

FAITH IN THE COMMUNITY

LISTEN. BELIEVE. ACT

THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING THE NWG FAITH ANIMATION. WE REALLY

HOPE THIS RESOURCE WILL BE PLAYED AND DISCUSSED IN FAITH WORSHIP ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS TO PROMOTE BETTER SAFEGUARDING.



Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility, and this also applies within the faith sector.

This animation has been designed specifically for the faith sector, to help raise awareness of abuse and help those in faith and community settings to respond positively.

Our campaign efforts are aimed at parents, communities, faith leaders, volunteers and children to help them understand what to look out for and how to respond to concerns about child abuse.

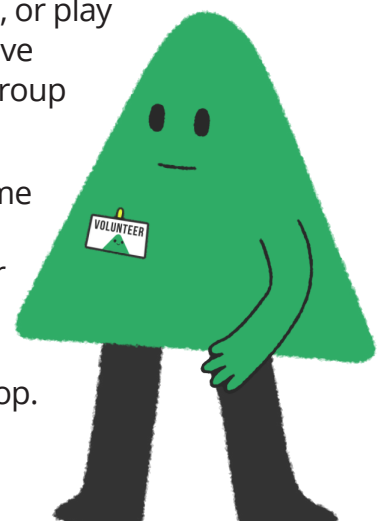
We purposely have not referred to any faith, ethnicity, culture, race or gender, hence using animation and shapes. This is important to ensure the story is the focal point and to ensure it is widely applicable.

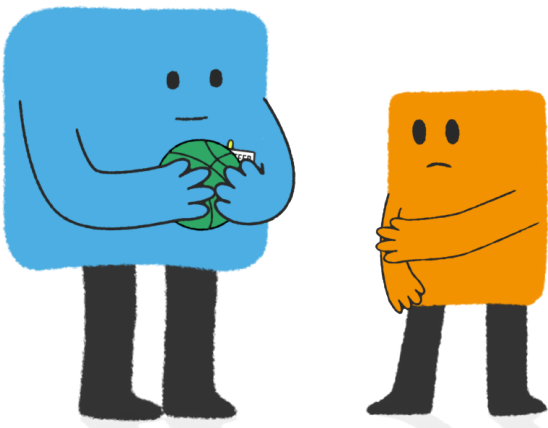
Our community has a part to play ~ as the protective 'eyes and ears' ~ to recognise and respond to signs of danger. This <https://stop-ce.org/ssss/> is a community campaign to raise awareness of Child Exploitation.

We need everyone, everywhere, to recognise that sometimes, there's something more to what they see or hear and to not make assumptions about a child's behaviour. Exploited young people don't always look, or act like victims and their behaviour or actions can often be dismissed as a 'typical teenager'. So, it's vital that everyone in the community can spot signs of child exploitation and trafficking and work together to safeguard children and young people.

We have designed this animation to be adaptable; so that parts of the film can be paused for participants to stop and discuss their thoughts, or play the whole clip then have discussions with the group you are delivering to.

We have provided some questions as prompts for discussions in your group, and guidance/resource links when delivering the workshop.





SECTION 1 CURIOSITY

- What made the male faith leader recognise the change of behaviour in Alex?
- What do we think might be going on in Alex's life?
- Explore and discuss the comments made by the female faith leader, "it's just teenagers, I'd leave it- we've got enough on our plates!"

Safeguarding curiosity and why it's important?

Safeguarding curiosity is where a volunteer explores and proactively tries to understand what is happening within a family or for an individual, rather than making assumptions or taking a single source of information and accepting it at face value.

It's important to note not all exploitation occurs online, so ensure this is discussed in groups. There are different types of abuse. The abuse could be sexual, criminal, county lines, child trafficking, peer on peer, radicalisation and extremism and modern slavery. Please see below for definitions.

<https://nwgnetwork.org/what-is-child-exploitation>

SECTION 2 RESPONSE

- What's Alex's behaviour like
- What techniques does the male faith leader connect with Alex?

When a child is disclosing abuse, the manner of your response is significantly valuable. Listening is key, ensuring we are not blaming them and letting them know it's not their fault. This will enable the child to be heard, feel supported and not judged.

The more we speak to children and young people, the better we understand how our language can impact them and the support that they receive. Changing the language we use, can make a significant difference not only to the young people we work with but also our own mindset.

Here are some useful phrases to consider using;

"I AM LISTENING"

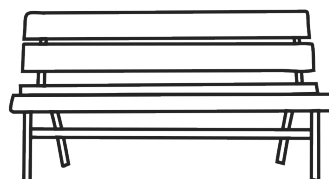
"THIS ISN'T YOUR FAULT"

"YOU ARE SO BRAVE FOR TELLING ME"

"I BELIEVE YOU"

"I AM HERE FOR YOU"

"YOU ARE NOT ALONE"



SECTION 3

CONFIDENTIALITY

- What do we do, when a child says, "I don't want anyone else to know about it", without breaking trust and maintaining your relationship with the child or young person?

This is where you are honest with them and reassure them first and foremost that you will keep them informed along the way. It's important to know that you can't make promises without knowing what you are dealing with. Young people and children will appreciate the honesty from the beginning. It's important to continue your relationship with them and for them to continue to trust you whilst managing expectations and being realistic.

SECTION 4

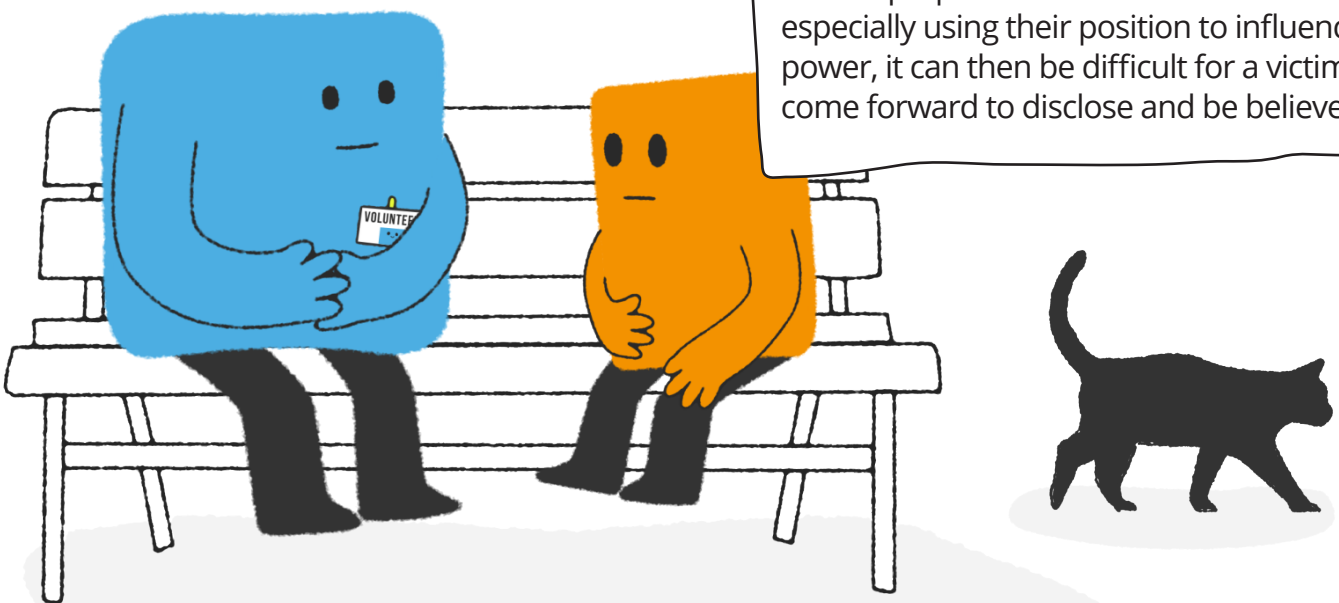
DISCLOSURE

- How do we respond to hearing the information that has been shared?
- What do we do next?
- How do we support Alex?

In this case, the abuse was happening outside the family home, however there may be cases where the abuse is occurring within the family home.

Children and young people who are victimised may be reluctant to disclose offences or seek support, often due to stigma, prejudice, embarrassment or the fear they will not be believed. Many children and young people who are from different backgrounds and religions feel they would bring shame, upon their family/community and their family reputations will be impacted, which places a significant pressure on them if they were to disclose. In some cases, they don't tell anyone, as they feel it would be better for the abuse to continue, then bring shame onto their families and communities.

It's important to note, the power and control perpetrators hold on their victims, especially using their position to influence power, it can then be difficult for a victim to come forward to disclose and be believed.



SECTION 5

INFORMATION SHARING

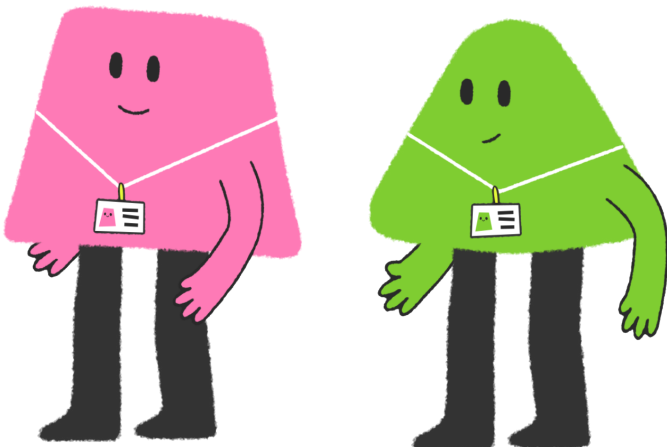
- Why would Alex think they would get in trouble?
- Why is it important for us to ensure Alex is safer by talking to someone- Who would that someone be?

Being able to listen, support a young person and ensure they feel believed will show empathy from you. Using language like “this isn’t your fault”, “do not blame yourself”, “you haven’t done anything wrong”. Both verbal and body language is important.

By saying that you will stand by them, support them, be there every step of the way will be a huge relief for the child or young person.

The importance of sharing information with professionals like, social workers, education, health and police is because we want to protect all children and young people.

Keeping the disclosure in the child’s own words is also important, this can then be shared with key professionals.



SECTION 6

REASSURANCE

- How can we reassure Alex?
- What could happen if the faith leader didn’t intervene?

For a child or young person, being reassured by the person they have just disclosed to is important for their recovery journey to rebuild.

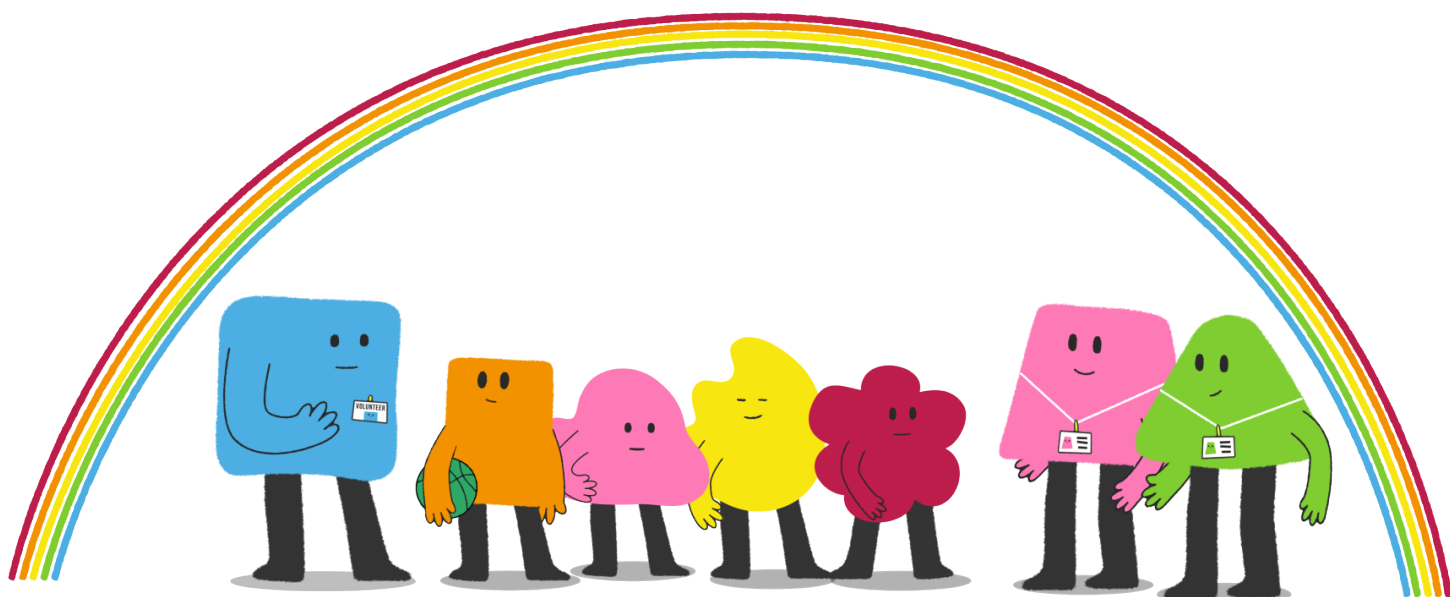
Grooming is when a person builds a relationship with a child, young person or an adult who are vulnerable, so they can abuse and manipulate them. Children and young people start to believe what they are told, and this becomes another barrier for them to not disclose the abuse. Perpetrators groom children and young people by saying “if you tell anyone you will get into trouble,”.

In some cases, especially within the faith context, the grooming process can include using faith scriptures in a negative way and bringing God into the equation, a way to silence a victim and/or make them think- How can they go against God?

It’s important for any child or young person to know they are not in any trouble as they haven’t done anything wrong.

Child exploitation has a profound and long-lasting impact on children’s physical, mental and sexual health, as well as their overall development. They will need support to recover, without support it can leave a child feeling isolated.

For families and communities, it can have a devastating impact, but also a very confusing, scary and frustrating time. Parents and carers may experience many unpredictable emotions which is an understandable response to a very difficult situation.



SUMMARY

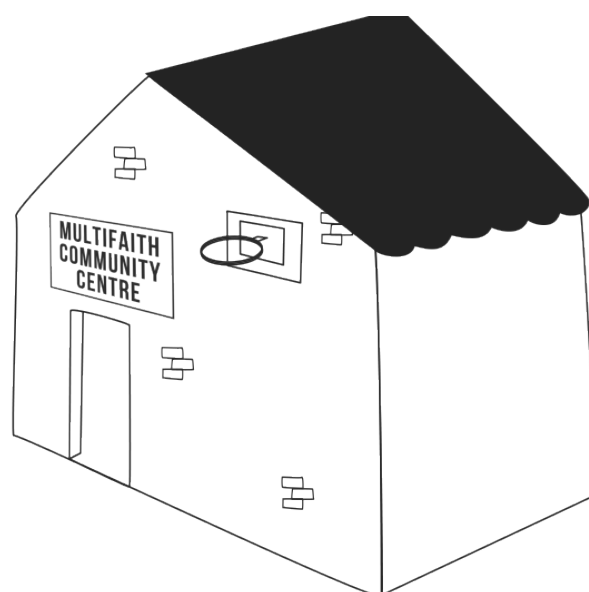
We hope this resource will encourage you all to talk about safeguarding within your worship places. We all have a responsibility to ensure children and young people are safe.

All faith organisations and faith-based groups that take children should have a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. Your policy should set out what your organisation or group will do to keep children safe, and your procedures should set out how you will do it.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse 'IICSA' report on child protection in religious organisations and settings (CPIROS) (September 2021) contains the

following recommendation:

"All religious organisations should have a child protection policy and supporting procedures, which should include advice and guidance on responding to disclosures of abuse and the needs of victims and survivors. The policy and procedures should be updated regularly, with professional child protection advice, and all organisations should have regular compulsory training for those in leadership positions and those who work with children and young people."



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

We appreciate it can be distressing listening to a child or adult share the abuse they have experienced or are experiencing. This is why it's important to understand it's okay for you to feel upset, anxious or unsure of what to do, but first I want to take this time to say, "THANK YOU" for being the one to listen to that child or adult, you may be the first person they have disclosed to.

It's important to ensure you have somebody you can talk to. Your wellbeing is just as important!

- Increase your self-observation- recognise your own signs of stress or trauma triggers.
- Take care of yourself emotionally, nurture selfcare.
- Look after your physical and mental wellbeing.
- Maintain a healthy work/life balance
- Use peer support and other organisations to ensure you can offload.
- Continue your personal development by accessing our training and forums.

<https://nwgnetwork.org/what-is-child-exploitation/help-for-professionals>

NWG TRAINING

- Mind Your Language
<https://nwgnetwork.org/about-us/training/mind-your-language>
- CSE Awareness
<https://nwgnetwork.org/child-sexual-exploitation-cse-myth-busting/>
- Faith Volunteer Training
<https://nwgnetwork.org/exploitation-in-faith-as-a-volunteer-what-do-you-need-to-know/>

REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS

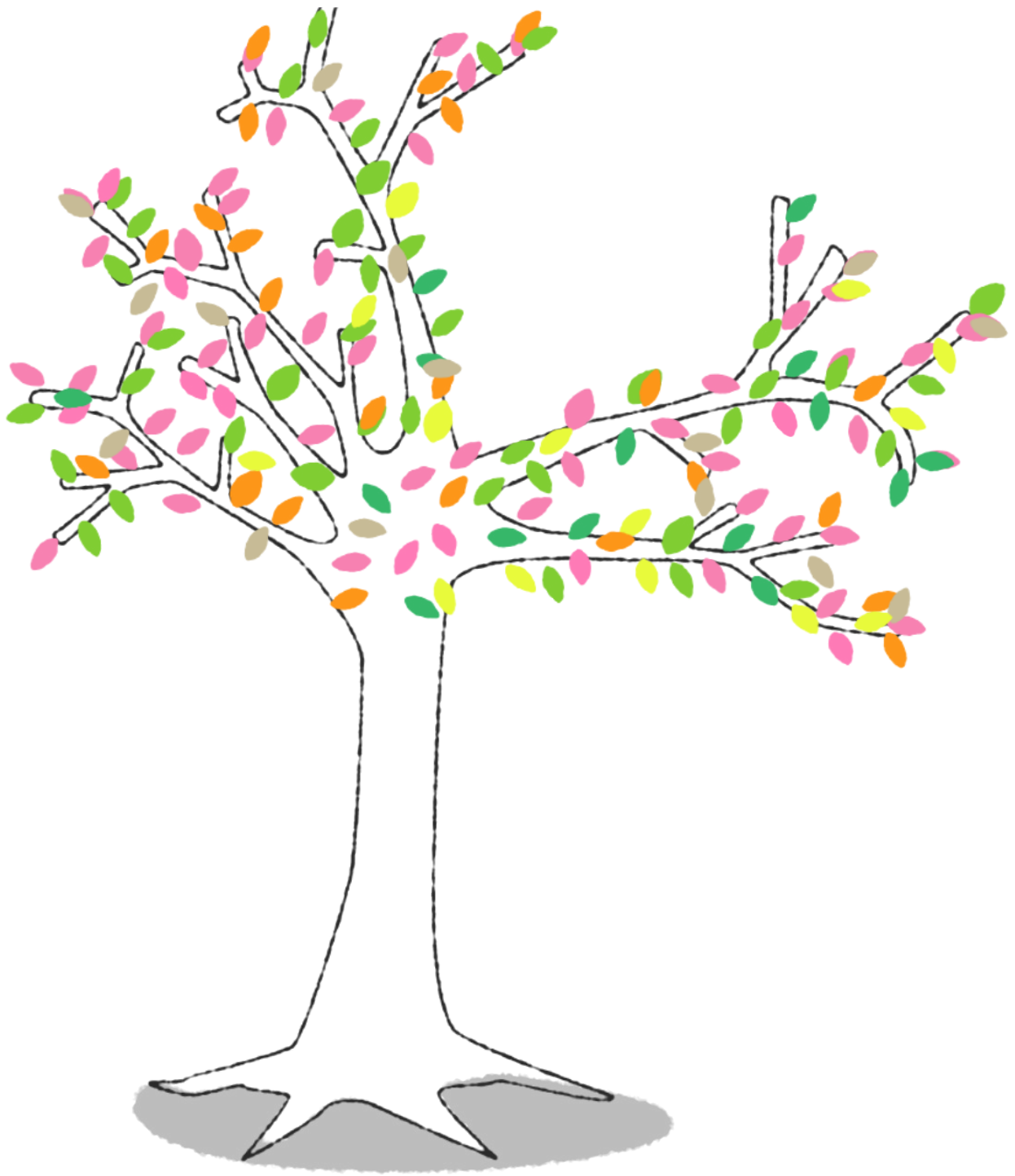
If you think a child is in immediate danger, please contact the police on 999.

If you are worried about a child but they are not in any immediate danger, you should share your concerns by.

- Follow your organisational safeguarding processes. Speaking to your safeguarding lead.
- Contacting local Safeguarding boards/ local authorities who will be able to help you. You can find the relevant numbers via your local council websites, under children or adult safeguarding boards.

The below link is our service directory which lists projects, organisations and services contact details near you.

<https://nwgnetwork.org/service-directory/>



**KEEPING CHILDREN
SAFE IS EVERYONE'S
RESPONSIBILITY**