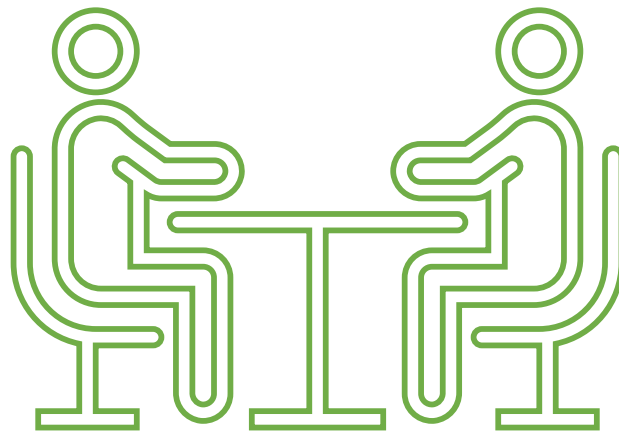


Prevention from Abuse *Toolkit*



**A document for all members and volunteers in
Stamford Methodist Church & Second Helpings**

June 2021

Prevention from Abuse Toolkit

This toolkit is to support any volunteers or staff members of the Stamford Methodist Church & Second Helpings who experience any of the following types of abuse whilst working or in their voluntary role:

- verbal abuse
- physical abuse
- threats of physical abuse or damage
- bullying
- online abuse
- damage to their property

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Definitions

Verbal abuse is harmful behaviour that can cause mental distress. It can involve both verbal and non-verbal abuse which can scare, humiliate and isolate a person. This may include:

- threats
- humiliation or ridicule
- provoking fear of violence
- shouting, yelling and swearing
- blaming
- controlling
- intimidation
- coercion

Physical abuse is physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which might or might not cause physical injury. This type of abuse includes:

- hitting
- pushing
- rough handling
- exposure to heat or cold
- force feeding
- improper administration of medication
- denial of treatment
- misuse or illegal use of restraint
- not being allowed to go where you wish, when you wish

Bullying can be defined as behaviour that is repeated; intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally, and often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

If you suspect or know that someone else is a victim of any types of abuse, including but not limited to the following, please refer to the safeguarding policy and refer your concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Officer and Minister:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

Racist or religious hate incidents

The following guidance has been taken from the Citizens Advice Bureau regarding racist or religious hate incidents:

What are racist or religious hate incidents?

Something is a racist or religious hate incident if the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on race or religion.

This means that if you believe something is a hate incident, it should be recorded as such by the person you are reporting it to.

Who can be the victim of a racist and religious hate incident?

Anyone can be the victim of a racist or religious hate incident. For example, someone may wrongly believe you're part of a certain racial group. Or someone may target you because of your partner's religion.

What does racial or religious group mean?

A *racial group* means a group of people who are defined by reference to their race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin. This includes:

- Gypsies and Travellers
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Jews and Sikhs

A *religious group* means a group of people who share the same religious belief such as Muslims, Hindus and Christians. It also includes people with no religious belief at all.

What type of incidents can be a racist or religious hate incident?

Racist or religious hate incidents can take many forms including:

- verbal and physical abuse
- bullying
- threatening behaviour
- online abuse
- damage to property.

It can be a one-off incident or part of an ongoing campaign of harassment or intimidation.

Hate incidents are not only carried out by strangers. It could be carried out by a carer, a neighbour, a teacher or someone you consider a friend.

When is a racist or religious hate incident also a hate crime?

When racist or religious hate incidents become criminal offences, they are known as hate crimes. Any criminal offence can be a racist or religious hate crime, if the offender targeted you because of their prejudice or hostility based on race or religion.

There are two main types of racist and religious hate crime:

- Racially or religiously aggravated offences under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Any other offences for which the sentence can be increased under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 if they are classed as a hate crime

In both cases, when a criminal offence is classed as a racist or religious hate crime, the judge can impose a tougher sentence on the offender.

Remember, the incident you've suffered may still be a crime even if it's difficult to show it was carried out because of hostility based on race or religion.

What can you do about a racist or religious hate incident?

If you've experienced a hate incident or crime you can report it to the police. You can also report a hate incident or crime even if it wasn't directed at you. For example, you could be a friend, neighbour, family member, support worker or simply a passer-by.

If you're being repeatedly harassed by the same person, or group of people, it's best to report all the incidents to help the police get the full picture. When reporting the incident or crime you should say you think it was motivated by hostility or prejudice based on race or religion.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can help you with reporting a hate incident or crime.

Guidance taken from this website in 2021:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/hate-crime/racist-and-religious-hate-crime/>

De-Escalation

The cause of anger is almost always an unmet need – for control, information, to be listened to, to feel safe or to be pain-free; it may have psychological antecedents or be triggered by fear.

Skilled listening can make it possible to pre-empt an angry outburst by looking for, or reading, non-verbal signals, or by listening to paraverbal communication, that is, tone, inflection and volume. People are unlikely to have chosen to be in their relatively vulnerable situation; it is likely they might be fearful, so anger may be the response.

Strategies to De-escalate Anger & Aggression

Listen

- Actively listen - use body language to show this, or tell them calmly: “I am listening.”
- Use non-directive, non-intrusive verbal feedback when appropriate e.g. “Ah”, “Oh right”, “Ok”

Wait

- Avoid the temptation to fill the void with words. Count back from 10 if this is challenging for you.
- An occasional and appropriate nod can demonstrate continued attention and a willingness to listen without interrupting.

Body Language

- Use eye contact if this is appropriate – but avoid unremitting stares
- Facial expressions to be neutral, or smile if and when appropriate
- Inclining the head is useful to affirm interest
- Sit alongside at their level to reduce any sense of domination or intimidation

Express

- Express empathy briefly e.g. “I expect that made you feel worse”, “you must have felt isolated” or “I can appreciate why you felt that way” (don’t bring up your own experiences).

- Use open-ended questions (e.g. use TED: Tell me...; Explain ... ; Describe ...”)
- Validate their experience by paraphrasing (repeating back what the person said but using different words).

Distraction

Once a person is a bit calmer, you may be able to further diffuse the situation with *distraction*. This may include:

- Share a low-risk topic that doesn't require a response e.g. about your pet; a funny thing that happened to you; something common to you both (e.g. the place, an object you can both see, the weather etc.).
- Start a low-risk task and then openly invite with a comment e.g. “You can help if you like” (tasks could include clearing a table, washing up cups, adding up the plates)
- Ask low-risk questions or make statements about a topic you know they are interested in.

Checklists for Safe Meetings

Please use these checklists to discuss with external organisers when invited to attend an *online* meeting or event:

Before committing to attend and/or present at an externally organised meeting please discuss the following recommendations with the organiser:

- Is the event invite only or pre-register only so the organiser has details of all those attending?
- Is the event password protected so only those invited and pre-registered can login?
- The online meeting link shouldn't be advertised publicly. If it has been, can the link be removed, and pre-registration set up?
- Are there two people 'co-hosting' – one who is chairing it and one who is checking participants' names and watching for suspicious activity?
- Will the meeting be locked a few minutes after the advertised start time and late comers are not admitted?
- Is there a process in place for the co-hosts to follow should the meeting be compromised?
- Will the chair of the meeting outline expected behaviour of all participants and what actions will be taken should any participants become abusive or disrespectful during the event?

As an attendee, consider the following:

- Have you discussed your attendance with the broader management team in committee meetings (where possible) to discuss any potential concerns?
- Have you shared the details of your attendance before the external meeting with another member of the committee or line manager*?
- If you feel uncomfortable before an event, please do not attend and raise your concerns with your line manager and the event organiser

- If you feel uncomfortable for any reason during an event, please leave the meeting immediately and report your concerns with your line manager and the event organiser
- If you experience any form of abuse during an event, please leave the meeting immediately and inform your line manager/safeguarding officer/minister as soon as you feel able

Please use these checklists to discuss with external organisers when invited to attend a meeting/event *in person*:

Before committing to attend and/or present at an externally organised meeting, please discuss the following recommendations with the organiser:

- Is the event invite only or pre-register only so the organiser has details of all those attending?
- Will the details of all those attending be checked against the pre-registered attendees before admittance to the event?
- Will there be two people 'co-hosting' – one who is chairing it and one who is watching for suspicious activity?
- Will late comers be admitted, and if so who is monitoring who they are?
- Is there a process in place for the co-hosts to follow should the meeting be compromised?
- Will the chair of the meeting outline expected behaviour of all participants and what actions will be taken should any participants become abusive or disrespectful during the event?
- Will there potentially be vulnerable adults or children present, and therefore best to take a colleague to avoid lone-working?

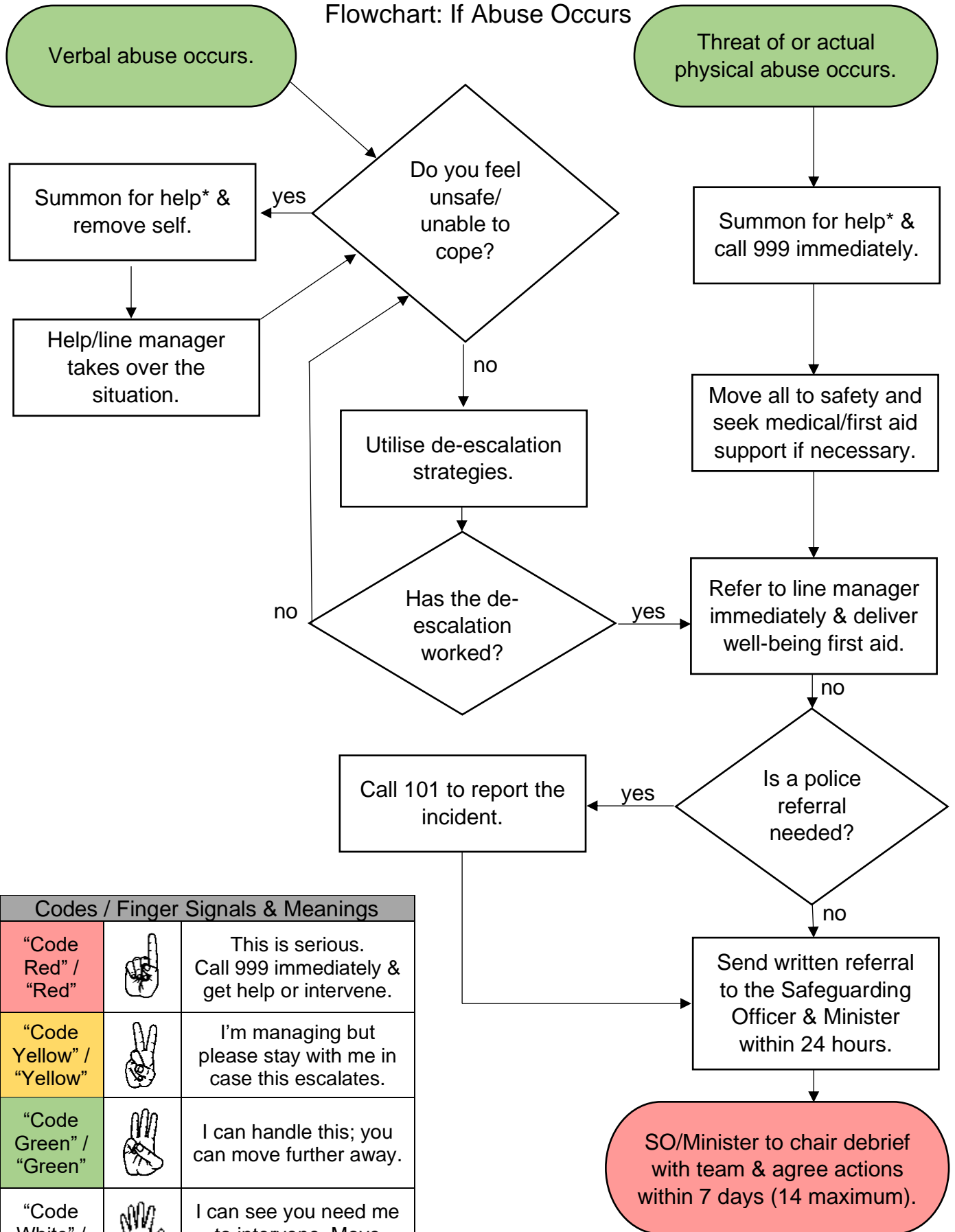
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- If you experience any form of abuse during an event, please leave the meeting immediately and inform your line manager/safeguarding officer/minister as soon as you feel able.

*If you do not have a line manager, refer to the minister or safeguarding officer of the church.

Flowchart: If Abuse Occurs



Codes / Finger Signals & Meanings		
“Code Red” / “Red”		This is serious. Call 999 immediately & get help or intervene.
“Code Yellow” / “Yellow”		I’m managing but please stay with me in case this escalates.
“Code Green” / “Green”		I can handle this; you can move further away.
“Code White” / “White”		I can see you need me to intervene. Move back: I will take over.

*Volunteers should not be lone-working where possible. Where this is unavoidable, inform your line manager of your location and times of lone-working, and have a mobile phone to hand.

Debrief Form for an Incident of Abuse

This must be led by the Safeguarding Officer or Minister with the line manager and volunteers/staff members involved.

Name of volunteers/staff affected:	
Time of incident:	Date of incident:
Location of incident:	

Date of de-briefing:	Officer/minister leading:
Those attending de-brief:	

Details of abusive person:
Type of abuse experienced:
What lead up to, or happened before, the incident occurred?
What happened during the incident?
What de-escalation tactics were used/tried if any? What happened?
Who was present, and at which point did they arrive?
How did the incident end?
What happened after the incident?
What first aid/medical support was given?
What well-being first aid/support was given?
Was the flow-chart followed? What worked/didn't work? (including referrals)
Is there anything that could have been done differently: a) to have reduced risk of abuse? b) to have reduced the level of abuse? c) to have better supported volunteers/staff/visitors?
Are there any necessary follow-up actions e.g. to reduce risk; as a consequence for the abuser
Is anyone in need of any further assistance or well-being support?

<event/group name> - Code of Conduct

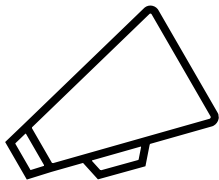
By entering <enter event/group name>
you are agreeing to our values of:



Please show love, peace and respect
to other visitors and volunteers at all times.



Verbal and physical abuse are
not tolerated here.



If you see others not following
these values, please report it.

Offenders will have to leave, and any incidents
or crimes will be reported to the police.

Please show love, peace and respect here.