

Safeguarding case study activity

Introduction

This activity builds on the topic of safeguarding. Prior to this session you will have provided learners with the underpinning knowledge to support this activity. A number of additional resources have been provided and can be downloaded from the Resources page. These include:

- services to support children and their families or adults
- services to support adults
- the history of the legislation
- the main points taken from the legislation.

Organise learners into groups. You will need to plan this in advance. Provide learners with one of four case studies and a set of questions to think about when discussing the case studies.

The case studies promote a number of skills including:

- working collaboratively to reach a final decision
- linking theory and practice
- problem solving.

Learners will also need to analyse the information within the case studies to arrive at an informed decision as to whether there are any indicators of abuse and what these are.

Please remember

Learners are vulnerable, so it is important that the activities for safeguarding are handled sensitively. Some sessions could result in some learners discussing personal and confidential areas of their own lives. You may also have to deal with disclosure of poor practice in the workplace. You must be aware of your own organisation's policies on disclosure and how to implement them if the need arises. Identify the key people to offer support if required. Guidance about appropriate action in the event of disclosure of confidential information by learners is part of the Government's Quality Protects programme.

www.dfes.gov.uk/qualityprotects

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/informationsharing

Learning objectives

Whilst undertaking this activity, learners will:

- work in groups to study scenarios of possible cases of abuse
- undertake research to identify reporting procedures for safeguarding
- Work collaboratively with peers to achieve learning outcomes
- evaluate their own learning and identify areas for further development.

Materials required

- Case studies.
- Handouts for types and indicators of abuse.
- Flow chart for reporting suggested abuse (optional).

Starting points

The case studies need to be used when the learners have the underpinning knowledge to be able to identify types of abuse and the indicators, including the signs and symptoms of all types of abuse. The activity will test their learning through a range of practical activities.

You could begin by asking learners to recap on what they have learned to date and how this links to their own work practice. This can be linked to issues around confidentiality and also around the safeguarding of the learners themselves (The Children Act 1989 includes learners up to the age of 19). This activity can also be used at the end of a unit for assessment of learning.

Suggested approaches

Use the activity when learners have some knowledge and understanding around safeguarding and are ready to link their knowledge to workplace practice. Remember that it is unlikely that learners will be involved in safeguarding issues during their training and many may not be involved once qualified and working in the sector. It is important for learners to have the knowledge and understanding of safeguarding as it is not a natural occurrence in workplace settings and they need to be aware of observational and reporting skills.

Group learners according to:

- their work placement
- support needed to complete activities
- where learners feel comfortable discussing sensitive and difficult issues.

Provide learners with one case study per group and ask them to discuss the issues and difficulties surrounding the scenario. There are question prompts

to elicit discussion. If the learners have a good understanding of the topic do not supply any supplementary information. If you feel that they need extra support provide them with the handouts on types of abuse and indicators of abuse. Alternatively, you may want learners to research the topic.

To extend the activity, you may also want to give them the handouts on organisations to support children and their families or other adults. Learners may then identify which organisations may be involved in the scenarios.

Learners can devise their own case studies to check the learning of peers and for peer questioning and assessment.

Learners can present their case studies to the rest of the group. You may provide instructions to the learners on suggested areas for peer questioning. You may also want to use the presentations as an assessment tool.

After completing the case studies, you can then link this to the flow chart for reporting suspected abuse. The learners will identify at which point during the scenario they would begin to implement the procedures on the reporting flowchart.

Individual learning plans (ILPs) can be reviewed, revised and updated according to knowledge and understanding.

Planning learning outside the classroom

Learners can continue their research outside the classroom. You could ask them to evaluate any recent media coverage around safeguarding and use the Organisations' charts to evaluate the support available and usefulness for practitioners of websites and so on. If you have not already done so, you can ask learners to evaluate the policies and procedures for safeguarding in their workplace.

Alternative approaches

This activity can be used as a whole class activity with learners discussing the scenarios within a large group. In this way you can manage the discussion and highlight issues surrounding the scenarios. Learning can be extended through questioning by teacher, tutor, trainer and peers and links can be made between theory and practice. You could also introduce the flowchart at the same time as the case studies and encourage learners to identify at which point they would begin implementing procedures for reporting.

Differentiation to meet individual needs

Groups working on the activity can be self-selected or chosen to develop specific skills, provide support and maximise sharing of experiences and knowledge.

Consolidation, checking and reflecting on learning

You can apply open questioning techniques to check on learning (further information on the Assessment for learning approach can be found in the Talking teaching, training and learning CPD activity).

When the activity is used later in the learning of a particular topic, it can be used as a reflective tool to encourage analysis of practice and process in relation to theory and practice. This deepens learning and promotes the transference of skills and knowledge to help learners deal with potential safeguarding situations.

Formative, self- and peer assessment can be used to revise ILPs and encourage the self-managing learner.

Learners can also demonstrate the skills of:

- creative thinkers in devising their own case studies
- effective participators and team workers through the use of group work.

What might learners do next?

Learners can produce guidance sheets and Top Tips for completing tasks. They can write scenarios to ensure that all types of abuse have a case study. They may also develop a 'safeguarding pack' as part of a summative assessment activity.

Embedding literacy, language and numeracy

The activity involves written and oral communication skills. It also provides opportunities for assessing group interaction, problem solving and presentation skills.