

Beyond Earlston: Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Part 1: Child Protection Policy Statement

Beyond Earlston is fully committed to promoting children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions that directly affect them. Beyond Earlston has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. In order to achieve this, we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Furthermore, we will endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

Beyond Earlston will:

1. Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation
2. Develop best practice in relation to the recruitment of all workers (paid staff and volunteers)
3. Provide opportunities for all newly appointed workers (paid and unpaid) through the provision of induction training, which gives an overview of the organisation's purpose, values, structure and services
4. Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards and procedures detailed in the organisations Code of Conduct and Child Protection procedures
5. Ensure that all workers understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a child/young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's designated person for child protection
6. Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner
7. Ensure that the designated child protection officer understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. police and/or social work)
8. Ensure that the organisation meets all its responsibilities in adhering to the requirements of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Act 2007
9. Provide opportunities for all workers (paid and unpaid) to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the care and protection of children and young people
10. Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's complaints procedures
11. Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people

Part 2: Child Protection Procedures

Section 1 - Introduction

- Beyond Earlston is committed to providing a safe environment for young people. This Child Protection Policy and Procedures reflects this commitment and aims to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children and young people are effectively managed
- Child Protection Officer is responsible for developing and reviewing the organisation's Child Protection Policy statement and other care and protection policies and guidelines. However, all workers (paid or unpaid) for Beyond Earlston are required to implement the child protection procedures
- Section 5 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that "it shall be the responsibility of a person who is 16 or over and who has care and control of a child under 16, to do what is reasonable to safeguard the child's health, development and welfare". This places on Beyond Earlston a Duty of Care for the children and young people we work with. Beyond Earlston also recognizes that all children and young people have the right to freedom from abuse as outlined in the UN Convention of Rights of the Child. Beyond Earlston will constantly strive to provide a safe environment, free from any forms of abuse, for all the young people in its care. Beyond Earlston understanding of abuse can be found in Appendix 2
- Beyond Earlston has a commitment to children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions which directly affect them

Section 2 - Recruitment

- Beyond Earlston recognizes that appropriate recruitment and selection procedures are a vital part in developing and maintaining a safe environment for children and young people. The following procedures are in place to ensure that only suitable applicants are accepted as volunteers or staff of Beyond Earlston:
- All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to complete an application form
- All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to complete a self-declaration form
- All successful applicants (paid and unpaid positions) will be asked to provide suitable references
- All suitable applicants (paid and unpaid positions) will be asked to attend an interview
- A self-declaration form will be used so that interviewed applicants can declare and discuss any convictions (and their context) with the organisation
- All successful applicants appointed into a 'regulated work' position, as defined by the PVG Act, will be required to become members of the PVG Scheme or, if already a member, provide their PVG Scheme Record and permit access to a PVG Scheme Record Update
- Any applicant found to be fully listed on the Children's List will not be appointed to a regulated work (paid or unpaid) position.

Section 3 - Training

- All newly appointed staff and volunteers at Beyond Earlston will receive training, support, information and guidance to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities with regard to Child Protection. This will include:
- Details of the structure of the organisation will be provided, including the details of overall responsibility for child protection within the organisation
- Details of the organisations aims and objectives will be provided
- An assessment of staffs (paid and unpaid) training and development requirements will be completed
- The roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers within the organisation will be clarified
- Clear details of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of all newly appointed staff and volunteers will be provided
- All staff and volunteers must agree and sign up to the organisations Child Protection Policy and procedures
- All staff and volunteers must be familiar with SBC 'CSE Recovery Pathway', (see Appendix 4).
- Training, information and a copy of the organisations Code of Conduct will be provided
- The contact details and roles and responsibilities of the organisations Child Protection Officer will be provided

Section 4 - Responding to suspicion or allegation of abuse

Members of staff (paid and unpaid) have a duty to report any suspicions, allegations or disclosures to the Child Protection Officer. However, the first concern must be the reassurance of the child or young person and their protection from any potential risk. During the reporting process the young person should be protected from further contact with the individual involved in the allegation.

As a worker or volunteer your role in child protection is not to investigate or decide if abuse has taken place. Your role is to observe, record and report. Please follow the SBC 'Children and Families Social Work Referral and Child Protection Workflow Chart' in response to suspicion or allegations of abuse. For Child Sexual Exploitation please also refer to SBC's 'CSE Recovery Pathway' (see Appendix 4).

Where an allegation is made against a (your organisation) worker (paid or unpaid), the above process still applies. A referral will be made to Disclosure Scotland if an individual harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm and as a result of this, we take the decision to remove them or they leave of their own accord, come to the end of a contract, retire or have been made redundant. The form for referral to Disclosure Scotland is available on the Government website www.scotland.gov.uk

Section 5 - Responding when a child or young person discloses abuse

It is likely that a child or young person who has been abused will have given a lot of thought as to whether they should disclose the abuse. It is highly likely that they will be nervous and afraid that they might be rejected, blamed or not believed. It is important that staff and volunteers follow the guidelines outlined below and consult the SBC 'Children and Families Social Work Referral and Child Protection Workflow Chart' (see Appendix 3):

Stay calm

Remain calm and natural. You have been approached because you are trusted, not because you are an expert counsellor. Do not promise to keep the information secret; you may have to inform an appropriate person. You must take any disclosure seriously and reassure the young person that you believe them.

Listen and take the allegation seriously

Listen to what the child or young person is saying. Give them the time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and willing to. Do not pressurise them and allow them to disclose information at their own pace. You should not investigate, ask leading questions or ask specific or explicit questions. You should only clarify what they are willing to tell you in their own words. Try to do this in an appropriate place, such as a room where other people can see in through an open door or window. Whilst it's important to respect the young person's privacy it should not be at the expense of other child protection measures.

Reassure

Reassure them that you believe what they are saying and that you know it is not their fault. You should also give them some indication of what you will do next with the information that they have given you.

Confidentiality

Reiterate that you cannot promise to keep the information secret. You must take any disclosure seriously. Details of the disclosure should only be passed on to the Child Protection Officer, who should refer the case to the appropriate authorities

Wherever possible you should try not to discuss any concerns that you have about a child or young person in a way that may lead others to suspect that they are being abused.

Record

If you are able to, make brief notes during the initial disclosure, explaining to the young person why you are doing it. If it's not possible to do so at the time, record the details as soon as possible after the disclosure with as many facts as possible (dates, times, actual words used).

Look after yourself

Being trusted with a disclosure of abuse directly from a young person can be emotionally draining, worrying and very stressful. Whilst it's essential that confidentiality is maintained at all times, it's important that you consider your own emotional feelings and discuss any anxieties you have with the Child Protection Officer. If appropriate, the Child Protection Officer will arrange additional support for you.

Section 6 - Protection of Workers who report care and protection concerns

Deciding to report a colleague or volunteer you suspect of abusing or otherwise harming a child can be stressful and difficult and you may be worried about the person concerned taking action against you. The law does give you protection if you raise concerns or report a colleague as long as the report was not malicious or vexatious.

Section 7 - Data Protection and management of confidential information

Beyond Earlston is committed to the safe and secure management of confidential information. All personnel information, including volunteer information, is kept locked and can only be accessed by those that require it to carry out their role. Only relevant information is kept and this is regularly reviewed and outdated information destroyed appropriately.

Beyond Earlston is also committed to the rights of children and young people to confidentiality and this will be respected by all workers. However, where a worker feels that the information disclosed by a child or young person should be referred to their line manager for investigation by an appropriate agency, the young person should be told that confidentiality cannot be kept.

Section 8 – Child Protection Officer

- The Child Protection Officer of Beyond Earlston is Susan Law

Section 9 - Review of Child Protection policy and procedures

This policy and procedures document will be reviewed annually by the Child Protection Officer and all staff and volunteers will be notified of any changes.

This policy has been approved by:

On behalf of:

Date:

Signed:

APPENDIX 1

Child Welfare Report Form

- A report should be made by the person who has had the initial concerns about a child's welfare using this form.
- The report should be handed to the Child Protection Officer in a sealed envelope.
- The Child Protection Officer should contact the appropriate Social Work Dept/Police as set out in Appendix 3 (Child Protection Flowchart)

Name:

Date:

Who is putting the child/young person at risk? (eg staff member, family member)

--

Name and contact details of child/young person/s you concern relates to:

--

Outline your reasons for concern:

Key Points

--

Brief outline of any action you have already taken to protect the child/young person:

--

Signature:

Designation:

Date:

Follow up action taken by Child Protection Officer:

Signature:

Designation:

Date:

APPENDIX 2

Beyond Earlston - Understanding of Abuse

Abuse to children or vulnerable young people is described under the following headings:

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or young person, whether wilful or unintentional, which results in serious impairment to physical health and development. For example:

- exposing a child to extreme weather conditions e.g. heat and cold.
- failing to seek medical attention for injuries.
- exposing a child to risk of injury through the use of unsafe equipment.
- exposing a child to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity.
- failing to provide adequate nutrition and water.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical neglect include:

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene and/or poor state of clothing
- constant tiredness
- frequent lateness or unexplained non-attendance (particularly at school)
- untreated medical problems
- low self-esteem
- poor peer relationships
- stealing

Physical Injury

Actual or attempted physical injury to a child or young person where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. For example:

- Deliberately hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise harming a child.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical abuse include:

- refusal to discuss injuries
- aggression towards others
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- running away
- untreated injuries
- excessive physical punishment
- avoiding activities due to injuries or possibility of injuries being discovered

- unexplained injuries, particularly if recurrent

Emotional Abuse

The adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child or young person, caused by failure to provide for their basic emotional needs. For example:

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child (e.g. continually ignoring a child)
- Constantly humiliating a child by telling them they are useless.
- Continually being aggressive towards a child, making them feel frightened.
- Acting in a way which is detrimental to the child's self-esteem (e.g. name calling, sarcasm, constant criticism)

Signs which **may** raise concerns about emotional abuse include:

- low self-esteem
- significant decline in concentration
- running away
- indiscriminate friendliness and neediness
- extremes of passivity or aggression
- self-harm or mutilation

Sexual Abuse

Any child or young person below the age of 18 may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person, by design or neglect, exploits the child or young person directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person including organised networks. This includes forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of or consent to what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, and non-contact acts such as forcing children to look at or be involved in the production of pornographic material, to watch sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. For example:

- exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes.
- showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material.
- inappropriate touching.

The following signs **may** raise concerns about sexual abuse:

- lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults, fear of a particular adult
- social isolation - being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationship
- sleep disturbance (nightmares, bedwetting, fear of sleeping alone)
- running away from home
- drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's age

Other abusive behaviour towards children and young people

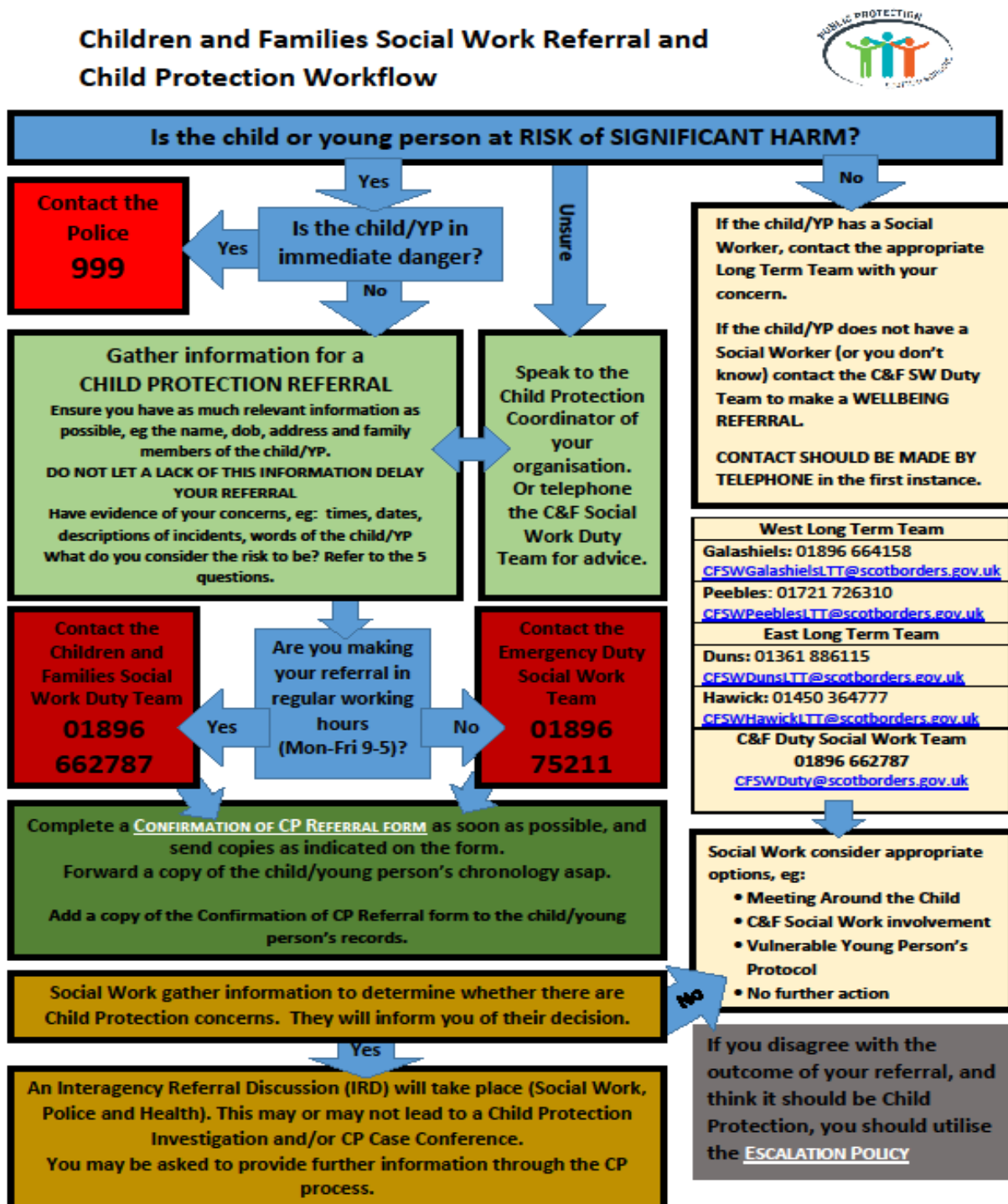
Staff, volunteers and committee members should also be aware of other, perhaps less obvious, forms of abuse. These may be dismissed by perpetrators as 'just fun' or 'having a laugh' with young people but can have a serious impact and cannot be allowed or go unchallenged:

- Bullying of any form, including name calling or constant criticism
- 'Picking on' a young person because of their family background, manner of dress or physical characteristic
- Racism or sectarianism in any form
- Favouritism and exclusion - all young people should be equally supported and encouraged
- Abusive language or gestures



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Appendix 3 – Child Protection Flow Chart



<http://www.sb-cpc-procedures.org.uk/>

<http://www.sb-cpc-procedures.org.uk/contents/forms/confirmation-of-child-protection-referral-form/>

<http://www.sb-cpc-procedures.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/New-Escalation-policy-flowchart-2014.png>

c/o Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP t; 01896 849282 e; susan@beyondearlston.org.uk
 w; www.beyondearlston.org.uk

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 Registered charity SCO43632

APPENDIX 4- CSE Recovery Pathway.

Support for Children and Young People who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.



It remains a reality that many children

and young people continue to experience sexual abuse; studies suggest that 15–20% of girls and 7–8% of boys experience some form of sexual abuse before the age of 16.¹ The prevalence of sexual abuse means that all schools will care for young people who have experienced some form of sexual harm, including online abuse. Similarly, most professionals will come into contact with young people who have been impacted by sexual abuse.

Children and young people who share that they have been the victim of abuse can often wait many weeks or months for support to recover. In the Scottish Borders there are 4 different sources of support for survivors of sexual abuse: **Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre, Children 1st, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Survivors Unite.** They all offer support that is specifically tailored to address the impact that sexual abuse has on the young person and their family. Details of the support provided is given below to support you in finding the right support for a young person and to minimise their wait for support.

When considering the impact of sexual abuse on young people it is worth noting:

- Many young people recover from their experience with support from their family and friends, and do not seek professional support.
- Some young people are keen to find someone out with their family and friendship group to talk to – a professional who can offer them additional support in their recovery.
- Sexual abuse can have a devastating impact on families, particularly when the abuser had a caring or parental role for the young person or is a close family member. It is very usual for the non-abusing parent or carer to need support to manage the significant consequences of the abuse within their family.
- The wider family and siblings may need support to cope with what are often major changes to family dynamics and life.
- It is normal to experience upsetting and confusing thoughts after a traumatic event, but in most people, these improve naturally over a few weeks. If a young person is still having problems about 4 weeks after the traumatic experience, or the symptoms are particularly troublesome they should arrange to see their GP who will discuss their symptoms and can refer them to CAMHS if they feel that treatment is required. See last page for a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) checklist.
- Thoughts of suicide and self-harm are not uncommon for young people who have experienced abuse or trauma and these agencies will all support young people who self-harm or have suicidal thoughts. **However, if you are concerned that a young person is seriously considering suicide, you should contact their GP (during office hours) or NHS 24 hrs (out with office hours) as a matter of urgency.**
- It is common for young people to have to wait for more than a year to give evidence if their case goes to court. This is usually very stressful, and we recommend contacting either

¹ Kelly, L. and Karsna, K. (2017) *Measuring the Scale and Changing Nature of Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation: Scoping Report*. Barking: Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse.



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Children 1st or Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre to discuss offering support to them through the legal process and to recover.



Support for Children and young people who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.

Young person under 12 years

- ☐ Children1st – **young people from 3 to 18 years who have shared that they have been the victim of any type of sexual abuse or assault are eligible for support from Children1st.** Self-referrals accepted, as are referrals from parents and other agencies
- ☐ If the young person is **experiencing signs of a mental illness or distress** you should speak to their parent and advise them to see their GP who can refer them to psychiatric services. Referrals to CAMHS are usually made by GP or a School Nurse although are also accepted from Health Visitor, Paediatrician, Occupational Therapist, Dietician, Speech & Language Therapist, Family Nurse Partnership, Educational Psychologist, Social Worker who has met with the child or young person

Young person aged between 12 years and 18 years

- ☐ Children1st – **support young people from 3 to 18 years who have shared that they have been the victim of any type of sexual abuse or assault are eligible for support from Children1st.** Self-referrals accepted.
- ☐ Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre (SBRCC): **Unity Service supports all young people of any gender/gender identity aged 12 to 18 who have experienced any form of sexual violence such as rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and the sharing of intimate images.** Self-referrals and referrals from any service/organisation as long as the referrer has the consent of the survivor.
- ☐ CAMHS – will support any young person **under 18 years of age**, who in addition to having reported sexual abuse or assault is **experiencing signs of a mental illness or distress to be eligible for support.** The young person needs to see their GP who can refer them to psychiatric services. Young people receiving support from CAMHS on their 18th birthday will transfer to adult services.

Young person aged 16 and over

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PUBLIC PROTECTION

- Survivors Unite is a professionally and **peer facilitated self-help group for adult survivors of sexual abuse**. The group accepts self-referrals from all adults aged 16 years and over, male and female, living anywhere in the Scottish Borders.

Support for Children and Young People who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.

Children 1st

Contact information for service

c/o Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP t; 01896 849282 e; susan@beyondearlston.org.uk
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Who can receive support?

- 3+ to 18 years, male and female
- Support is also offered to the parent/carer and wider family in recognition that many need this support in their own right, especially immediately post-disclosure
- Children, young people and their families, where they are pending a court case. Support given with court visits and during court case if required

What does Children1st offer?

An Abuse and Trauma Recovery Service to any Young Person aged up to 18 who has experienced sexual abuse.

- Support to recover from abuse and trauma (not physical trauma) for as long as needed
- Support focuses on building self-esteem/self-confidence, normalising and life story work.
- Support draws on a range of therapeutic approaches such as art, play and other forms of creative communication to help children and young people make sense of their experiences and encourage them to develop trusting relationships with safe boundaries.
- Support for families to understand the impact the abuse has on their child and their family, helping to keep them safe.
- Children and young people meet their project worker on a weekly basis for about an hour, at different venues across the region and are given choices on where to meet – somewhere that is safe and comfortable to them. Families can be supported with transport where this is needed.
- We work in partnership with Survivors Unite, a charity which offers peer support and counselling services to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

How to refer

A referral to Children 1st can be made by anyone whether it is a self-referral, family member or professional.

Referral forms can be requested from

ettrick@children1st.org.uk

Main number: 01750 22892

A confidential consultation can be requested at any time by contacting Sarah Axford, Service Manager

Main number: 01750 22892

Mobile number: 07554779264

sarah.axford@children1st.org.uk

What happens after receipt of referral?

A young person and/or their family will be contacted within 2 working weeks of a referral being made. If a young person is in crisis they will be seen as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, due to levels of demand the service always has a waiting list. Referrers will be made aware of the degree of priority for a young person in relation to the wait for support.

Once they are offered support this is not time limited, as it is recognised that children and young people who have experienced abuse have wide ranging needs and recovery may be long term.

Support for Children and Young People who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.

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Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre (SBRC)- Unity Service and Sunrise Adult Service.	Contact information for service
Who can receive support? Unity Service: All young survivors of any gender/gender identity aged between 12 and 18 who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives. Sunrise Adult service: All self-identifying female survivors aged 18+ who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives. Male survivors 18+ can contact SBRCC and will be offered initial telephone support, signposting and support to gain access to other support services. Support for family, friends and non-offending partners. Our services are LGBT inclusive. What does Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre offer? Free and confidential emotional and practical support, information and advocacy. We offer a safe space for survivors to tell their story, we will believe, support and listen. We will never put pressure on survivors to disclose or share anything they do not want to. Survivors do not need to share the details of what happened if they don't want to, if they do, we will respond in a sensitive and supportive way. One-to-one support, maximum of 20 support sessions, lasting up to an hour. Centre and outreach support offered; we don't offer home visits. Email, text and phone support, this can be informal or structured. Group work. Support & Advocacy: If a survivor is considering or has reported a sexual crime to the Police our Advocacy & Support Workers can support the survivor throughout the whole process, this service is not time-bound. Our one to one support is often around the following themes: Establishing physical safety and stability in daily living and current relationships, establishing safety and stability in themselves. Learn to regulate or increase tolerance of emotions and symptoms which cause distress. Risk assessment and management i.e. suicide.	Website: scottishbordersrapecrisis.org.uk Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre 1A Wilderhaugh Galashiels TD1 1PW Main number: 01896 661 070 Mobile number: 07584 149 391 For general information: info@sbrcc.org.uk For support: support@sbrcc.org.uk Opening hours: Monday - Friday: 09:00 - 16:30. Out of hours support can be arranged. How to refer? Self-referrals and referrals from any service/organisation as long as the referrer has the consent of the survivor. Organisations/ Services – we prefer to take referrals over the phone. Survivors can phone the centre on: 01896 661070, email support@sbrcc.org.uk or text us on 07584 149 391. What happens after receipt of referral? Survivors will be contacted within 3 working days of a referral being made and offered an introductory support session within two weeks. After the introductory session survivors will then be placed on our waiting list. Survivors who are in crisis will be offered 6 crisis sessions. Survivors can contact the centre for phone, email and text support while they are on the waiting list for their regular support to begin. We check in with survivors on the waiting list every 6-8 weeks.

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Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	Contact information for service
Who can receive support? up to 18 years How? Supporting any child/young person up to the age of 18 to improve their mental health, including mental health difficulties deriving from CSE. CAMHS on duty Nurse can be consulted. Decision on suitability for support offered based on details of a young person behaviour and presentation issues (i.e. problems). Referrals can often be quite limited in detail, so the more information given the better.	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services CAMHS The Andrew Lang Unit Viewfield Lane Selkirk TD7 4LJ Main number: 01750 23715 Referrals are accepted from: Health: GP, School Nurse, Health Visitor, Paediatrician, Occupational Therapist, Dietician, Speech & Language Therapist, Family Nurse Partnership Education: Educational Psychologist Social Work: Social Worker who has met with the child or young person. What happens after receipt of referral? Emergency referral triaged and responded with on same day. CAMHS operate 0900 - 1530 hrs (after this generic crisis team). Urgent referral triaged and responded to within five days. Routine referral triaged then offered appointment (target of within 18 weeks for first appointment).

Survivors Unite	Contact information for service
Who can receive support? Survivors of sexual abuse, over the age of 16 years. How? Survivors Unite is a professionally and peer facilitated self-help group for adult survivors of sexual abuse. The group meets on a weekly basis in the Central Scottish Borders and support is available to group members in between group meetings as and when required.	Contact Amanda Erskine at Children 1st for details. Main number: 01750 22892 The group accepts self-referrals from all adults aged 16 years and over, male and female, living anywhere in the Scottish Borders.

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Support for Children and Young People who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Checklist

If the young person is presenting with any of the following symptoms, please contact their GP.

The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have a significant impact on a person's day to day life. In most cases the symptoms develop during the first month after a traumatic event, but in a minority of cases, there may be a delay of months or even years before symptoms start to appear. Some people with PTSD experience long periods when their symptoms are less noticeable, followed by periods where they get worse. Other people have constant severe symptoms.

Specific symptoms of PTSD (can vary widely between individuals, but generally fall into the categories described below)

- **Re-experiencing is the most typical symptom of PTSD**

This is when a person involuntarily and vividly relives the traumatic event in the form of: flashbacks, nightmares, repetitive and distressing images or sensations, physical sensations, such as pain, sweating, feeling sick or trembling.

Some people have constant negative thoughts about their experience, repeatedly asking themselves questions that prevent them coming to terms with the event. For example, they may wonder why the event happened to them and if they could have done anything to stop it, which can lead to feelings of guilt or shame.

- **Avoidance and emotional numbing**

Trying to avoid being reminded of the traumatic event is another key symptom of PTSD. This usually means avoiding certain people or places that remind you of the trauma or avoiding talking to anyone about your experience. Many people with PTSD try to push memories of the event out of their mind, often distracting themselves with work or hobbies. Some people attempt to deal with their feelings by trying not to feel anything at all. This is known as emotional numbing. This can lead to the person becoming isolated and withdrawn, and they may also give up pursuing activities they used to enjoy.

- **Hyperarousal (feeling 'on edge')**

Someone with PTSD may be very anxious and find it difficult to relax. They may be constantly aware of threats and easily startled. This state of mind is known as hyperarousal, which often leads to irritability, angry outbursts, sleeping problems (insomnia), difficulty concentrating.

- **Other problems**

Many people with PTSD also have a number of other problems, including:

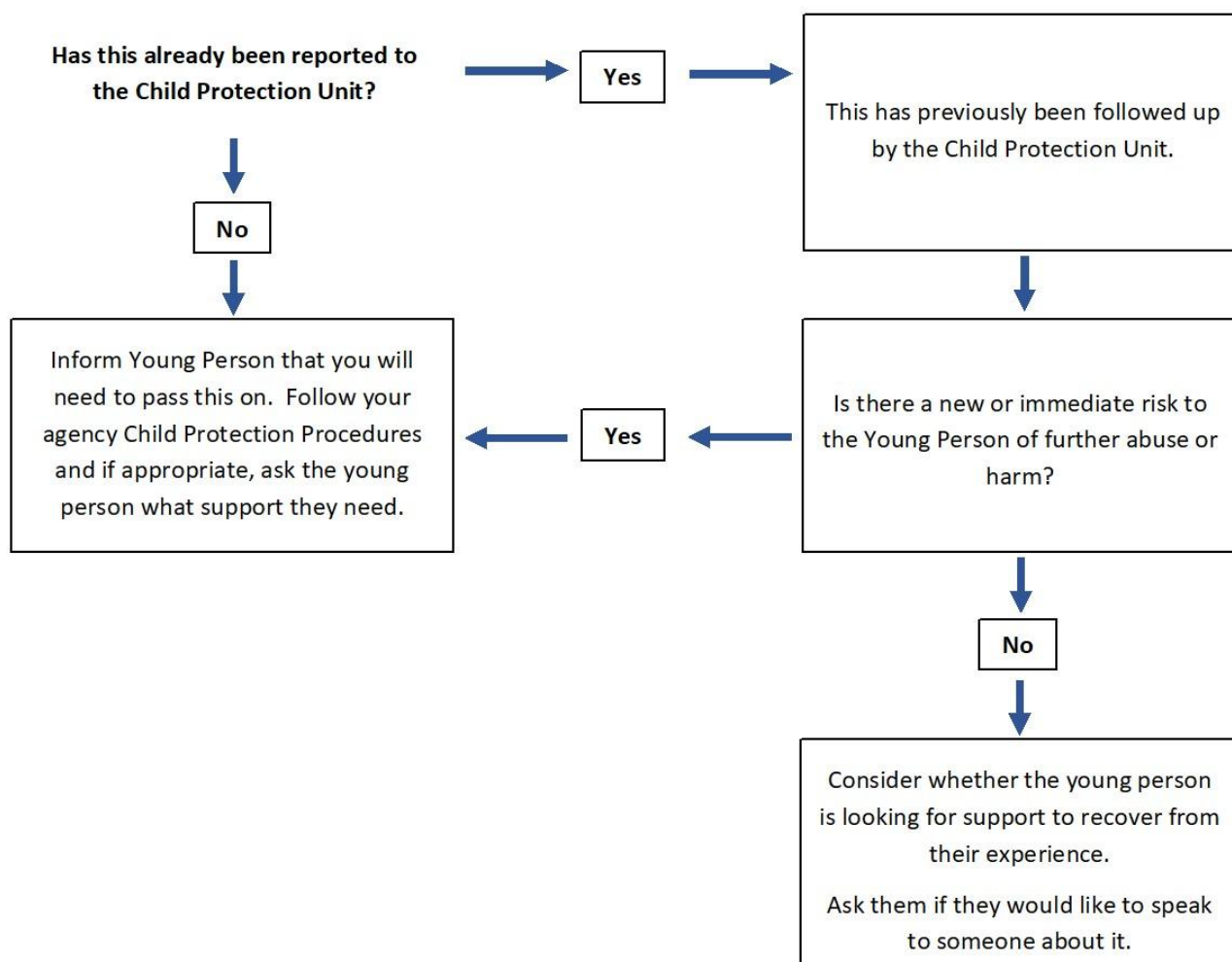
- other mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety or phobias
- self-harming or destructive behaviour, such as drug misuse or alcohol misuse
- other physical symptoms, such as headaches, dizziness, chest pains and stomach aches
- PTSD sometimes leads to work-related problems and the breakdown of relationships.



Support for Children and Young People who have been the victim of sexual abuse sexual exploitation.

Check before referring on for support

Before referring a young person for support, it is important to check that the abuse is historic and has previously been followed up. This flowchart gives guidance in line with Scottish Borders Child Protection Procedures.





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