

## **Dealing with challenging behaviours and promoting positive behaviour**

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As a charity working with children, young people and adults through our activities and events there will be occasions where we will have to deal with poor and challenging behaviours. Challenging behaviours can be, but not limited to:

1. Aggressive physical behaviour.
2. Foul, threatening, and hurtful language and actions.
3. Destructive behaviour such as throwing objects or damaging equipment.
4. Disruptive behaviours that affect the individual's engagement in the activity and/or the participation and enjoyment of everyone else involved.

This guidance aims to help everyone involved in YST events and activities understand, promote, and encourage positive behaviour, identifying issues and how to deal with them.

This guidance is based on the following principles:

1. The welfare of children, young people and adults participating in our events/activities is the paramount consideration.
2. Everyone involved in YST activities /events is provided with the YST Code of Ethics and Conduct which sets out the charity's standards of behaviour.
3. Everyone involved in YST activities and events is aware of the reporting process for alleged breaches of the Codes of Ethics and Conduct.
4. Everyone involved in YST activities /events understands that children, young people, and adults must never be subjected to treatment and behaviour that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading in accordance with the YST Safeguarding Policies procedures and guidance.
5. Everyone involved in YST activities / events understands that a participant may display behaviour that is challenging. For example, this could be due to (but not limited to) due a physical and/or mental health condition, adverse experiences or trauma, their background and life experiences.

### **Planning activities and events**

When planning activities and events always consider in advance if any child, young person, or adult participating requires additional support or supervision to participate safely. Some participants may be identified as having additional needs that affect their behaviour through the registration process, direct contact from a parent/carers, school, or other partner organisation.

### **Where potential needs/risks are identified always:**

1. Conduct an assessment of any additional risk associated with behaviour. This could include but not be limited to speaking with the participant directly if they are over 18. If they are under 18 consider speaking to parents/carers/school/other partner organisation to understand their needs and how their behaviour is affected.
2. For children and young people ask the parents/carers about their behaviour and what measures and strategies help at home or at school, can these be replicated at the activity or event?
3. For adults, speak to them directly about support measures and strategies that could be implemented at the activity or event.



4. Do not assume you have to be an expert in additional needs or managing behaviour. Simple adjustments may be all that is required to support their engagement.
5. Ensure there is suitable ratios of adults to all participants during sessions. Additional supervision may have been identified as a potential need at points 1-3.
6. Ensure that all YST staff and volunteers involved understand how to manage the behaviour that has been identified and agree a consistent approach.
7. If a participant has been identified prior to an YST activity/event to have additional needs or behaviours that may require support and / or physical intervention this should be discussed with them directly if they are aged 18 or over. If they are under 18 consider speaking to their parents/carers or other agencies before they attend. This allows the YST to work in partnership with those parties to ensure they can be supported to attend the activity/event safely. This can include asking those parties to provide a suitably qualified and trained support worker or volunteer to support their attendance and deal with any behavioural issues and / or any required physical interventions.
8. Speak to the YST Safeguarding Team for further support and guidance.

### **Encouraging Positive Behaviour**

When responding to any concerns around challenging behaviour our response must always be proportionate to the behaviour. Any resulting actions taken as soon as practicable, fully explained to the participant if they are aged 18 or over or parents/carers if they are aged under 18 years.

#### **Always:**

1. Stay calm and talk to the participant and establish what the issue is. They could be tired, missing home, feeling anxious or not feeling part of the team. Ask them what would help to make them feel more comfortable/settled.
2. Don't assume the problem rests solely with them. Can you engage them in another way if they are struggling?
3. Deal with inappropriate /poor behaviour there and then, don't store up incidents to be presented to the participant later.
4. Try to de-escalate the situation by talking it through calmly with the participants concerned.
5. Consider do they need some time out or quiet time away from the activity or event.
6. Ask them for their view on how best to tackle a problem. Individuals are more likely to engage with you and respond to solutions if they have had input to what those solutions look like.
7. Reinforce the Code of Conduct for the event and activity and if required the sanctions /consequences for breaches of the code.
8. Consider increased staff supervision.
9. Be mindful that there is usually a reason someone is behaving differently to the rest of the group. It might be a cry for help or attention. Always talk to your Safeguarding Lead if you are concerned.
10. Ask for help and support from your colleagues to manage situations of challenging behaviour. They may have dealt with similar situations at other activities and events that could be helpful.
11. Share strategies and solutions that have worked well to resolve issues so these can be shared with colleagues across the YST through training, CPD and staff updates.



**The following actions are never permitted to manage behaviour at any YST activity or event:**

1. Physical punishment or the threat of such.
2. Refusing to speak, interact or engage with any participant and encouraging others to do the same.
3. Deprivation of food, water, access to toilets or other facilities.
4. Any form of intimidation, ridicule, or humiliation.

**Discipline and using sanctions**

The YST Code of Ethics and Conduct detail the behaviours expected of everyone at YST activities and events. Disciplinary steps and sanctions are an important element in maintaining discipline to ensure YST activities and events are safe, inclusive and enjoyable environments for everyone attending.

The following steps can be used in conjunction with the YST Code of Ethics and Conduct:

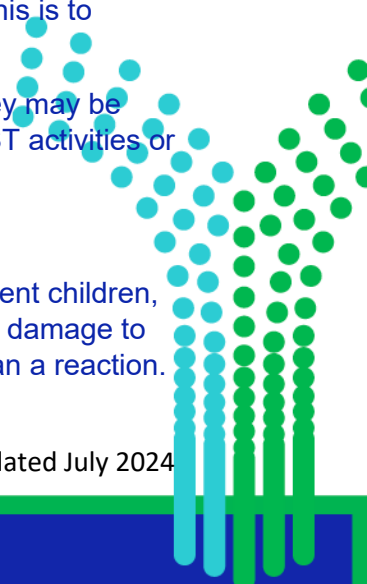
1. Ensure the Code of Ethics and Conduct is clearly communicated to all attendees. Encourage a sense of responsibility and respect for others and property at the activity or event.
2. If anyone behaves or conducts themselves in breach of the Code of Conduct, consider a verbal warning in the first instance.
3. If following a verbal warning, there is a further breach consider removing the participant from the activity for a short time. Two members of staff should accompany them to a safe place.
4. Use this time to allow them space and the opportunity to calm down and tell you what is happening for them, remind them of their responsibility under the Code of Conduct, the potential impact of their behaviour on others and the consequences to them of any further incidents.
5. If the participant struggling is under 18 years old, consider speaking to their parent/carer or school to see what strategies could help support them to continue their participation.
6. If the participant struggling is 18 years old or over, consider asking them whether you can contact a parent/carer or someone they trust to help support them to continue their participation.
7. Be mindful that there is usually a reason they are behaving differently to the rest of the group. Always talk to your Safeguarding Lead if you are concerned.

If someone attending a YST activity/event is subject to frequent sanctions regarding their behaviour a review of their continued participation may take place. Reviews by YST staff may include involving the adult, young person, their parent, carer or school and any other persons involved in supporting or providing services to them and their family. This is to ensure that informed decisions about further participation can be made.

If someone's behaviour presents a risk of danger or harm to them or others, they may be removed from the activity or event and be unable to participate at any future YST activities or events.

**Physical Intervention**

Physical intervention is only permissible when it is absolutely necessary to prevent children, young people and adults from harming themselves or others or causing serious damage to property. It should always be the result of conscious decision making rather than a reaction.



Before physically intervening at any YST activity/event you should consider “is this the only option in order to manage this situation and ensure everyone stays safe?” Any form of physical intervention should be to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the young person whose behaviour is of immediate concern.

**If you must physically intervene always:**

1. Stay in control of your actions.
2. Consider your own safety and protect yourself where appropriate.
3. Use your voice first to try to diffuse a situation with words, if you must physically intervene, ensure you give a verbal warning first.
4. Use only the minimal amount of force required for the shortest period of time. This could be restraining a young person from hurting themselves or others or moving them away from a situation of conflict.
5. Avoid contact with the buttocks, genitals, breasts, and intimate areas of the body to reduce the risk of allegations of assault.
6. Avoid contact with the head and neck to reduce the risk of allegations of assault and unintentional injury.

Physical intervention should never be used as a form of punishment or to inflict pain on any individual.

**Any physical interventions at YST activities and events must be reported to the YST Safeguarding Team using the safeguarding incident report form.**

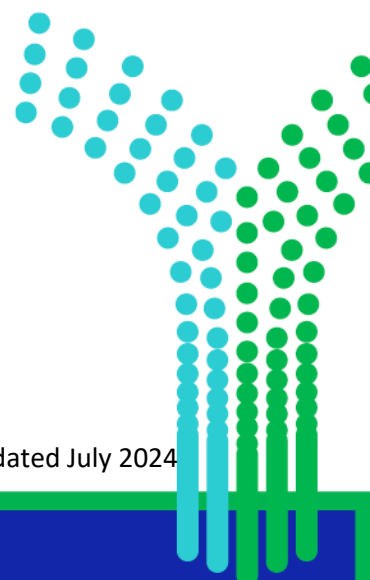
**After a physical intervention**

Physical intervention provokes strong feelings and emotions for everyone involved including those children, young people and adults who have witnessed the situation.

A review and debrief meeting following a physical intervention should always take place. This meeting will usually involve YST staff, the adult or young person, their parent, carer or school and any other persons involved in supporting or providing services for the individual at the event or activity (e.g., a support worker). This is to ensure that informed decisions about further participation in the event/activity can be made.

This meeting provides the opportunity for all parties to talk about what has happened in a calm and safe environment. The welfare and wellbeing of all those involved in the incident should be discussed and support provided where necessary.

A review/debrief meeting may also need to decide about a person’s continued participation in the YST activity or event.



## **Further resources**

**Website Link:** [About Us | Mind, the mental health charity - Mind](#)

Mind and Young Minds offer a suite of expert resources for organisations working with adults, children, and young people. Including how to support them with anxiety, OCD, ADHD, Anger management and many more. There guides provide tools and strategies that can be used to support them.

**Website Link:** [Community support for young people's mental health | YoungMinds](#)

This guide provides practical information, resources and tips that give you the tools and confidence to support young people.

**Website Link:** <https://youtu.be/TXjTu5EsOzQ>

Young Minds video “what makes an adult someone to turn to”

**Website Link:** [Spot. Support. Signpost | Sport and mental health - Mind](#)

Spot. Support. Signpost aims to help anyone, from volunteers to senior leaders, to spot the signs someone may be struggling, support them, if you feel able to and signpost them to help and services.

**Website Link:** [Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit - Mind](#)

A mental health and physical activity toolkit aiming to increase the number of sport, physical activity and mental health providers who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support and engage people experiencing mental health problems in physical activity.

The toolkit is made up of a variety of guides. Each one provides guidance, tools, templates and good practice case studies to help organisations provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for people experiencing mental health problems to be physically active.

**Website Link:** [Your feelings | Childline](#)

Children and young people can find the way they are feeling very hard to cope with. Childline offers support and guidance on mental health, anxiety, stress, panic, self-harm and understanding feelings and emotions.

**Website Link:** [Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

The NSPCC offer this guidance for those working with children and young people to help understand harmful sexual behaviour and what to do if you are concerned.

**Website Link:** [Challenging behaviour - Sense](#)

Sense is a charity supporting everyone who is deaf, blind or has complex disabilities. They offer resources around challenging behaviour.

**Website Link:** [How to deal with challenging behaviour in adults - Social care and support guide - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

This NHS guide offers support in relation to managing challenging behaviour in adults.



**Website Link: Information and guidance - Challenging Behaviour Foundation**

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation (CBF) is a registered charity that was founded in 1997 by Vivien Cooper OBE, the parent of a child with severe learning disabilities. The charity focusses specifically on children, young people and adults with learning disabilities that affect their behaviour.

**National Youth Agency introduction to trauma informed practice CPD**

**Website link: Introduction to Trauma Informed Practice - National Youth Agency (nya.org.uk)**

The National Youth Agency has created this free CPD for youth workers to gain a greater understanding of trauma and how it affects mental and emotional wellbeing. Key components of the module include:

- Learning about trauma and understand responses to trauma
- Information about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) and the impact on young people
- Why trauma affects our mental and emotional wellbeing
- Understanding responses to trauma and how to respond
- The importance of Regulation and how to support young people
- How to recognise and respond to the signs of compassion fatigue or burnout

