

Ógras – Child Protection Awareness Programme

GUIDANCE SHEET: Transporting Young People.

The issue of transporting children has become very sensitive for those involved in youth work.

In general it is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual young people, especially on long journeys. This view has been taken as our knowledge has grown of how those who want to harm children have developed.

Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but circumstances may arise where it is necessary to do so. If alternative arrangements have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Parents should be informed of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses.
- The driver should attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- When leaving children off after an activity /group, workers/ volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last.
- Ideally two children would be left off at an agreed point i.e. one of their homes.
- The person who leaves children home should be alternated; this would reduce the risk of any one individual from always being alone with the child.
- The driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Ensure that children are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have.

If a culture of safety is created within the group/organisation then the child is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.

Late collections.

- These can present clubs/organisations with particular difficulties.
- Parents/guardians should be provided with guidelines addressing the issue and outlining their responsibility and the consequences of late collections.
- Each club should have contact numbers for parents/guardians and if possible be provided with an alternative contact number.
- Parents/guardians should have a contact number for the club leaders to inform them of emergencies and possible late collections.
- Children should wear seatbelts at all times.
- In the case of a voluntary worker, working with Ógras we would advise not to offer or give a child a lift except in a case of real emergency.

If a leader uses their car to transport members, remember that if they are involved in an accident, a claim will be dealt with under their motor policy and not Ógras insurance.