

GUIDANCE FOR TAXI DRIVERS AND ESCORTS OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS-

keeping your passengers safe!



Introduction

Welcome to this guidance booklet aimed at all our valued transport drivers and escorts. Our message is a simple one, keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe is everyone's responsibility but in order to do that we need to know what this means.

To help you understand what you need to do to help safeguard others, we are offering you support through face to face sessions and this guidance material.

When you go to collect your passengers there is a lot of information you need including where do they need to be picked up from, do they have any special needs which you need to be aware of e.g. are wheelchair users, where are they going and also you need to know about the roads you will be travelling on e.g. major road works, hold-ups, etc. This is the day to day job which you do, we hope that by reading this booklet and attending the training, you will know what to look out for and what to do if you have any safeguarding concerns.

We welcome your feedback on what we can do to help you keep your passengers safe.

Name and contact details of person/unit



Why has this guidance been produced?

This guidance aims to help you understand what you need to know and what to do to keep all your passengers safe.

You may have read about a number of cases in the news recently, some involving famous people, some involving transport companies in which children under the age of 18 years have been sexually abused. This is known as Child Sexual Exploitation.

Everyone involved in transporting vulnerable passengers needs to follow agreed guidelines to ensure the safety of all passengers. These guidelines include:

- Picking up and dropping off passengers
- Transporting passengers
- Behaviour with passengers
- Conversations with passengers
- Physical or sexual contact
- Confidentiality
- Who to contact if you have concerns



Layout of booklet

This booklet has been set up to help you to think about vulnerable adult passengers first and then children and young people.

1. Protecting vulnerable adults

What does adult abuse mean?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons"

Who is a vulnerable adult?

Anyone over the age of 18 who is in need of or in receipt of Care Services from their local Council

Examples of adult abuse

Abuse does not usually occur in a vacuum. Victims may experience a number of categories of abuse at the same time. Try and give examples of what you think would be a good example of each category.

Category of Abuse	Signs or Symptoms
Physical	
Sexual	
Psychological	
Financial or material	
Neglect or act of omission	
Discriminatory	
Institutional	
Modern slavery	
Self-Neglect	
Sexual Exploitation	
Domestic Abuse	

Physical
e.g.
Shaking
or
slapping
some

Possible indicators of abuse?

- Facial Expression
- Silence
- Questions asked
- Behaviour
- Body Language
- Avoidance of issue
- Manner

Who might be an abuser?

- A partner, child or relative, or other household member
- A friend or neighbour
- A volunteer worker
- A health or social worker
- A member of staff in a residential or nursing home or sheltered housing scheme
- Another vulnerable adult
- Anyone else who has contact with a vulnerable adult
- Abusers can be male or female
- Abusers can come from any background, rich/poor, well educated or not, etc.

Best practice if you discover or have concerns?

- Taxi drivers may become aware of the potential abuse of a vulnerable adult through their own suspicions when transporting the person in their taxi or by the victim disclosing abuse to them. It is important that taxi driver responds to such disclosures in a supportive way to the client.

What should you do if someone discloses abuse?

- Listen to words and also unspoken feelings e.g.. body language
- Focus entirely on what is being said
- Use language appropriate to the individual i.e. no jargon or abbreviations
- Summarise occasionally what is being said to check understanding
- Maintain good eye contact & sit at similar eye level
- Use words of encouragement e.g.. “mm”, “right” & “yes”
- Allow silences so the individual can think before speaking

What should you record?

- When / Who / What/Where
- Facts
- Date and sign
- Pen with black ink
- Write clearly
- Keep a copy if you can
- Write asap

What do you need to do/who should you report your concern to?

**INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED HERE RELATING TO THE VARIOUS
PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**



Protecting children and young people

What is meant by the term child? A child is considered to be anyone under the age of 18 years.

What have you read, seen or heard recently that has made you think about safeguarding children?

e.g. watching a news item, reading something in the newspaper

What do you see as the basic needs of children?

- Basic Physical Care
- Affection
- Security
- Responsibility
- Stimulation
- Guidance and Control
- Independence

When does Child abuse occur?

- It's widespread
- It crosses all classes, cultural and racial boundaries
- It is frequently difficult to prove
- A clear standardised definition does not exist
- Relates to children under the age of 18



This is a picture of Peter Connolly known in court as Baby P who died terrible and repeated physical abuse by his mother's partner. It went on for most of his short 8 months of life and although lots of professional staff were involved including social workers, doctors, the Police, no one realised what was happening until it was too late.

What kinds of abuse are likely to occur?

- Physical e.g. beating, scalding
- Emotional abuse e.g. telling someone they are useless
- Neglect e.g. not meeting their needs such as food, warmth, safe place to live
- Sexual abuse e.g. having sexual advantage of someone

As a taxi driver you might see physical evidence of potential abuse but this might not be true- the person could have had an accident.

Emotional abuse may be hard to see but if both parties are in your taxi you may hear comments which might lead you to think that something wasn't quite right.

Neglect also isn't easy to spot when you are just picking someone up once. Things like poor hygiene might be an indicator but then they may just sweat a lot and the weather is hot!

The main focus of this guidance is to look at child sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual abuse/exploitation

What is it?

- It is a form of abuse
- It is generally a hidden crime

The Children's Society describes sexual exploitation as;

“ someone taking sexual advantage of you, for their own benefit. Through a variety of means they get you to do sexual things for their own or other people's benefit or enjoyment.

This might include touching or kissing private parts, sex, taking sexual photographs.



Vulnerable people (of all ages) may be encouraged to do sexual things by being:

- Offered money
- Threatened to be hurt
- Threatened to be humiliated
- Bought presents
- Given a place to stay
- Told that they are loved.

Young people can be groomed and sexually exploited in parks, shopping centres, taxi ranks, restaurants, leisure centre- **any where!!**

Human Trafficking

Vulnerable people who could be victims of sexual exploitation are also vulnerable to trafficking across our area, towns and across the U.K. or even internationally.

Human trafficking is illegal and is punishable by a significant prison sentence.

Domestic violence

Any one may experience domestic abuse, even if it isn't actually happening to them, it could be within their own family, neighbours or friends' families. It may not involve actual physical violence but could be through use of

degrading language e.g. telling someone they are useless, through trying to control everything they do.

Signs for you to be aware of:

- A child or young person wanting attention and affection from any adult
- A vulnerable person displaying sexual knowledge or behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate
- Is encouraged to be secretive about their relationship with an adult
- Is a baby with an injury which they are too young to have been able to injure themselves
- Has burns, scalds or bruises with clear outlines
- Seems afraid their parents, carers or the adults with them

These are not the only signs for you to look for and some may not be caused by abuse. If you are concerned about a child, young person or vulnerable adult, it is your responsibility to report it.

What do you need to do/who should you report your concern to?

- Listen to words and also unspoken feelings e.g.. body language
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You don't have to give your name if you feel you can not do so, Children's Social Services will follow up every report where they believe a child may be at risk of harm

Useful contact numbers

To report a concern about abuse or neglect of an adult, Social Care and Health	XXXXXX
To report a concern about abuse or neglect of a child or young person, call the Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection (LADO)	XXXXXX

So what might make a passenger vulnerable?

Lots of things can make a passenger vulnerable, including their ability to understand what is happening to them, their mental and physical state. Some examples include:

- *Someone with autism*- these people have a different way of understanding the world and may find it difficult to understand what we mean when we talk to them. Sometimes they may be confused by rules as well and each person will have their own needs and preferences. They may be anxious when moving from one place to another and may not cope well with changes to routine e.g. driving a different way to their destination than normal. They may behave in unexpected ways.
- *People with dementia*- you should be advised of how to deal with them by their carer or family member who is likely to be with them
- *People with hearing or sight impairment*- these people should be able to give you information on how they need to be treated.
- *People with mobility impairment*- these people may need special taxis in order for them to be able to be moved from one location to another.
- *People with epilepsy*- if this is a regular pick up you should be aware that the person has this condition but there is no need to treat them any differently to any one else unless they have a seizure. Then you should note how long this lasts for and pass it onto a responsible person.

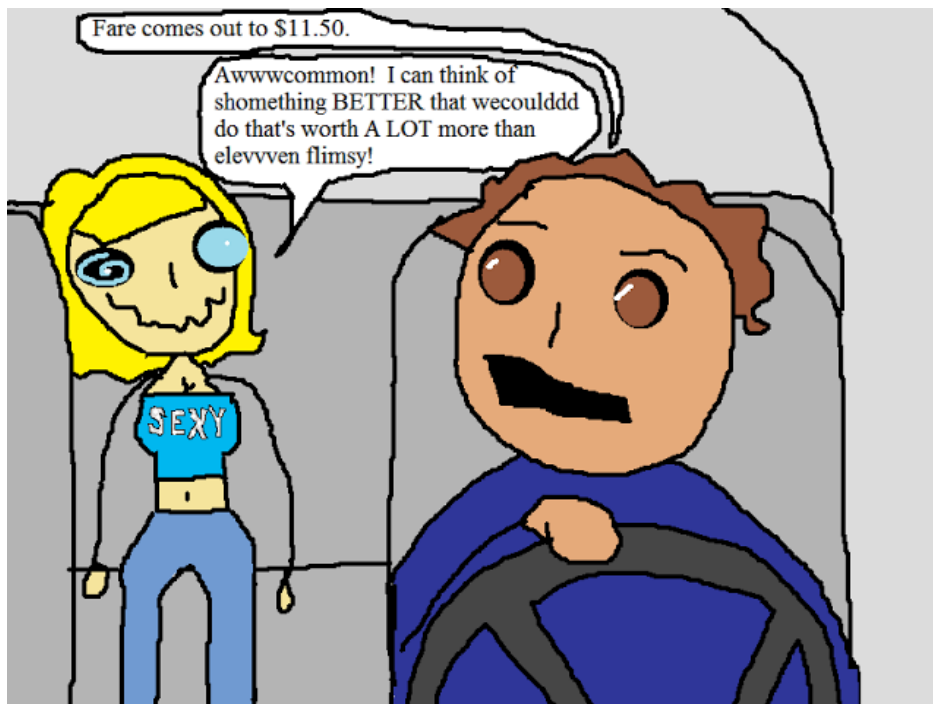
If you know that someone is vulnerable due to the examples given above, you need to make sure that you follow any instructions and advice given to you. For example, do not drop a passenger off at an unplanned venue because they/someone else has asked you to do so.

Protecting yourself

If a passenger becomes violent or aggressive, you should remain calm and avoid shouting at them. Give them space and if you have an office, report this to them.

You should not

- Take an unplanned detour to take the passenger home
- Give a vulnerable passenger your mobile phone number for any reason
- Give gifts of any kind
- Befriend passengers on Facebook or other social media
- Touch a child/young person unnecessarily or inappropriately
- Make offensive comments e.g. swearing
- Make inappropriate comments e.g. those of a sexual nature
- Attempt to misuse personal details obtained via the business about a child e.g. communicating with a child at their postal address, via mobile phones or social network



You should always:

- Be professional
- Avoid swearing
- Always show your identity badge
- Sit lone passengers in the back seat (unless advised otherwise)

Guidance for Taxi drivers

This guidance aims to promote good practice in local taxi or private hire businesses that involves providing a service to vulnerable passengers. Vulnerability could be caused by a number of factors including:

- Mental health/illness
- Misuse of drugs
- Misuse of alcohol
- Existing medical conditions e.g. dementia, autism.

Both adults and children can be vulnerable as a result of these factors.

The next section details a few case studies which will be covered during the face to face workshop

Case study examples

Case Study A:

Alice has care and support needs due to a physical disability and carers visit her home to help her get up in the morning and go to bed at night and to administer her medication. When you are driving Alice to a hospital appointment which you do regularly, she tells you that recently her evening carer has been giving her a double dose of her medication so that she will “get a better night’s sleep” and “won’t wake up until later when the domiciliary care provider can get a carer out to her. Do you think this situation could be considered abuse?

- What type/s of abuse may be happening?
- How would you respond to this situation?

Case study B:

You notice that a young person who often travels with you has bruises on her face and arms, doesn’t look well and is very quiet, unlike her usual behaviour

What would you do?

Case study C:

You have noticed a particular man using your taxi to go to a local hotel with girls much younger than himself and they seem to be intoxicated. This has now happened more than once.

What would you do?