

CONFIDENTIALITY

The principle of confidentiality is fundamental to the working of the groups. Information should not be confidential to individual workers - the bounds of confidentiality are within the staff team.

Youth workers treat with confidence personal information about young people, whether obtained directly or indirectly, or by inference. Such information includes name, address biographical details, and other descriptions of the young person's life and circumstances, which might result in their identification. Information concerning a young person will not be passed on to another young person except with their agreement.

Where workers wish to communicate information about a young person outside the team, permission of the young person will be sought. Exceptional circumstances may arise where there is danger that a young person, may cause physical harm to themselves or to a third party. In this case agreement to consult with other agencies should be sought from the young person wherever possible, unless there are good grounds the young person is no longer able to take responsibility for his/her own actions.

In situations where young people may be disclosing sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, a worker should never agree to confidentiality. See Child Protection guidelines for clarification.

The nature of youth work makes the practice of prescriptive guidelines difficult in some, areas. Youth workers therefore need to be aware of different factors around confidentiality, which affect them in different working contexts, and make appropriate decisions.