



SOUTHERN FEDERATION of MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETIES

INFORMATION SHEET No 1 - Issue 2

DATE: DECEMBER 2005

SUBJECT: CHILD PROTECTION ACT

1. Introduction

These guidelines have been produced by the Federation to help its member organisations take appropriate action to enable children and vulnerable adults to enjoy the hobby of model engineering in all its forms in a safe environment.

As far as we are able to determine by carrying out an investigation with Social Services it is not necessary to carry out full checks of your members under the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) scheme. However, we would recommend that you contact your local Social Services Department and show them your Policy and Code of Practice and Procedures for their approval. They will also give advice on any action you should take, also obtain a phone number you can contact in the event of any abuse heard or seen..

Be aware of any changes in the law, contact Social Services for advice, don't rely on hear say, it is usually incorrect.

2. Requirements

Your organisation is advised to take the following **2 steps**

- 1. A policy statement.** This will state your commitment to providing a safe place for children to take part and learn, and to prevent the abuse of children. You can use or adapt the Policy Statement below, if you wish.
- 2. A simple code of practice and procedures.** This should govern how the organisation runs and cover :
 - i. The prevention of abuse of children whilst at your site.
 - ii. What to do if abuse is alleged/suspected to have occurred.

3. Policy Statement

The Policy Statement on Child Protection is as follows:

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- As defined in the Children Act 1989, anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.
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This policy will be kept under periodic review

4. Code of Practice and Procedures

It is possible to reduce situations for abuse of children and help to protect adult members from false allegations being made by promoting good practice.

Some common sense guidelines for everyone dealing with children:-

(a) Within your organisation:

- Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Do not take children to your home.
- Do not photograph or video children, or publish their pictures, without the knowledge and consent of their parents.
- Do not publish information, in print or on a website, that may enable someone to contact the child.

They should never:

- Be alone with children away from others.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act. (A suggested Incident Report Form is attached)

(b) Visiting your organisation:

- Avoid accepting children on site unless they are either accompanied by a parent or guardian or there is a society member present who has been subjected to background vetting. Alternatively, appoint a Welfare Officer who has undergone the appropriate vetting and would be on site at all times the public is present.
- Never be in a one-to-one situation with a visiting child.
- Except in emergencies or to prevent danger, avoid physical contact with children. Parents or guardians should be asked to lift children on and off rides and, where possible, accompany them on the ride.
- Clear and concise instructions should be announced before the commencement of each ride.

- If a child puts itself in possible danger by, for example, attempting to touch equipment, being in a hazardous position adjacent to miniature railways or road locomotives or running alongside them, their parents or guardians must be advised. The potential dangers should be pointed out and the parent or guardian asked to supervise the child appropriately.
- If children enter an operating area they should be instructed to leave and their parent or guardian advised of the reason for the instruction.
- In the event of distress or injury the parent or guardian must take the initiative to console and administer initial treatment.
- Nothing above should preclude a member from taking timely action to prevent an accident or injury or to act to treat a life-threatening injury.
- Never let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act. (A suggested Incident Report Form is attached).
- If an allegation is made by a child against a member of the club/society this must be reported immediately to the secretary or appointed officer of the committee. It may be necessary to involve Social Services.
- Relationships do build up between children and adults, if the child reports of problems at home this must be taken seriously and reported to Social Services. Social Services have a special phone number to which these cases can be referred in confidence. The secretary should have this number in his records and can be obtained from the local office.
- Remember in all cases of abuse or problems at home ***Just listen*** – leave it to the experts Social Services to deal with the problem

Incident Report Form

Try and keep the process friendly rather than formal; you want the child to feel as comfortable as possible during this stressful process. This form is to be filled in by a Third Party who has not been involved with the incident

Interviewers' Details

Name: Position:

Child's Details

Name: Date of Birth:
Address:

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Parents/Carers names:
Address:

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Record what was said and reported

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Action taken

Police: reported to which police station?

Officer reported to:

Date/time incident reported:

Details of advice received:

Other: contacted other organisations for advice? Date/time of call:

Which organisation(s):

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Person advice received from:

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Details of advice received:

Signed by interviewer as above: Date:.....