

Toby's – Shaftesbury Young People's Project

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1. Toby's offer a non-judgmental and private service to young people. All significant disclosures made by a young person will be taken seriously, notified to the Youth Worker-in-Charge and if appropriate, acted upon in consultation with the young person concerned.
2. All young people will be informed, by a clearly displayed notice and access to the full policy, that staff will respect young people's right to privacy and inform them what confidentiality actually means.
3. Members of staff who are working with individuals must inform young people that there are exceptional circumstances when their confidentiality will be breached and direct action taken to ensure the health and well being of that person.

3.1 By exceptional circumstances we mean:

- ❖ When a young person (17 years and under) discloses to a project worker that they have been physically, emotionally or sexually abused and inaction could place them back in the same situation.
- ❖ When other young people (17 years or under) are considered to be at risk e.g. if younger siblings are left in an abusing home.
- ❖ Where the young person is likely to endanger their own life or the life of someone else.
- ❖ When the young person is known to have committed serious crime that involves injury to another person.
- ❖ When the Police make inquiries about a serious offence or incident about which the project holds information.

3.2 By direct action we mean:

- ❖ Referral to an appropriate outside agency e.g. Social Services, Police, Health Department

4. Confidentiality at Toby's means confidentiality within the team i.e:

- ❖ Staff team – paid workers and volunteers on a need to know basis
- ❖ Youth Worker-in-Charge in all cases.

5. Procedural Guidelines

- 5.1 Any disclosures that fall within the exceptional circumstances should in the first instance be referred to the Youth Worker-in-Charge. The young person should be encouraged to be involved in the process. The Youth Worker-in-Charge will be responsible for ensuring that the detailed and accurate recordings are made in accordance with Youth Service procedures.
- 5.2 The breaching of confidentiality will only be done after attempts to persuade young people to ask for help of their own accord has failed. Therefore every effort will be made to work with the young person in a planned way towards an early, agreed disclosure to the relevant authority. The young person will be consulted at all stages of the decision making process and their views and wishes taken into consideration.
- 5.3 Immediate referral to the casualty department/Social Services/Police must be made where rape/serious crimes against the person or physical/sexual abuse has occurred.

- 5.4 If a referral is made to the Local Authority/Police/Health Department, staff are expected to co-operate with their respective investigation and consultative procedures in respect of the young person, whilst informing the young person that they are doing so.
- 5.5 Third parties having involvement with a young person or referring young people to the project may request information about our involvement or progress in a particular situation. Confidentiality should be maintained. However in situations where communication or liaison are thought to be in the young person's interests they should be asked if the worker can disclose.
- 5.6 Other agencies should be informed of the confidential nature of our involvement and requested to co-operate.
6. All disclosures made by young people to workers at Toby's must be kept confidential, except in reference to referrals to appropriate agencies.

Amendment to the Confidentiality Policy 01/04/03

Advisors must in addition to requesting the consent of young people to share information with advisors in Toby's and Connexions advisors in Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset, a young person must be asked to give consent to their file being audited by the Quality Legal Service if necessary. This will take the form of a tick box on the front of the file.

Date effective 01/04/03

Date review 01/03/04