

# Safeguarding In the Diocese of Plymouth – Newsletter (Covid-19 edition)



***"While we have the opportunity, let us do well to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of the faith." Galatians 6:10***

## INTRODUCTION

In this time of crisis it is important that we do not relax standards of care in respect of safeguarding and we should make ourselves aware of the additional strains that are put on families, children and the vulnerable. Whilst we may not be able to meet face to face a Church is not a building but a community and as such whilst the buildings may be shut there is still a lot going on in the safeguarding world and as such the Safeguarding Office for the Diocese is open and there to support you.

**Should you have any issues or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact the Safeguarding Office directly either on [robert.brown@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:robert.brown@prcdtr.org.uk) or on the phone 01364645431 (you will be transferred to my mobile)**

To further help I have highlighted a number of key topics in each case with an introduction to the issues and concerns. In each case the links will provide more detailed information ranging from Domestic Abuse to keeping yourself safe on line through to safeguarding resources for children. Should any of the issues raise questions then please feel free to ring or email the Safeguarding Office on the contact details above. Please also note other than write a book it is not possible to cover all eventualities but whatever the issue the Diocesan Safeguarding Office can assist in resolving the matter.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

We know from both figures produced by Government and Charities who work in the area that Domestic Abuse has increased dramatically during the current lockdown – some simple advice

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and listen to the questions from the operator and if possible, respond by coughing or tapping the head set. If prompted, press 55 to Make Yourself Heard and this will transfer your call to the police. (NB Pressing 55 only works on mobiles and does not allow police to track your location.)

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about your location should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response

***The most important issue is to seek help safely.***

Free phone National Domestic Abuse Help line, run by Refuge 0808 200 0247  
[www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk)

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327 [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)

Rape Crisis (England and Wales) 0808 802 9999 [www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)

Respect phone line 0808 802 4040 [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)

Advice by Catholic Bishops Conference <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/domestic-abuse/>

**REMEMBER - The Safeguarding Office can assist if required**

## **SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN**

The below link will provide you with access to a wealth of resources which can be used to educate young people, families and teachers on safeguarding and online risk.

[https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/?utm\\_source=Thinkuknow&utm\\_campaign=f4fd0dd4ee-TUK\\_ONLINE\\_SAFETY\\_AT\\_HOME\\_05\\_05\\_20&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0b54505554-f4fd0dd4ee-64892461](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=f4fd0dd4ee-TUK_ONLINE_SAFETY_AT_HOME_05_05_20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-f4fd0dd4ee-64892461)

## **IF A CHILD OR VULNERABLE PERSON IS AT RISK**

### **YOU MUST RESPOND**

In an emergency phone the Police on 999

Contact the safeguarding Office – we can advise and support

Remember do nothing is not an option

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

Guidance on helping with mental health during the current lockdown is available at

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/help-and-information/covid-19-and-your-mental-health/>

In addition in the Plymouth area

Livewell South West, has set up a 24/7 urgent mental health advice line that will enable young people, families, carers and professionals to access support when they need during this lockdown

period. This is available to all families (they do not have to be open to CAMHS to access this) who are registered with a Plymouth G.P and professionals across the city of Plymouth. The telephone line will be covered by specialist mental health trained staff, who will be able to provide advice, support and sign posting to other relevant agencies. This service is open to Children, Young People and Parents and carers” Contact 01752 435122 for advice and support.

The situation in other areas is a little more complex but the Safeguarding Office will be able to signpost

## **KEEPING YOURSELF SAFE AS A VOLUNTEER**

The safety and well being of volunteers during a global health emergency like COVID-19 is paramount. Please ensure you always follow the guidelines below:

- 1) Wash your hands regularly and properly by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water
- 2) Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth. Hands touch surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.
- 3) Practice respiratory hygiene. Make sure you, and the people around you follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.
- 4) Maintain at least 2 metres (6 ft) distance between yourself and anyone who you are supporting
- 5) If you are delivering groceries or prescriptions, please confirm an approximate drop off time with your client and knock on the door and leave items on their doorstep for collection by the client.
- 6) Please do not exchange cash / payments in person. Please arrange reimbursement of funds either via online payment or through the organisation you are supporting.
- 7) If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care. Stay at home and visit: [www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19](http://www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19) and follow the instructions to complete the symptom checker OR phone your GP. DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR GP OR HOSPITAL. Why? 111 and your GP will have the most up to date information on the situation. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to direct you quickly to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent the spread of viruses and other infections.
- 8) Stay informed and follow advice given by 111, your GP or Public Health England. National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in our locality. They are best placed to advise on what our area should be doing to protect themselves.
- 9) If you feel unwell at any time, PLEASE STAY AT HOME and do not attend any voluntary commitments. However, please call to let your relevant Manager or team know.
- 10) Notify your Manager immediately if you have had direct contact with someone who displays any symptoms or who is a confirmed case and stay at home. Direct Contact means:

- Living in the same household

- Direct or face to face contact with a case, for any length of time
- Being within 2 metres of the case for any other exposure not listed above, for longer than 15 minutes.
- Being advised by a public health agency that contact with a confirmed case has occurred

If you have any concerns regarding your voluntary role, please always seek advice from your organisation. The Safeguarding Office can assist

Remember, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, its part of our Christian mission and both moral and social responsibility. Should you have any concerns then please contact the Safeguarding Office as we can advise and support and ensure that appropriate action is being taken.

**Robert Brown**  
**Safeguarding Coordinator**