

Partner safeguarding

The following guidelines are based on Salvation Army Safeguarding Principles.

- **Do** hold prayer and conversations in an open area with other people nearby to enhance openness and transparency and to provide a level of protection for you and the child (see Safe & Sound 4.1.4 'Praying with children').
- **Do** meet with your Prayer Partner only during gathered church times.
- **Do** be aware of appropriate physical contact and that it should only be initiated by the child (see Safe & Sound guidelines 4.1.3 'Touch').
- **Do** always ask the young person if they would like to pray together, without assuming that is what they want at that moment.
- **Do** ask the young person if they have a request for prayer, remembering that they are likely to ask for very different things from an adult.
- **Do** consider your body language. Is it right to be at the same height as a child, kneeling or sitting with them?
- **Do** be aware of the language that you use and that it is appropriate for the young person's age and understanding (see Safe & Sound section 4.1.1 'Language').
- **Do** write down prayer requests on the pocket Prayer Card provided so that you can both remember requests between conversations.
- **Do** only communicate verbally with your Prayer Partner, never via social media or text.
- **Do** store any notes in a confidential and secure manner.
- **Do** familiarise yourself with Safe & Sound Procedure 15 - 'Prayer Partnerships.'
- **Do** understand and adhere to the corps policy regarding sending cards or giving gifts to young people (Guidelines in procedure 15 state: 'If they choose to give a card or a present to the child, it should be given with the knowledge of the parent and should not be a regular feature of the friendship.')
- **Do** speak to your corps officer or Prayer Partners co-ordinator if you feel God has given you some insight or prophecy for the young person, without leading the young person in a direction with which they are unfamiliar.
- **Do** treat things your partner tells you with respect, not sharing them with anyone else unless you need to. It may be that the child discloses a situation which may need to be dealt with by reporting to others for help, eg: Safeguarding Lead, Children's Services or Police (see Safe & Sound section 7.3 'Reporting the alleged abuse of a child - How to deal with a disclosure of abuse').

Co-ordinator safeguarding

Safeguarding guidelines for Prayer Partners co-ordinator ¹

- **Do** inform parents and children of all aspects of Prayer Partners.
- **Do** introduce both parties to the Prayer Partner if not already known to them.
- **Do** match the adult and the young person according to their gender if possible.
- **Do** give parents the contact number of the corps officer/Safeguarding Lead and Prayer Partners co-ordinator on the invitation (How to be a Prayer Partner, Part 1).
- **Do** explain the practicalities and purpose of Prayer Partners to the young person and ask for their views before proceeding.
- **Do** tell young people who to speak to with safeguarding concerns.
- **Do** explain that the young person, parent or the adult Partner may (via the Prayer Partners co-ordinator) end the Prayer Partner relationship at any time.
- **Do** inform the Safeguarding Lead (by default usually the corps officer) if there are any specific reasons for ending the partnership that are related to safeguarding,

¹ These guidelines have been compiled with reference to The Salvation Army's Safe & Sound Procedures 2007, and following consultation with Kevin O'Donnell, Territorial Safeguarding Adviser, Dec 2023



Please note: In most cases, the Corps Officer is the Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy should be available. Concerns can also be raised to Divisional leadership or the Territorial Safeguarding Department: Safeguarding Office Telephone: 020 7367 4767 /Safeguarding Dept Mobile (out of hours): 07551 022 583 / Email: safeguarding@salvationarmy.org.uk