

R3 child Protection Measures

Additional safeguards for activities involving children and young people under 18

How to use this document

This document sets out child-specific safeguarding measures that apply in addition to the organisation's core safeguarding policy (F1) and Code of Conduct (F2). It must be read alongside both those documents and with any protocols for travel (A1), accommodation (A2), online activities (A3), and the relevant national legal framework (Country Legal Supplement).

For the purposes of this document, a child is any person under the age of 18. For children under 13, additional measures apply (see Section 5).

1. Before the Project Begins

- The DSL must approve all activities and accommodation arrangements involving under-18 participants before they begin. See Section 8 for accommodation-specific requirements.
- Parental or guardian consent must be obtained for every under-18 participant before any activity (R2 Form A).
- Every under-18 participant receives F4 (Participant Safeguarding Card) in their language before the project begins.
- All staff and volunteers working with under-18s have completed safeguarding induction (P3) and a DBS check, Enhanced DBS check or equivalent in their country before working with children. See the Country Legal Supplement for national requirements.
- The risk assessment (R0) includes child-specific risk items.

2. During the Project — General Safeguards

- No adult should be alone with a child in an unobserved, private space. Where a one-to-one interaction is necessary (e.g. for welfare support), it should take place in a visible setting with another adult nearby and aware.
- Physical contact: only when necessary for the professional context, explicitly consented to, and visible to others.
- Communication: official channels only. No personal social media contact or personal messaging with under-18 participants.
- Photography and media: parental consent (R2 Form C) required for all images of children. No images posted on social media without consent.



Funded by
the European Union

www.safe-spaces.eu

3. Supervision Ratios

Minimum supervision ratios for activities involving under-18s (adjust upward for higher-risk activities or participants with additional needs):

Activity type	
Day activities — mixed age group	1:10 (general), 1:6 (under 12s)
Overnight/residential	1:8 (general), 1:5 (under 12s). At least two adults at all times.
Travel (transport)	1:8 (general). At least two adults per vehicle or travel group.
Activities with participants with disabilities or additional needs	At minimum 1:3, or as specified in the individual's needs assessment.
One-to-one welfare support	A second adult must be in the vicinity and aware. Both door and space must be visible.

4. Responding to Concerns Involving Children

All four response types (disclosure, observation, allegation, third-party report) apply to children. Additional requirements for child-specific concerns:

- The DSL must be informed of any concern involving a child as soon as you are able — and always within the same day. Do not defer until the next morning or beyond. If you needed a few minutes to support the child or compose yourself first, that is understood — report as soon as you can.
- Where a statutory referral is required, the relevant child protection authority is in the country where the child is currently located (jurisdiction follows location).
- Parents or guardians are informed of serious concerns except where doing so would put the child at greater risk (e.g. if the concern involves the parent or guardian).
- Reference: UNICEF Child Protection best practice: [unicef.org/child-protection](https://www.unicef.org/child-protection)

5. Additional Safeguards for Children Under 13

- Enhanced parental consent is required for all activities.
- Higher supervision ratios apply (see Section 3).
- Online activities: children under 13 require explicit parental consent for any online account creation. See A3 (Online and Hybrid Activities).
- Any allegation involving a child under 13 is automatically classified as Major and requires immediate statutory referral.

6. Communication with Under-18 Participants

- Use official, monitored channels for all communication with under-18 participants.
- No personal social media contact. No private messaging on personal platforms.
- Group chats should have at least two adults present and visible.
- Online sessions must be moderated. See A3 for full digital safeguarding guidance.



7. Online Activities Involving Children

See A3 (Safeguarding in Online and Hybrid Activities) for full guidance. Child-specific requirements for online activities:

- Parental consent for online session participation.
- Sessions recorded where possible and records retained for the retention period.
- Ground rules shared with parents and participants before any online session.
- Two adults present in all online sessions with under-18s.

8. Accommodation and Sleeping Arrangements

The DSL must pre-approve all accommodation arrangements for projects involving under-18 participants.

- No adult staff or volunteer may share a room with an under-18 participant unless they are a parent or guardian of that specific child.
- Rooms must have lockable doors. Under-18s must have the ability to lock their room from the inside.
- Male and female participants sleep in separate rooms unless they are siblings and parental consent is given.
- A staff member or volunteer is on call overnight. Their name and contact details are given to all under-18 participants before bedtime.
- No adult may enter a child's room unannounced. Knocking and waiting for a response is required.

Cross-reference: A2 (Safeguarding on Trips and Residentials) for the full residential protocol.

References

F1 Safeguarding Policy. F2 Code of Conduct. R2 Consent Forms. A1 Safe Travel. A2 Trips and Residentials. A3 Online and Hybrid Activities. O3 GDPR. Country Legal Supplement. UNICEF Child Protection: [unicef.org/child-protection](https://www.unicef.org/child-protection). Glossary of Key Terms (Safe Spaces) — for definitions of all bolded terms in this document.



© Safe Spaces, 2026. This material is released under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence (CC BY 4.0). Permission is granted to utilize, modify, and translate these resources for organizational use, provided the Safe Spaces project is formally credited. Access the complete toolkit at www.safe-spaces.eu.

Financial support provided by the European Union. Production of this document by the European Commission does not imply endorsement of the material; the perspectives expressed belong solely to the authors. Neither the National Agency nor the Commission accepts liability for any application of the information provided.



Funded by
the European Union

www.safe-spaces.eu