present in the room or outside the room. This could be a parent/carer waiting for the child or within a school environment, there would be an allocated person responsible for ensuring the child is brought and returned to their classroom. If that person is aware that therapy is going on, he or she can attend to any difficulties and be available in case of problems.

Almost all therapy takes place in a room with the door shut. This is standard practice for most therapists. There are instances however, when leaving the door slightly ajar can be therapeutically justified, even if it means compromising confidentiality by risking someone overhearing what is happening. The child with extreme anxiety or claustrophobia is a case in point. So too is the child who has been subjected to sexual abuse behind a closed door, such as a bedroom or a bathroom. In these instances, not only does the client feel safe but the therapist can feel less vulnerable.

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Child clients are generally expected to stay in the room throughout the session. There are a few exceptions to this rule. These include children who have experienced being locked in a bedroom as punishment and those who have not been allowed out of a room until they have engaged in sexual activity with an abuser. In these rare instances the therapist gives the child permission to leave the room as often as she/he needs to.

On very rare occasions, Precious Moments and Health Limited's therapists may sometimes video or tape record the session, with the agreement of the parent/carer and the child concerned. The video tape is for note-taking and training and is kept in a locked cabinet. It is available for loan to the parent/carer only with the clear agreement of the child and the therapist.

In relation to mentoring, the parent/carer would give authority for the child or young person to go out with their mentor and return by a certain time. All involved would have contact numbers in case of emergencies or any other concerns. Prior to a mentor taking a child or young person out, a risk assessment would be provided by the Parent/Carer, Social Services or other relevant organisation stating the type of risk i.e. low, medium or high. If the risk is too high the mentoring request can be refused to avoid any safeguarding issues.

Since most issues with children impact on and are affected by the system (family, school etc.), it is sometimes appropriate to involve the parent/carer or brother and sister in some or all of these sessions. Having another person present, providing it is therapeutically justified, is a major contribution towards safe and ethical practice. It is especially important with the child who is either flirtatious or is known to be acting out sexually.

In its training and supervision work, Precious Moments and Health Ltd will help mentors, counsellors and trainees to identify any potential Safeguarding /Child Protection issues in their work and follow the companies safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.

Children often need physical contact. With this in mind Precious Moments and Health Ltd has developed a Safe Touch policy when counselling & mentoring children and young people:

1 Always have other people in sight

Avoid being on your own with a child of any age.

2 Ensure that the child wants the physical contact you are offering

Where possible make eye contact with the child and indicate with gestures or verbally what you propose, waiting for the child's clear agreement. This is whether you are offering a hug, touching a shoulder, holding a hand, tickling or play fighting. If you believe a child may have been abused, it is important to avoid hugging, tickling and play fighting until they have learned the difference between 'good' and 'bad' touching.



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3 Touch in appropriate areas only

Consciously avoid touching the child in areas of the body that would be covered by a swimming costume. The only exceptions are when changing or washing a baby or a very small child or helping a disabled child in the toilet or washing themselves. Touching the leg above the knee is generally not acceptable.

4 Be cautious about having a child on your lap

Men are strongly advised to avoid children sitting on their laps. In exceptional circumstances they may let a small child sit on the knee end of their lap.

5 Avoid face-to-face hugging of a girl who has begun to develop

This is especially important with men. Instead of a face-to-face hug, try an on the shoulder 'sideways hug.' This satisfies the older girl's need for closeness and avoids inappropriate physical contact.

Special precautions are required when working with children who have a disability because of the increased risk of physical abuse or sexual exploitation. Only in very exceptional circumstances will an associate of Precious Moments and Health Ltd be alone with a disabled child. Helping the child change clothes or to go to the toilet must always be done with the door open and, if at all possible, in the presence of another adult.

Precious Moments and Health Limited's child-child policy includes addressing any public or age – inappropriate sexualised behaviour with another child, whether or not the two children are of the same age. While such behaviour may provide useful therapeutic clues to the child's possible problematic background, it is essential that such behaviour is addressed to avoid any abuse arising as a result.

Children will be encouraged strongly to respect each other at all times. This includes avoiding any physical or verbal aggression towards another child because of the child's own anger problems.

Standard 5: Implementation in different cultural contexts

Precious Moments and Health Ltd works mainly in the UK. Its child protection policy applies in all its work, taking account of the different cultures it works with. Aspects of the child protection policy may need to be adjusted when taking account of different cultures.



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Standard 6: Equality

Precious Moments and Health Ltd is deeply committed to equality for children, adolescence and adults regardless of culture, language, religious adherence, age, gender, level of disability, socio-economic group or sexual preference. At all times, it promotes equality and protection for children, adolescence and adults.

Standard 7: Communication systems

Precious Moments and Health Ltd safeguarding children/Child Protection policy is available upon request.

Standard 8: Education and training

Precious Moments and Health Ltd provides safeguarding and child protection training for all of its contractors including counsellors and mentors.

Standard 9: Access to advice and support

Precious Moments and Health Ltd is aware of the importance for children who have been or are being abused to have a way of getting help. It favours the model exemplified by ChildLine, where the child can speak on the telephone in confidence with a trained counsellor about what is concerning her or him (telephone 0800 1111). It also favours local initiatives where children who have been abused can seek advice and support in person, on line or by telephone.

Standard 10: Implementation and monitoring

Precious Moments and Health Ltd as a small organisation is able to monitor any incidents of noncompliance with its child protection policy and to take appropriate action quickly. Any such incidents will start with a strategy meeting to propose a way forward.

In the case of a complaint being made about a staff member, contractor or associate, Precious Moments and Health Limited's own supervision network will be involved as quickly as possible. This will also include its UK clinical supervisor for counselling and mentoring work, the police and /or social services if appropriate.

Standard 11: Working with partners

Precious Moments and Health Ltd seeks to work cooperatively with other organisations. Such partnerships will include Precious Moments and Health Ltd providing counselling and mentoring services to Social Services, NHS and other organisations.



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When working with children or training with other organisations, Precious Moments and Health Ltd expects such partnership organisations to have in place, or be in the process of developing, their own safeguarding children/child protection policy and procedures. Such policy and procedures need to be consistent with standards outlined in this document.

Child protection issues that arise as a result of working with partners will be referred back to the partner organisation by Precious Moments and Health Ltd for appropriate action.

Mauva Johnson-Jones

Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer

August 2016

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