



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Purpose & Scope

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy sets out the framework by which Growing Resilience in Teens (GRIT) Charity No. 1191777 meets its moral and legal obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people who access its services. It is underpinned by national statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures, and best practice in working with vulnerable young people aged 11–24.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all GRIT staff; including senior managers, trustees, paid staff, volunteers, children, young people and all organisations that work with GRIT to provide services to our clients.

- Growing Resilience in Teens (GRIT) is set up as a service to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 11-24 through small group programmes and 1:1 support. This takes place in a variety of settings in Hitchin, Letchworth and surrounding areas, and online.
- For the purposes of this policy and in accordance with the legal definition, the term “**child**” or “**children**” refers to those who are under 18. The term “**young adult**” refers to those over the age of 18.
- We recognise that our staff are in a unique position in their care of children and young people.
- The responsibility for all staff to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare is one that is central to our ethos, our policies, and our actions.
- The trustees of GRIT must always act in the best interests of the children and young people accessing our services and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children and young people but it also enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

2. Purpose

- To safeguard children and young people who receive GRIT’s services.
- To enable all young people accessing our services to feel safe and cared for and to ensure that they have a safe place and safe people to whom they can turn.
- To enable all adults working with GRIT to be fully equipped to fulfil their responsibilities in effectively promoting the safeguarding and welfare of all children and young people accessing our services.

We believe that:

- All children and young people are deserving of the highest levels of care and safeguarding, regardless of their individual characteristics or circumstances, and we are committed to applying this policy to ensure effective levels of safeguarding and care are afforded to all young people accessing our services.

- It is essential that all actions are taken first and foremost in the best interest of our children and young people.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of our children and young people is of paramount importance and is enshrined in law. (See below Children Act 1989 and 2004, Human Rights Act 1998).
- No individual child or young adult or groups of children or young people must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access services which meet their particular needs.
- All children and young people without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of our children and young people.

This policy sets out guidance and procedures that GRIT will follow to ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people accessing our services. Its contents are intended to be in accordance with all relevant Government guidelines and legislation, as well as the inter-agency procedures provided by our North Hertfordshire safeguarding partners.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- All GRIT trustees, staff and volunteers are responsible for following GRIT safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- All GRIT trustees, staff and volunteers will value, listen to and respect the children and young people accessing GRIT services.
- All GRIT trustees, staff and volunteers will work collaboratively with children, young people, parents/ carers (where appropriate) and professional agencies to safeguard them.
- All GRIT trustees, staff and volunteers will foster and build a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, children and young people feel safe, know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns.
- Trustees will ensure this policy is applied robustly and review it regularly (annually at a minimum) to ensure the effectiveness and rigour of safeguarding practice.
- Trustees will appoint a lead trustee, Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and a deputy DSO to take responsibility for leading Safeguarding and child protection within GRIT.
- The DSO, alongside the lead trustee and deputy DSO, will make sure all staff and volunteers understand and follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures and undergo annual training updates.

- All GRIT trustees, staff and volunteers will ensure children, young people and their families (where appropriate) know about the organisation’s safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern.
- When a child or young adult is considered “at risk,” GRIT coaches will create a “Safety Plan” (see Annexe 1) with them. Where appropriate, this might be shared with the family and other support services (CAMHS, AMHS, counsellors etc).

4. Links to national guidance and statutory requirements

The policy has been drawn up in alignment with law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable young people.

Legal: Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015); Human Rights Act (1998); Equality Act (2010) Children’s Act (1989 and 2004), United Convention of the Rights of the Child (1991), Data Protection Act (1998 and 2018) , Sexual Offences Act (2003), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), Protection of Freedoms Act (2012), Children and Families Act (2014), Care Act (2014), Domestic Abuse Act (2021), Mental Capacity Act (2005).

Government: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023); What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (2015); Keeping children safe in education (2024); Children missing in education (2016); Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (2021); Information Sharing, Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (2018); SEND code of Practice 2014.

5. Definitions

Distinction between children and young people

Legally, “a child” is defined as a person under the age of 18. From their 18th birthday, an individual is defined as “an adult”. GRIT works for and directly with “young people” up to the age of 24.

We recognise that the legal distinction between a 17-year-old and an 18-year-old may feel arbitrary in some respects, and very significant in others. For example:

- an 18-year-old may not feel equipped to make decisions about their lives despite no longer legally requiring the consent of a parent or carer.
- young people may experience a gap in or ending of service provision at this age, for instance between CAMHS and AMHS, or leaving care.

In addition, in our society, the period between ages 16 and 19 may include significant changes to a young person’s life including leaving school or college, starting work or going to university, and leaving the family home. These changes may present new or increased risks to a young person.

When we consider safeguarding risks and responses, we must take care to ensure that we are clear about the legal definition of children and adults and guard against scenarios such as:

- adultification of under-18s when referring to them as “young people” without due consideration of their status as children.
- not giving an adult appropriate control or influence over their care due to a perception of them as a “young person”.

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than ‘protection’ of children and young people and relates to the action taken to promote their welfare and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

Safeguarding children is defined in *Working together to safeguard children 2024* as:

- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network⁴ through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families’ lives.

Policy in Detail

1. Role of DSO and Deputy DSO

- The DSO, alongside the Deputy DSO, will coordinate all safeguarding and child protection procedures, including those related to online safety, filtering and monitoring, and will take lead responsibility for this area.
- During working hours, the DSO or their Deputy will be available to discuss any safeguarding concerns, either in person or via phone or other modes of communication. The DSO will make appropriate cover arrangements where they are unavailable. If the DSO is absent, the CEO will arrange for suitable cover from the Deputy DSO; if the CEO is absent the Lead Safeguarding Trustee will make these arrangements.
- The DSO and Deputy will undergo suitable training, including related to specific areas such as online safety and PREVENT, to equip them with the skills and knowledge required to undertake their role, which will be updated at a minimum every two years; in addition, their skills and knowledge will be refreshed at regular intervals, annually at a minimum.
- The DSO and Deputy will ensure that all staff know and understand the safeguarding and child protection procedures, as well as knowing, and working effectively with, the local inter-agency procedures for assessment of early help needs and for referrals of suspected cases of abuse.
- The DSO and Deputy will encourage amongst coaches a culture of listening to children and young people and taking into account their wishes and feelings to help protect them. This includes understanding that children and young people may not recognise that they are being abused, or feel ready to share this, and the importance of coaches remaining professionally curious and seeking to build trusting relationships with children that facilitate communication.
- The DSO and Deputy are expected to oversee and manage all referrals of suspected abuse that are made to Social Care, Police, Channel, and other agencies, and will also support and liaise with any coaches or staff who have either been involved in making such referrals or who have concerns about a young person which may subsequently require a referral. All referrals will be followed up within one working day of them being submitted, if GRIT has not received feedback from the agency to whom the referral was made.
- The DSO and Deputy will maintain detailed and secure records on our electronic system of any concerns and referrals, and all subsequent follow up actions and communications. Records will be actioned and updated within one working day of the event taking place.

2. Induction and Training

- All trustees, volunteers and staff will undergo annual safeguarding training provided by GRIT. This will be delivered by a designated trainer to Level 2.

- All trustees, volunteers and staff to read and agree to the associated policies on their recruitment and annually thereafter.
- The training will support all staff to appropriately identify and respond to any pupil at risk of harm. (Recognise, Respond, Respect, Record). It will give background knowledge of the principles of safeguarding as stated above and provide scenarios examples of best practice. Specifically, it will cover:
 - safeguarding definitions and principles
 - how to respond to allegations
 - how to recognise risk factors for abuse or exploitation
 - how to recognise signs of possible abuse or exploitation
 - what to do if abuse suspected
 - suitable case examples to work through under supervision.
- Coaches will also be issued with the Coach Training Guide: Identifying and Responding to Self-Harm in Adolescents (see Annexe 7) to support best practice in managing self-harm disclosures and concerns.
- All trustees, volunteers and staff will read the following Gov.UK documents:

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners 2015: [Stat guidance template](#)

3. Types of abuse and specific safeguarding issues

- We recognise that our coaches are in a unique position to recognise and respond to signs of abuse, and that these can take place and manifest in a variety of ways, including abuse that takes place online, and abuse that takes place between children and young people.
- Induction training and regular refresher sessions will equip staff and volunteers to understand the different types of abuse, including specific safeguarding issues such as Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation, and support them to know how to respond to any concerns.
- Annexe 3 details our approach to dealing with the risks posed by abuse, and how we identify and respond to any signs of abuse.

4. Contextual safeguarding

- Our children and young people are subject to possible risk at home, at school, in their local community and environment, and online, and we recognise that, in order to effectively safeguard and promote their welfare, we need to understand any specific issues arising in the local area that can affect the risk posed to them.
- We will work with local partners, including Schools, Social Care and Police, to ensure that we stay alert to any emerging contextual risks, and to ensure that assessment of risk for any of our young people includes appropriate reference to their local community and environment.

- Further information to support GRIT staff in understanding contextual safeguarding can be found via the Contextual Safeguarding Network:
<https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

5. Safety and Risk assessments

- As a general rule, GRIT services provide an early intervention for children and young people who are not actively being treated by other agencies, however we recognise that the programme can be extremely beneficial to some young people alongside other agencies. We do not seek to replace other agencies such as GP, CAMHS, one to one counselling.
- All children and young people accessing GRIT services will complete a pre-questionnaire with a trained coach to ascertain the level of risk (Annexe 6).
- When a child or young adult is considered “at risk” GRIT coaches will create a “Safety Plan” (see Annex 1) with them. Where appropriate, this will be shared with the family and where other agencies are involved (e.g. CAMHS, AMHS, counsellors), it is essential that the safety plan is agreed to be shared with other agencies.
- The GRIT programme is a group-based programme, and participants must be able to operate in a group situation.

6. Raising Concerns

All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to children’s or adult social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the police.

Children

GRIT has adopted the threshold of *significant harm* in relation to onward reporting of safeguarding concerns relating to a child. The threshold for significant harm is generally considered met if the information is indicative of the abuse of a child, as noted in Annex 4 i.e. physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect. All safeguarding concerns where a child is considered to be at risk of significant harm will be referred to the police, Local Authority Children’s Services and/or the NSPCC.

Adults

In relation to an adult who has not given consent to share information, GRIT; has adopted the threshold of *serious harm* for onward reporting of a safeguarding concern. The definition of *serious harm* adopted by GRIT; refers to actions that are potentially life threatening or are likely to lead to long term impairment of physical or mental health. Where there is a concern and the threshold of serious harm has been met, GRIT; will make an onward referral to a relevant authority, such as the police, the Local Authority and/or the local Mental Health Crisis Team.

It is paramount that any concern about the welfare of a child or young adult accessing GRIT services is raised immediately. Our risk assessment has identified three main areas of potential concern:

- Disclosure of abuse of any kind
- Concern about a child or young adult who is suffering from extreme anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts.
- A child or young adult is actively suicidal

We have adapted the guidance of the NSPCC on handling disclosures, and this is included in our training and is detailed in Annexe 3.

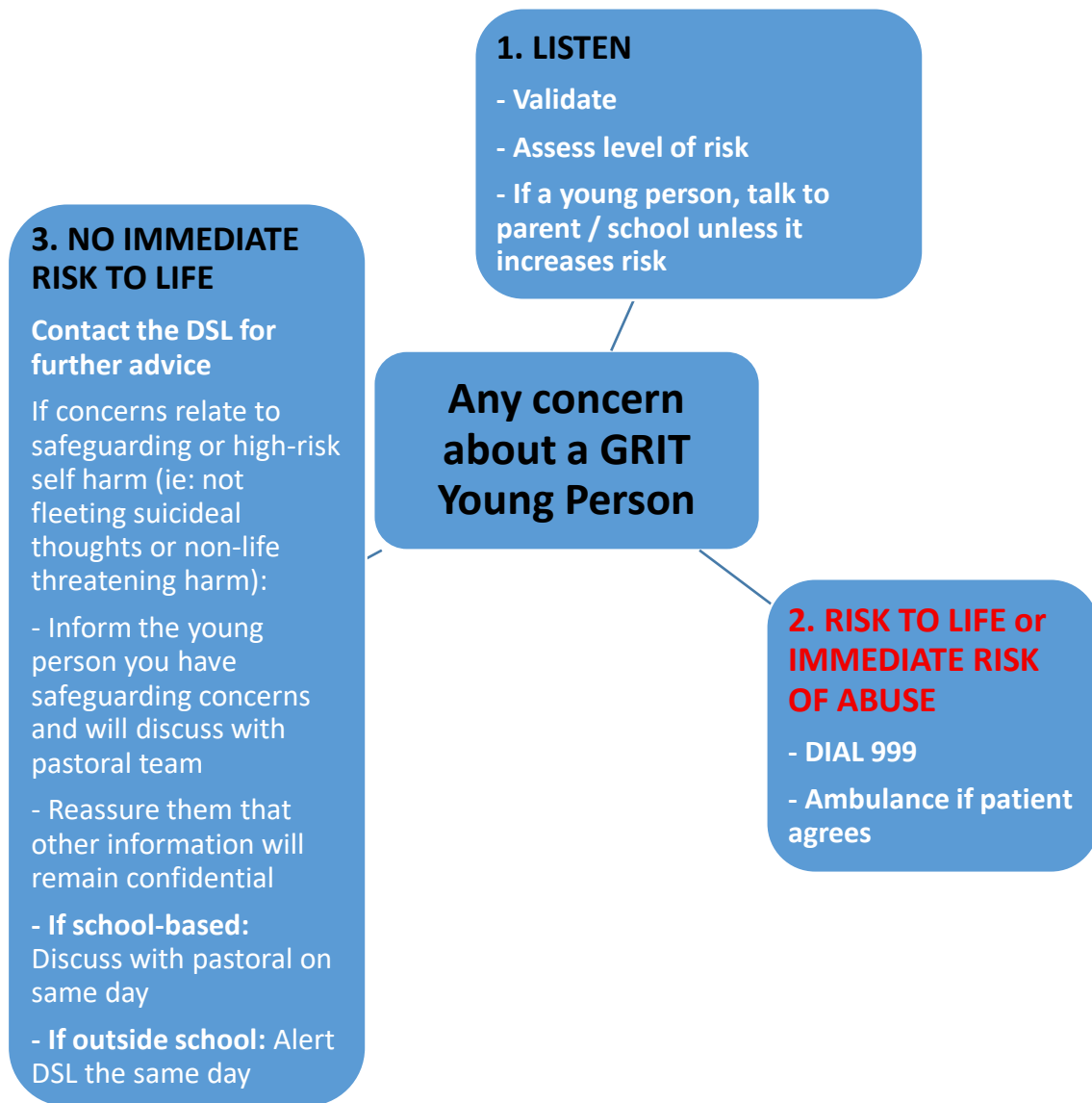
- All staff are trained in recognising signs of distress or deterioration in symptoms
- Children and young people are encouraged to have a very low threshold for sharing concerns.
- Whistle blowing: Any member of staff having a concern about the conduct of another GRIT staff member should speak to the CEO and DSO. (See Whistle Blowing Policy)
- Allegations by children and young people against GRIT staff: all allegations should be listened to and reported to the CEO and DSO.

Taking action

The 6 Rs describe the sequence of actions that anyone working with or for GRIT; must take:

1. Recognise concerns that a child or adult is being harmed or might be at risk of harm.
2. Respond appropriately to a child or adult who is telling you what is happening to them
3. Report/refer the concerns according to GRIT's safeguarding procedures (to a DSO, Social Care, NSPCC or emergency services)
4. Record the concerns appropriately and any subsequent action taken; ensure there is no delay in passing on concerns.
5. Resolve – take responsibility to ensure that reports and referrals made are followed up in a timely way and take further action if not satisfied with the response.
6. Reflect on your learnings from the safeguarding process and on how to support the wellbeing of yourself and others involved.

Safeguarding Flow Chart



7. Processes, procedures, and inter-agency liaison

- GRIT has a clear procedure for recording any possible signs of abuse, using a standardised safeguarding concern form on our online system (see Annexe 6). This will be explained to all staff and volunteers at induction. A paper copy of our concern form is also available in the event of being unable to access the online system. Training and refresher sessions will reinforce effective techniques for recording concerns and will highlight the importance of accurate written records.
- All new safeguarding concern records, and any other documentation of a safeguarding nature, are held in our online system, separately from any other client information, and are stored securely. Cases are flagged (red, amber, green) to prioritise safeguarding concerns.
- Upon receiving a concern which indicates a suspicion of abuse, the DSO or Deputy DSO will follow local inter-agency procedures, local information-sharing protocols

and statutory/legal expectations in deciding if a referral to an external agency is warranted. It is important to note that whilst a referral would typically be made by the DSO or their Deputy, any member of staff can make a referral, and appropriate information will be signposted to all staff to support them to do so.

- In the case of a referral being made due to risk of significant harm, the referrer will make a detailed written record of their actions, including: dates and times of any conversations; the name and role of any professionals that were spoken to; the outcome of the referral; any actions that the referrer and the agency receiving the referral have agreed upon.
- Any disagreements between the referrer and a professional or agency will be appropriately voiced and discussed, with the referrer following appropriate escalation procedures if they remain dissatisfied and if the circumstances warrant, in line with Herts Local Authority escalation procedures. Disagreements or escalation will be recorded in writing by the referrer.

8. Lone Working

GRIT coaches typically see children and young people 1:1 and are vulnerable to allegations of abuse (see also Lone Working Policy).

- Where possible see young people when there is another adult in the building
- Where this is not possible, ensure another adult knows the location and time of the session.
- Make sure the child or young adult knows they are free to leave the session at any time and are comfortable with the situation.
- If possible/ appropriate – use a room that another adults can see into or leave the door open

9. Online Working

When working online, GRIT coaches should ensure that the online safety agreement has been signed by the child, young adult or carer. A secure system such as Microsoft Teams should be used (see Online Safety Policy).

10. Safer Recruitment

- GRIT has a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures for staff, trustees and associated agencies.
- We recognise that it is critical to ensure that our young people are supported by adults who are safe to do so, and that we are responsible for promoting a culture of safety within our organisation by preventing unsafe adults from gaining access to it.
- In line with expected practice for safer recruitment, a minimum of one member of GRIT staff will undertake training in 'Safer Recruitment' and will be present on every interview panel.

- GRIT will maintain a Safer Recruitment Record (SRR), detailing the required and relevant recruitment and vetting checks undertaken on all employees, volunteers, trustees and third-party staff.
- The CEO and DSO will oversee the SRR and be accountable for its accuracy, checking it regularly and annually as a minimum, making a record of the check and any subsequent actions that arise.
- The designated trustee will also check the adherence of our safer recruitment practice to our organisation's policy on a regular basis. N.B. trustees are not expected to have access to personal information as part of this process.
- The Safer Recruitment Record will be supported by files containing appropriate supporting evidence for recruitment and vetting checks, held in line with Data Protection legislation.
- Please see our Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers Policy for further detail regarding our adherence to safer recruitment principles.

11. Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with our associated policies:

- GRIT Anti-bullying policy
- GRIT Behaviour Management Policy
- GRIT Digital Safety Policy
- GRIT Acceptable IT Use Policy
- GRIT Photography Policy
- GRIT Complaints Procedure
- GRIT Whistleblowing Policy
- GRIT Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers Policy
- GRIT Risk Assessment Policy
- GRIT Equality and Diversity Policy
- GRIT Code of Conduct Policy
- GRIT Lone Working Policy

12. Contact Details

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Name: Dr Louise Randall

Phone: 07803 582008

Email: louise@gritcharity.org

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Name: Mike Cannon

Phone: 07879 013897

Email: mike.cannon@gritcharity.org

Senior Lead for Safeguarding (Trustee)

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Name: Dr Claire Powell
Phone: 07500 222600
Email: cepowell66@gmail.com

Child Exploitation Online & Protection Centre (CEOP) www.ceop.police.uk

Herts Social Services: 0300 123 4043

Call **999** if you're in immediate danger or if a crime is being committed or the young person is in immediate danger of death or further abuse.

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

13. Policy Review

The policy and procedures will be reviewed, approved and endorsed by the board of trustees annually or when legislation changes.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and safeguarding practice annually.

- Created by Jan Reiser
- Updated by: Dr Louise Randall (Chairman) on 18/06/25
- Approved by Dr Louise Randall, Chairman

Signature:

Date:

Dr Louise Randall

07/03/2025

- Next review date: 01/06/26

ANNEXE 1: Young Person's Safety Plan

My Safety Plan:

Date:

Know When to Get Help

What are the warning signs that you are beginning to struggle with your problem?

These can include thoughts, feelings, or behaviours. e.g. your head is racing with thoughts, feeling negative, change in eating habits.

Use Coping Skills

What can you do, by yourself, to take your mind off the problem or distract yourself?

Do some exercise, cold shower, change surroundings

What obstacles might there be to using these coping skills?

Keeping Yourself Safe

What do I want to do to keep myself safe?

e.g. Ensure I have no access to sharp things, or alcohol. Give someone my medicine for safe-keeping.

Reach Out to Social Support

If you are struggling to manage your problem alone, contact trusted family members or friends. Who can support you? Who is compassionate? Who am I able to tell I am in crisis and am at risk?

Name	Contact Number/ Email

What would I like them to do?

Crisis Support (24 hours)

Organisations	Contact Number/ Email
CAMHS Single point of Access (SPA) https://www.hpft.nhs.uk	0800 6444 101
Childline Childline www.childline.org.uk	0800 1111
Samaritans Samaritans Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy Here to listen	116 123
PAPYRUS HOPELINEUK Contact Us Papyrus	0800 068 4141 TEXT: 88247
SHOUT	Text SHOUT to 85258
NHS 111 option 2	111 option 2

DIAL 999 in a medical emergency

Signature:

Advice from CAMHS in Herts

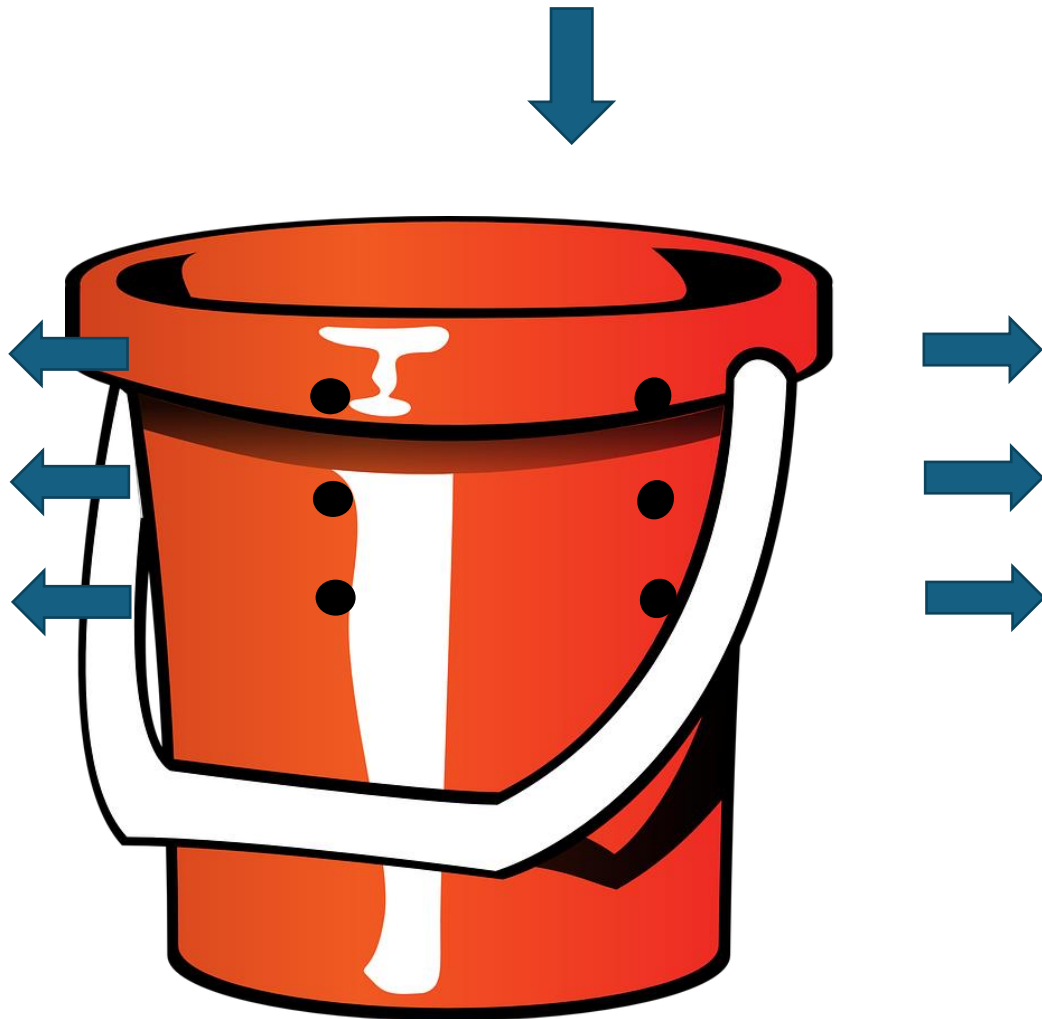
(Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT))

999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency intervention Life threatening condition
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<p>0800 6444 101</p> <p>or</p> <p>NHS 111 opt 2</p> <p>or</p> <p>Mental Health Urgent Care Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent mental health needs Feeling unsafe, distressed or worried Hearing voices or seeing things others can't Feeling unable to cope Thinking about harming yourself or others <p>Click here for more information about the Urgent Care Centre</p>
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<p>0800 6444 101</p> <p>or</p> <p>E: hpft.spa@nhs.net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needing help and guidance but it's not an emergency Needing advice about anxiety/worries Mood changes Withdrawing from people If you just want to talk
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STRESS BUCKET: What's filling up your bucket?



Think about what is going onto your stress bucket.

What situations or times do you find difficult? e.g. Night times, busy places, socialising, being alone in the evening.

If we allow our bucket to fill up we become stressed & overwhelmed. Try to engage in activities that stop your bucket filling up.



ANNEXE 2: Pre-Service Questionnaire



GRIT Pre-Service Questionnaire

Please complete this form and provide as much information as possible so we can understand your current challenges and experiences. This will help us to ensure our support meets your specific needs. Thank you.

Your Contact Details (Young Person)

If you are completing this form on behalf of a young person, please can you ensure they are with you at the time of writing so you can answer the questions from their point of view.

Your Name (Young Person) *

First Name

Last Name

Your ID Number (It begins with the letters 'Corl. Please ask your coach for these details) *

Your Email address (Young Person)

example@example.com

Phone Number

Please enter a valid phone number.

Your Address (Young Person)

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

About You (Young Person)

If you are completing this form on behalf of a young person, please can you ensure they are with you at the time of writing so you can answer the questions from their point of view.

What is your gender? *

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

What are your pronouns?

- He/Him
- She/Her
- They/Them
- Other

What is your ethnicity? *

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups
- Asian/Asian British
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Black/Black British
- African
- Caribbean
- Arab

What is your school or employment status? *

- Full Time Student
- Part Time Student
- Not currently attending school

- Full Time Employment
- Part Time Employment
- Unemployed

What year are you in at school (if applicable)

- Year 5
- Year 6
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 12
- Year 13
- I do not attend school

About How You Are Feeling

Please complete this next section carefully. It is important we understand how you feel before you begin working with us.

In the last 6 weeks has your mental health impacted your attendance at school or work? *

- Yes
- No

If yes, over the last 6 weeks how many days of school or days of work have you missed due to your mental health? *

- More than 10 days
- 5-9 days
- 1-4 days
- None

Below are some questions about your life at school, work and home. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each of these over the last 6 weeks.

Scale: 1=None of the time, 2=Rarely, 3=Some of the time, 4=Often, 5=All of the time

How confident do you feel about your performance in school or work? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Have you experienced challenges with bullying in or out side of school or work? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Have you experienced challenges in your home with family members such as domestic violence, alcohol or drug abuse? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How confident do you feel about managing your emotions (i.e. anxiety, anger, sadness, depression)? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Below are some questions about your behaviours, coping mechanisms and emotional challenges. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each of these over the last 6 weeks. Scale: 1=None of the time, 2=Rarely, 3=Some of the time, 4=Often, 5=All of the time

How many times have you self-harmed? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How many times have you drunk alcohol? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How many times have you smoked or vaped? *

- 1

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How many times have you had anxiety or difficulty around food or mealtimes? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How many times have you had anxiety or difficulty around your body image? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each of these over the last 6 weeks.

PLEASE NOTE WE USE A DIFFERENT SCALE FOR THESE QUESTIONS:

Scale:1=Almost Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=About half the time, 4=Most of the time, 5=Almost always

I have difficulty making sense out of my feelings *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I am confused about how I feel *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I have difficulty getting work done *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I become out of control *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Scale: 1=Almost Never, 2=Sometimes, 3>About half the time, 4=Most of the time, 5=Almost always

When I am upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I believe that I will end up feeling very depressed *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I have difficulty focusing on other things *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I feel out of control *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Scale:1=Almost Never, 2=Sometimes, 3>About half the time, 4=Most of the time, 5=Almost always

When I am upset, I feel ashamed with myself for feeling that way *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I feel like I am weak *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I have difficulty controlling my behaviours *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I believe that there is nothing I can do to make myself feel better *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Scale:1=Almost Never, 2=Sometimes, 3>About half the time, 4=Most of the time, 5=Almost always

When I am upset, I become irritated with myself for feeling that way *

- 1
- 2

- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I start to feel very bad about myself *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, I have difficulty thinking about anything else *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

When I am upset, my emotions feel overwhelming *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Have you been previously supported by or are you being supported by any other services or agencies such as social care, CAMHS, mental health care team? Please let us know the details below. Please mark as 'no' if this does not apply. *

0/8000

We'd love to keep you updated on how we can continue to support you outside of GRIT's services. Also as a charity, we rely on the generosity of our local community to help us provide our vital services. We'd love to be able to share information on how you can support GRIT through fundraising, volunteering, and local events. We promise not to bombard you with messages!

To help us stay connected, please provide a personal email address rather than a work or school email where possible. *

- Yes, I would like to receive occasional updates about GRIT's activities and how I can support your work.
- No, I do not wish to receive updates or information at this time.

Name (Coaches please ensure you re-enter their name here)

First Name

Last Name

Email

example@example.com

Please let us know your preferences?

- Information for Young People
- Newsletter
- Fundraising and event updates
- Information for Parents/Carers
- Volunteering Opportunities

How we'll use your information:

By opting in, you consent to GRIT using your contact details to send occasional updates about our charity. We will never share your information with third parties, and you can change your preferences or unsubscribe at any time by contacting us at fundraising@gritcharity.org or clicking the unsubscribe link in our emails.

For more details, please read our [Privacy Policy](#).

Submit

Have you been diagnosed with or referred for an assessment for neurodiversity or additional needs? *

- No
- Austim
- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Other

Have you had any admissions to hospital because of a mental health problem? *

- Yes
- No

Do you have any medical problems? (Such as diabetes, heart disease, epilepsy?) *

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes to the above question, can you provide further details:

0/8000

Are you currently taking any medication? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes to the above question, can you provide further details:

0/8000

Thank you for telling us how you feel.
We are here to help and support you every step of the way, and our team is dedicated to making sure you feel safe and understood throughout this process.

Stay Connected with GRIT!

ANNEXE 3: Handling Disclosures: Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Introduction

GRIT deals with vulnerable children and young people who are struggling with their mental health. Disclosure may happen at any time and to anyone in the team, and young people often fear there may be negative consequences if they tell anyone what's happening to them. Some may delay telling someone about abuse for a long time, while others never tell anyone, even if they want to.

It's vital that our young people are able to speak out and that whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they've been told. Even if a GRIT; young person doesn't tell someone verbally about what's happened to them, there may be other indicators that something is wrong. Everyone who works with them needs to be able to recognise the signs and know how to respond appropriately.

GRIT is committed to recognising and responding to all concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young adult and has adapted this guideline from the excellent NSPCC guidance on dealing with disclosure.

Disclosure

Disclosure is the process by which a person starts to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over a long period of time – it is a journey, not one act or action. The disclosure might be made directly or indirectly and sometimes a young person might start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order. Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or a case being taken to court, but all disclosures should be taken seriously. It takes extraordinary courage for a child or young adult to go through the journey of disclosing abuse. It's vital that anyone who works with our young people undertaking this journey is able to provide them with the support they need.

How disclosure happens:

- Directly– making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them
- Indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- Behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- Non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

Children and young people may not always be aware that they are disclosing abuse through their actions and behaviour. Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures of abuse. This means they give some details about what they've experienced, but not the whole picture. They may withhold some information because they:

- are afraid
- they will get in trouble with or upset their family
- want to deflect blame in case of family difficulties as a result of the disclosure
- feel ashamed and/or guilty
- Need to protect themselves from having to relive traumatic events.
- When young people do speak out it is often many years after the abuse has taken place (McElvaney, 2015).

Barriers to disclosure

Some children and young people are reluctant to seek help because they feel they don't have anyone to turn to for support. They may have sought help in the past and had a negative experience, which makes them unlikely to do so again. They may also:

- feel that they will not be taken seriously
- feel too embarrassed to talk to an adult about a private or personal problem
- worry about confidentiality
- lack trust in the people around them (including parents) and in the services provided to help them
- fear the consequences of asking for help
- worry they will be causing trouble and making the situation worse
- find formal procedures overwhelming (Mental Health Foundation and Camelot Foundation, 2006).
- Not all children and young people realise they have experienced abuse, for example if they have been groomed.

Spotting the signs of abuse

- Children and young people who have been abused may want to tell someone, but not have the exact words to do so. They may attempt to disclose abuse by giving adults clues, through their actions and by using indirect words (Allnock and Miller, 2013; Cossar et al, 2013). All adults working within GRIT; need to be able to notice the signs that a child or young adult might be distressed and ask them appropriate questions about what might have caused this.
- You should never wait until a child or young adult tells you directly that they are being abused before taking action. Instead, ask them if everything is OK or discuss your concerns with the GRIT designated safeguarding lead, their deputy or any of the GRIT trustees. In a crisis the NSPCC helpline is an excellent resource (0808 800 5000).

- Waiting for a child or young adult to be ready to speak about their experiences could mean that the abuse carries on and they, or another young person, are put at further risk of significant harm (Cossar et al, 2013).
- Not taking appropriate action quickly can also affect the child or young adult's mental health. They may feel despairing and hopeless and wonder why no-one is helping them. This may discourage them from seeking help in the future and make them distrust adults.

Responding to disclosures

The NSPCC carried out research to find out how adults can better respond to a young person who is disclosing abuse (Baker et al, 2019). They found three key interpersonal skills that help a child feel they are being listened to and taken seriously:

- **Show you care, help them open up:** Give your full attention to the young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
- **Take your time, slow down:** Respect pauses and don't interrupt the young person—let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
- **Show you understand, reflect back:** Make it clear you're interested in what the young person is telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.
- If a young person tells you they are experiencing abuse, it's important to reassure them that they've done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. Tell them what you will do next.
- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), the Deputy DSO or the Senior Lead for Safeguarding

Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the young person's disclosure. This could make things a lot worse for them.

ANNEXE 4: Types Of Abuse

In considering appropriate and proportionate measures that GRIT; may take in the event of a safeguarding concern being identified, it is important to understand what is considered abuse; related both to children and to adults.

Abuse is defined as a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It includes acts of commission (such as an assault) and acts of omission (situations where the environment fails to prevent harm). Abuse may be a single act or a series of acts.

We are aware that all children and young people are potentially vulnerable to abuse.

It can take place at home, in school, in the wider community and online; be committed by adults and by other children; be inflicted by people known to the child/young adult and by strangers; be a consequence of an act of deliberate harm and from failing to take necessary steps to prevent the child/young adult from coming to harm.

Adult Abuse: The Care Act 2014 recognises ten categories of abuse of **adults**:

- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect
- self-neglect,
- domestic abuse
- discriminatory abuse
- organisational abuse
- financial abuse
- modern slavery

The Care Act defines an “**adult at risk**” as:

- A person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

GRIT; understands that not all adults with care and support needs will be at risk of harm. This will depend on the individual and their current situation. An individual's likelihood of experiencing harm may vary over time depending on the circumstances they are in and their needs at that time.

Child Abuse: The four main types of **child abuse** are described as :

- **physical:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child; physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child
- **emotional:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development; may involve conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, not giving them opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, interactions that are beyond their developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them from participating in normal social interaction, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation or corruption
- **sexual:** forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening; may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, non-physical contact, grooming a child in preparation for abuse, and online sexual abuse
- **neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development; may involve failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, and failure to meet a child's basic emotional needs

High quality safeguarding training ensures all adults involved with GRIT are familiar with the definitions of abuse, actions that constitute each of the four categories, and the signs of each type of abuse, including online, so that young people who may be in need of help or protection are appropriately identified.

In addition to the above, we recognise that there are a number of specific safeguarding issues that require special consideration due to their complex nature.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm: We recognise that children who have a Social Worker or who had had a Social Worker, may have needed this due to abuse, neglect, and complex family circumstances, and that this potentially leaves them vulnerable to further harm.

Child on child abuse: Some children may abuse their peers, which can manifest in many ways, including bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour, physical abuse, sexual abuse/harassment/violence, 'sexting', upskirting, and initiation/hazing. Child on child abuse of all types can be face to face or online. All incidents of child on child abuse are

taken equally seriously, regardless of the nature, identity or gender of the perpetrator and victim/s.

Gangs, youth violence, and serious violent crime : We recognise that children and young people are vulnerable, at any age, to being drawn into a gang environment and/or being targeted as perpetrators or victims of violence to others. GRIT staff will be trained to identify risk factors for such activity and will be vigilant to any signs of our pupils being drawn into, or affected by, gangs, youth violence, and serious violent crime, and will work with local agencies to safeguard any perpetrators and/or victims.

Exploitation, including child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

It is understood that any child or any young person is vulnerable to the risks of exploitation, including child criminal and child sexual exploitation, and that this risk is not limited to older children or adolescents. Children can be exploited by adults, but children can also be used to exploit other children

Exploitation can take place online as well as face to face. We recognise that all young people regardless of gender can be exploited, both criminally and sexually, and that their experiences, as well as the indicators of the risk they are facing, may differ.

GRIT staff are alert to the signs and indicators of a young person becoming at risk of, or subject to, all forms of exploitation, including but not limited to: gang and violence-related activity; criminal and anti-social behaviour; going missing from education; underage and/or illegal sexual activity; risky behaviour, including behaviour online.

County Lines: In addition, we are alert to the signs and indicators of a young person becoming at risk of, or subject to, exploitation for the purposes of county lines, a term used to describe exportation of illegal drugs by criminal networks between different locations in the UK. This includes but is not limited to: going missing from education; awareness, knowledge and use of alcohol and illegal substances. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is GRIT's named professional for issues related to exploitation, and will work with local agencies as required to safeguard young people at risk of, or subject to, exploitation.

Children with family members in prison, and children in the court system: We recognise the significant impact that having, or having had, a parent being in prison can have on a young person's outcomes and life chances, academically, emotionally and financially. We also recognise that giving evidence in court, either as victims or as witnesses is likely to have a significant impact on them.

Domestic abuse : Seeing, hearing or experiencing domestic abuse, defined as controlling, coercive, threatening, violent and abusive behaviour between partners, ex-partners and family members, is a form of abuse. It poses a serious risk to young people and we recognise the serious and long-lasting impact it can have on their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn. Children experiencing domestic abuse are now recognised in law as victims.

GRIT staff are trained to know and understand the types of domestic abuse, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and financial, its risks, regardless of whether the young person has been physically injured or not, and to recognise any incident of domestic abuse witnessed or experienced by our young people as a potential safeguarding issue. Where necessary, we will work with local agency professionals to respond to any reported incidents of domestic abuse.

Homelessness : We recognise that homelessness, and the risk of homelessness, places a young person's welfare at significant risk, being at risk of poverty, exploitation, and becoming missing from education, amongst others. Timely intervention when a risk of homelessness is first identified is critical in preventing a situation from escalating and homelessness becoming a reality.

'Honour based' abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing and Forced Marriage: 'Honour based' abuse refers to actions committed under a belief of protecting or defending the honour of a family or community. Regardless of the motivation or circumstances, we recognise that these acts are illegal and abusive and should be responded to as such. We are aware of, and will adhere to, our legal duty to notify the Police of any confirmed cases of Female Genital Mutilation carried out on a girl under the age of 18. We are alert to the signs and indicators of a pupil being at risk of 'honour based' abuse and will work with local agencies as required to safeguard these pupils.

Radicalisation : Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) we are required to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism', otherwise known as the 'Prevent duty'. We are alert to the signs and indicators of a young person showing signs of radicalisation and of being at risk of being drawn into terrorism and will work with local agencies and the Channel programme as required to safeguard them.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is our named professional for radicalisation, who has an appropriate knowledge of the risks associated with the local area and is aware of the local referral processes for raising a Prevent concern.

Children Missing from Education: We recognise that a child missing from education can be an indicator of abuse or neglect, including a risk of exploitation, 'honour based' abuse and radicalisation, as outlined above. (See : Children Missing in Education (2016)

Elective Home Education: We are alert to the possible risks posed to children if they are removed from school roll by their parents to be educated at home, especially if they are vulnerable, have a Social Worker or have SEND.

Online safety: Technology has become a significant risk factor in safeguarding children and young people, and we recognise our responsibility to protect them from the risks of inappropriate content and contact from inappropriate people. GRIT staff are alert to the risks posed to young people via their use of technology, typically referred to as ‘the four Cs’ :

- Content: harmful or illegal content
- Contact: harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that causes harm or increases the risk of harm;
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling or phishing

Staff receive appropriate training to support them in ensuring that any online risks are swiftly identified.

Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND): We recognise that pupils with SEND, including those with physical and mental health conditions, face additional challenges in keeping safe, and that they may be subject to increased risk by virtue of their special need or disability. Their physical and emotional needs, behaviour, mood, difficulties with communication, and proneness to isolation and to bullying all make them more vulnerable to abuse, and more vulnerable to abuse being overlooked or ascribed to a different cause.

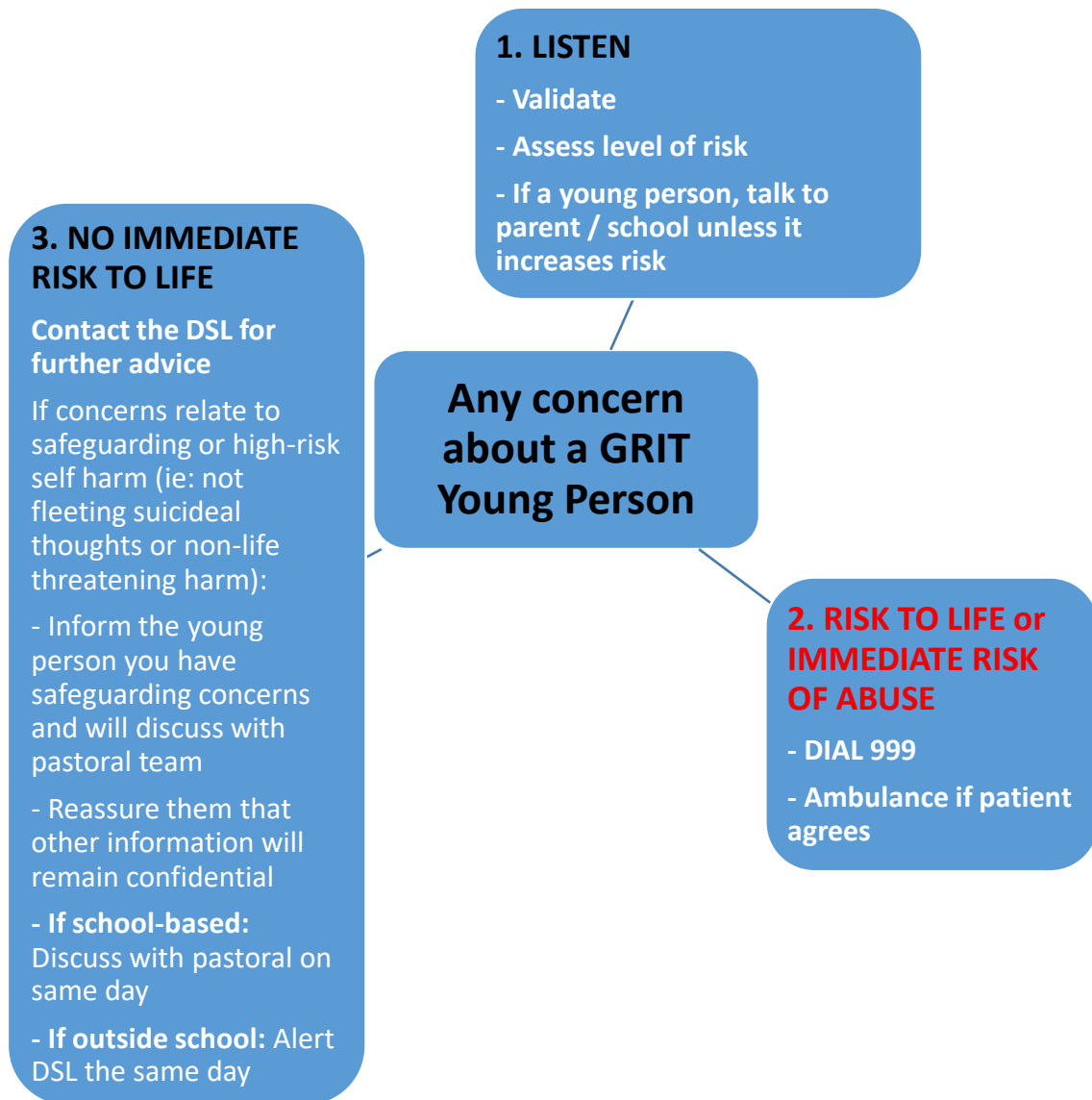
Looked After Children, and previously Looked After Children: Children are most commonly taken into care following abuse or neglect; consequently, young people who are Looked After or previously Looked After, including those who have been adopted from care or are subject to care orders, can be vulnerable as a result of their historical experiences, as well as with their current care arrangements.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning: We recognise that identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, lesbian, gay, bisexual and gender questioning young people , or those perceived to be such, can be targets for bullying and abuse by their peers, the risks of which can be compounded if they do not have a trusted adult with whom to share these concerns. GRIT staff will endeavour to provide a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual and gender questioning children to discuss concerns, and remove any additional barriers that may prevent this.

ANNEXE 5:

Quick Reference Guide for Managing Emergency/ High Needs Support

Coaches' Quick Reference Guide for Managing Emergency/ High Needs Support



Need	Contact Details
Medical emergency, report a crime, young person in danger	999
GRIT Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)- any concern	Dr Louise Randall Phone: 07803 582008 Email: louise@gritcharity.org
GRIT Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSO)- any concern	Mike Cannon Phone: 07879 013897 Email: mike.cannon@gritcharity.org
GRIT Senior Lead for Safeguarding (Trustee)- any concern	Name: Dr Claire Powell Phone: 07500 222600 Email: cepowell66@gmail.com
NSPCC Helpline- any concern	0808 800 5000
PREVENT: reporting concerns about radicalisation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact DSO/ Medical supervision 2. Talk to school DSL 3. Act Early Support Line 0800 011 4. Anti-Terrorism Hotline on 0800 789 321. 5. Get help for radicalisation concerns - GOV.UK 6. PREVENT referral form in team folder
Child Exploitation Online & Protection Centre (CEOP) on line sexual abuse/ grooming	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Contact DSO/Medical Supervision 2.Talk to school DSL 3.www.ceop.police.uk 4. Report online
Child/ Young Person abuse	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Contact DSO/Medical Supervision 2.Talk to school DSL 3. Call Herts Social Services 0300 123 4043 <p>Report concerns about a child or request support Hertfordshire County Council</p>
Suicidal thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen non-judgementally • Validate feelings • Assess level of risk/ intent • Complete safety plan • Contact DSO • Talk to school DSL/ parent • Refer to CAMHS guide- see below • Contact organisations for advice- see below
Self- harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen non-judgementally • Validate feelings • Assess level of risk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete safety plan • Contact DSO/Medical Supervision • Talk to school DSL/ parent • Refer to CAMHS guide- see below • Contact organisations for advice- see Coaches crib sheets • www.harmless.org.uk
Eating disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen non-judgementally • Validate feelings • Assess level of risk • Bring to medical supervision • Contact organisations for advice- see Coaches crib sheets • www.firststepsed.co.uk • www.Beateatingdisorders.co.uk
Responding to Disclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show you care, help them open up • Take your time, slow down • Show you understand, reflect back • Use open questions, do not lead • Reassure- abuse not their fault • Validate feelings • Do not promise confidentiality • Tell them what will happen next • Record in child's words as soon as possible after event. Record date and time • Report to DSO. Record date and time reported. • Do not talk to perpetrator

Crisis Support (24 hours)

Organisations	Contact Number/ Email
Single point of Access (SPA) CAMHS/ AMHS https://www.hpft.nhs.uk	0800 6444 101 (children) 0300 123 4042 (adults)
Childline Childline www.childline.org.uk	0800 1111
Samaritans Samaritans Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy Here to listen	116 123
PAPYRUS HOPELINEUK Contact Us Papyrus	0800 068 4141 TEXT: 88247
SHOUT	Text SHOUT to 85258
NHS 111 option 2	111 option 2

Mental Health Need : Advice from CAMHS in Herts (Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT))

999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency intervention Life threatening condition
------------	--

<p>0800 6444 101 (children)</p> <p>0300 123 4042 (adults)</p> <p>or</p> <p>NHS 111 opt 2</p> <p>or</p> <p>Mental Health Urgent Care Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgent mental health needs Feeling unsafe, distressed or worried Hearing voices or seeing things others can't Feeling unable to cope Thinking about harming yourself or others <p>Click here for more information about the Urgent Care Centre</p>
--	--

<p>0800 6444 101(children)</p> <p>0300 123 4042 (adults)</p> <p>or</p> <p>E: hpft.spa@nhs.net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needing help and guidance but it's not an emergency Needing advice about anxiety/worries Mood changes Withdrawing from people If you just want to talk
---	--

ANNEXE 6: Safeguarding proformas

GRIT Safeguarding Record for Young People

Staff are required to complete this form and pass it to Dr Louise Randall if they have a safeguarding concern about a young person in GRIT;

Salesforce CON Number	
Date of birth	
Your name and role	
Nature of concern/disclosure <i>Please include where you were when the young person made a disclosure, what you saw, who else was there, what did the young person say or do and what you said.</i>	
Time & date of incident:	
Name and position of the person you passing this information to	
Your Signature	
Time and date form completed	
Time form received by DSO	
Action Taken by DSO	
Parents informed?	
Signature of DSO	

GRIT Safeguarding Record for Staff

Name of person to whom concern relates:		Role of person to whom concern relates:	
Date when concern arose:		Time when concern arose:	
Details of concern- include names of staff, young people, witnesses and dates/ times			
Name of person recording concern:		Role of person recording concern:	
Date when concern form was shared		Signature:	
Name of person receiving concern		Role of person receiving concern:	
Signature:		Low level concern or safeguarding concern?	

ANNEXE 7:

Coach Training Guide: Identifying and Responding to Self-Harm in Adolescents

1. Purpose

This guide equips coaches working with adolescents to confidently identify, respond to, and refer cases of self-harm in line with NICE NG225 guidance. It promotes a trauma-informed, compassionate approach within a safeguarding framework.

2. Coach Role & Boundaries

Coaches are often trusted adults in young people's lives. While not clinicians, they are in a strong position to:

- Notice early signs of distress or self-harming behaviour
- Create a safe, supportive environment
- Refer appropriately to designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) or mental health professionals

Always act within your setting's safeguarding policy and do not attempt to diagnose or counsel beyond your scope.

3. Recognising Signs of Self-Harm

Look out for:

- Unexplained cuts, burns or bruises
- Wearing long sleeves in warm weather
- Frequent 'accidents' or injuries
- Withdrawal, low mood, irritability or secrecy
- Talk of feeling hopeless or overwhelmed

If you observe these signs, or if a young person discloses self-harm:

- Stay calm and non-judgmental
- Acknowledge their courage in telling you
- Avoid shock, blame or overreaction

4. How to Ask Safely

You may say:

"I've noticed you've seemed a bit down lately, and I'm here if anything is bothering you."
 "Some people cope with stress by hurting themselves. Is that something you're dealing with?"

Ask sensitively and in private. Give space for honest answers.

5. Immediate Response & Safeguarding

If a young person discloses or shows signs of self-harm that requires medical attention:

- Ensure safety: Attend to any injuries with first aid or call for medical help.
- Stay with the young person until a responsible adult takes over.
- Inform the safeguarding lead or follow local child protection procedures.
- Document clearly what was said or observed.

6. Supporting the Young Person

- Reassure: Emphasise that they are not in trouble.
- Don't promise secrecy: You must pass on concerns to keep them safe.
- Encourage: Let them know that help is available and they are not alone.
- Involve family: Where appropriate and with guidance from safeguarding leads.

7. Creating a Supportive Environment

- Promote predictability and trust in coaching sessions.
- Promote healthy coping strategies (e.g. physical activity, breathwork, journaling).
- Model emotional literacy: Talk openly (but appropriately) about feelings and stress.

8. When and Where to Refer

Encourage a psychosocial assessment by a trained professional as early as possible. Your job is not to assess risk but to connect the young person with appropriate care.

Use referral pathways to:

- School mental health teams
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- GP or healthcare providers
- Local safeguarding teams

9. Coach Preparation & Training

All coaches should receive:

- Basic mental health awareness and safeguarding training
- Guidance on self-harm and suicide prevention
- Supervision or debriefing following a disclosure

10. Quick Reference Checklist

Task	Action
Notice	Recognise potential signs of self-harm
Ask	Speak calmly and sensitively if concerned
Support	Offer reassurance and stay present
Refer	Escalate concerns to safeguarding lead
Follow up	Maintain connection in a supportive role
Reflect	Seek supervision or debrief if needed

11. Final Notes

Self-harm is a coping mechanism, not a behaviour to punish. Coaches are key figures in early identification and compassionate response. Your ability to listen, notice, and act appropriately can be life changing.

Always follow your organisation's safeguarding protocol and seek support when needed.