# **Procedure for children at risk of abuse**

This procedure applies to any paid or voluntary instructor, member of staff or helper who may be concerned about the safety and protection of a child. Although the document primarily addresses safeguarding children, it should be noted that most the procedure guidelines can also be applied to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

# **Purpose and aim of this procedure**

We aim to ensure those children who participate in karate training or related activities through Hombu Dojo Karate International (HDKI), and any other children who may come to the attention of HDKI member clubs or an organisation event, receive the protection and support they need if they are at risk of abuse.

The procedure provides clear direction to staff and volunteers at HDKI GB and member clubs if they have concerns that a child is in need of protection.

## **Different types of abuse**

**Physical abuse** is violence causing injury or occurring regularly during childhood or in someone’s care or company. It happens when:

* A child or person is hurt or injured by being hit, shaken, squeezed, thrown, burned, bitten, or cut
* Someone tries to drown or suffocate a child
* Someone gives a child poison, alcohol, or inappropriate drugs
* Someone fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

In some cases, the injuries will be caused deliberately. In others, they may be accidental but caused by knowingly putting the child at risk that could otherwise have been prevented.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when someone uses power or control to involve a child in sexual activity to gratify the abuser's own sexual, emotional, or financial needs or desires. It may include:

* forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of it happening.
* Encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
* Showing a child pornographic material or involving them in the production of such material
* Involving children in watching other people’s sexual activity or in inappropriate discussions about sexual matters

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child that is likely to cause serious harm to his/her development. It may include:

* Persistently denying the child love and affection
* Regularly making the child feel frightened by shouts, threats, or any other means
* Hurting another person or animal to distress a child
* Being so over-protective towards the child that he/she is unable to develop or lead a normal life
* Exploiting or corrupting a child, e.g., by involving him/her in illegal behaviour
* Conveying to a child the message that he/she is worthless, unlovable, inadequate, or his/her only value is to meet the needs of another person. This may or may not include gender-related, racist, homophobic, or other forms of abuse.

**Neglect** involves persistently failing to meet a child’s physical, psychological or emotional needs. It may include:

* Failing to ensure a basic need for food, clothing, shelter, health care, hygiene and education are met.
* Failing to provide appropriate supervision to keep a child out of danger. This includes lack of supervision of activities or leaving child alone in the house.

## **Ways that abuse might be brought to your attention**

* A child might make a direct disclosure about him or herself
* A child might make a direct disclosure about another child
* A child might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
* An instructor, dojo member or helper might be concerned about a child’s appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a child
* A parent or carer might make a disclosure about abuse that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering
* A parent might offer information about a child that is worrying but not direct disclosure

## **Talking to a child who has told you that he/she or another child is being abused**

* Reassure the child that telling someone about it was the right thing to do.
* Tell him/her that you now must do what you can to keep him/her (or the child who is the subject of the allegation) safe.
* Let the child know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it.
* Let the child tell his or her whole story. Do not try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying.
* Ask the child what he/she would like to happen as a result of whether/she has said, but do not make or infer promises you can’t keep.
* Give the child the ChildLine phone number: 0800 1111

## **Helping a child in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention**

* If the child is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her
* If the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them
* If he/she needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and while you are waiting for help to arrive, get help from your first aider
* If the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have to help the child
* You may also need to contact your supervisor/manager or named person for child protection to let them know what is happening

A decision will need to be made about who should inform the child’s family and the local authority children’s social care department and when they should be informed. If you have involved the police and/or health services, they should be part of this decision. Consider the welfare of the child in your decision making as the highest priority.

## **Issues that will need to be considered are:**

* the child’s wishes and feelings
* the parent's right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
* the impact of telling or not telling the parent
* the current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk
* any risk management plans that currently exist

Once any immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, follow the steps set out in the flowchart at the end of this document.

## **Keeping a record of your concerns**

Use the example reporting form in the appendix to record the concern and how it is dealt with and managed. The relevant sections of the form should be completed and signed at each stage of the procedure. It can be used to forward information to the statutory child protection authorities if a referral to them is needed.

The form should be signed and dated by all those involved in its completion and kept confidentiality in the child’s file. The name of the person making notes should be written alongside each entry.

## **Useful contact details**

HDKI Child Protection & Welfare Officer: Andrea Carbon 07534333569

HDKI GB Secretary: Jenny Cameron 07814114241

HDKI GB Technical Director: Simon Bligh 07973 829970

Local Police: (Insert number) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Local authority social care department: (insert details) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111 (textphone) 0800 400 222 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **Reporting child protection concerns**

If the child needs emergency medical attention or in immediate danger, follow the procedure set out in the section on **Helping a child in immediate danger or in need of immediate medical attention**.

You should then take steps set out in the flowchart on the next page to ensure the concern is dealt with.

## **Flowchart terms**

“Manager/Supervisor” are terms used to mean anyone in charge, such as an instructor or member of staff paid or unpaid. This could be the lead instructor, or general secretary, if there are a number of club staff and volunteers. If it is just one person operating a club, or the allegation involves the lead staff member, the Manager or Supervisor is the next person senior in their chain of command, which for HDKI GB is the Technical Director. If the allegation involves the TD, then the matter can be referred directly to HDKI Welfare & Child Protection Officer.

“Staff” are any paid or unpaid members that take a key role in the operation or instruction of a club, group or individual.

