If you have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a young person or vulnerable adult, report it as soon as possible. Call the RNLI duty officer on 08451 668222 anytime, who will then escalate the matter to the safeguarding officer.

Where to find more information:
For further advice, email safeguarding@rnli.org.uk, or speak to your line manager.

SAFEGUARDING TIPS

SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

We are committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all RNLI representatives to share this commitment and to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE

A young person is as defined by the Children Act 1989: a person under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable adults:

A vulnerable adult is: a person who is in need of community care services by reason of mental health or other disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. Note that disability or age alone does not signify that an adult is vulnerable.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland.
BEST PRACTICE IN SAFEGUARDING

Always:

✓ Work in an open environment i.e. avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with ‘no secrets’.
✓ Treat all young people and vulnerable adults equally, with respect and dignity.
✓ Put the welfare of vulnerable people first.
✓ Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust, empowering vulnerable people to share in the decision-making process.
✓ Ensure any form of manual/physical support is provided openly and according to guidelines, following consultation and agreement with the young person or vulnerable adult and their carer.
✓ Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking in the company of the vulnerable.
✓ Request written carer consent before you transport vulnerable people in your car.
✓ Avoid private or unprofessional communication with vulnerable people by phone, text, letter, social media or email and don’t grant the vulnerable access to your personal social media profiles.

Never:

✗ Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
✗ Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
✗ Make sexually suggestive comments to a vulnerable person, even in fun.
✗ Allow allegations made by a vulnerable person to go unrecorded or acted upon.
✗ Take a vulnerable person to your home where they will be alone with you.

REPORTING

If:

• you accidentally hurt a vulnerable person.
• a vulnerable person seems distressed in any manner.
• a vulnerable person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
• a vulnerable person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

If you have a concern report it immediately to the duty officer, record it, and ensure the carers are informed.

RESPONDING TO A CONCERN

• Stay calm.
• Contact emergency services if there is a need for any medical attention or protection – and ensure they are aware that this is a safeguarding issue.
• Reassure the vulnerable person that they are not to blame and that they were right to tell.
• Listen to them – show that you are taking what is being said seriously.
• Keep questions to a minimum – although you must have a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said the law is strict and an abuse case can be dismissed if it appears a vulnerable person has been led, or words and ideas have been suggested.
• Explain that you will have to tell other people in order to stop the abuse.
• Record what’s happened, consider using the Incident Report Form.
• Report what’s happened to the duty officer as soon as possible.
• The duty officer will escalate the concern using the incident report form and contact the safeguarding officer. They will decide whether further parties or agencies need to be informed.

If you suspect that a vulnerable person may be the subject of abuse, it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred/is occurring but it is your duty to report your concern to the duty officer.

To contact the duty officer call 08451 668222 or 0044 8451 668222 for Republic of Ireland