

Code of Behaviour for Volunteers

The CSBS has developed this code of behaviour. This is shared with all volunteers during induction/training and checked on at all continuing volunteer development events/opportunities. This code of behaviour is reviewed by a group of volunteers, as advised by the relevant person not less than once every 24 months. Volunteers are welcomed to input suggestions for change in this code at any time, to the relevant person. This code of behaviour will be read in conjunction with CSBS Policies and Procedures.

This code of Behaviour for volunteers, includes due regard to **Child Safeguarding** in all aspects of volunteers' work and engagement with the CSBS organisation.

Every volunteer in Clare Suicide Bereavement Support has a duty to protect the welfare and safety of children, and to recognise that the safety and welfare of children is everybody's responsibility and that the best interests of children should be paramount. Please see ***Clare Suicide Bereavement Policies and Procedures Supporting Child Safeguarding***. Every volunteer with Clare Suicide Bereavement must read and sign that they have read and will follow these policies and procedures.

- Take your commitment to Clare Suicide Bereavement to heart, performing your duties to the best of your ability.
- Honour confidentiality. Inform people whom you are befriending of the limits of confidentiality, including legal obligations with regard to Child Protection issues. You should discuss the limits of confidentiality at the time of first meeting.
- Respect the mission and goals of Clare Suicide Bereavement.
- Be aware of our boundaries as listeners and befrienders. Clare Suicide Bereavement is not a counselling service. Foster mutual trust and respect. Please see Appendix 6, to ensure high quality listening for our befriendees.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Treat each person equally regardless of age, class, gender, education, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.

- Deal with conflicts or difficulties in an appropriate manner as outlined in our policies and procedures.
- Respect the property of Clare Suicide Bereavement
- Do not accept gifts or money from befriendees.
- Be courteous, friendly and cooperative.
- Offer constructive feedback about our organization in an appropriate manner.
- Be willing to learn and take part in induction, Garda vetting and re-vetting, and training sessions.
- Follow through on commitments and advise your supervisor if you are unable to work as scheduled.
- Demonstrate respect for the direction and decisions of your supervisor(s).
- Treat fellow volunteer befrienders, people who come for befriending and members of the public fairly and without discrimination.
- Take steps to manage personal stress, maintain their wellbeing, and avail of supervision offered in CSBS.
- This list is not exhaustive and may not cover every situation or provide you with a set of absolute standards.

Please see Clare Suicide Bereavement policies and procedures.

Communication – including attitudes, use of ICT, social and digital media, etc.

- workers or volunteers should treat children or young people with respect and listen to children.
- Boundaries for worker/volunteer contact with children/young people over social media or outside of the Centre based befriending process.

Safe supervision of children and young people –

- This includes adult-child ratios. (See policy on supervision)
- Guidance on how to deal with behaviours that challenge (without the use of physical chastisement),
- explicitly banning the use of foul or sexualised language and
- directing the use of positive reinforcement to praise and encourage children and young people.

Transport issues – Volunteers are not allowed to give lifts to, or travel with anyone – adults or children whom they are supporting. Volunteers do not travel with clients in vehicles.

- **Intimate or personal care** – including issues related to individual needs.
- **Volunteers should ensure that unnecessary or unjustified physical contact does not become normalised or become part of the culture of the organisation, particularly with the same person over a period of time.**
- **Volunteers are not allowed to touch/hug children.** A soft toy is suggested for children using words such as:
‘Teddy (a soft toy) is a member of our organisation and is here for hugs’.
- **Safe management of activities** – the code of behaviour will reflect the procedures for safe management of activities.

The code will be used as a tool in **training** to discuss and consider organisational expectations of workers’/volunteers’ conduct. Induction training for all new workers and volunteers should include the code and its uses.

- The code can provide a useful tool in staff supervision. It provides an agreed language and framework to discuss practice issues that may arise in day-to-day work. Members of the management committee have a responsibility to supervise and support workers/volunteers to ensure the code is being adhered to.
- There should be an explicit declaration in the organisation’s code of behaviour about workers’/volunteers’ responsibilities to report breaches of the code of behaviour to management. This should be emphasised in on-going training, induction and staff meetings.
- The code will only be useful if implemented. Managers need to listen and respond appropriately to reports of breaches of the code. Having developed and implemented a code of behaviour for workers and volunteers, we have clearly identified boundaries regarding acceptable and unacceptable practice. This makes it much easier to address issues of poor practice, should they arise. Disciplinary action is taken where appropriate.