

Safety Briefings

Guidance

Safety Briefings

Safety briefings provide clear, structured information to both staff and young people about potential risks, safety procedures, and expectations for behaviour and wellbeing.

In youth settings, where activities often involve dynamic environments, group interactions, and varying individual needs, safety briefings help create a shared understanding of how to stay safe and support one another. They also help with ensuring that everyone feels informed, prepared, and empowered to speak up if something doesn't feel right.

Having a consistent safety briefing process ensures that everyone is aligned with the organisation's approach to risk management and knows exactly what the plan is.

Briefings may be delivered using tools such as slide decks, printed notes, or emails—especially for larger groups or more complex programmes. However, it's essential that these formats are complemented by open conversation and opportunities for discussion. This allows participants to ask questions, clarify expectations, and feel confident in their understanding of the safety measures in place.

Briefings should be delivered in a way that is accessible, age-appropriate, and responsive to the needs of the group, including any health, disability, or wellbeing considerations.

Staff and volunteers

All staff, particularly those working directly with young people, should receive a structured safety briefing at the start of any programme and following any significant change. This briefing must include a summary of the risk assessment, highlighting key hazards and the control measures in place for the activity.

Staff should be given time to ask questions, clarify their responsibilities, and understand how they are expected to apply safety measures throughout the session. Staff should also be encouraged to raise any concerns they may have—whether related to logistics, safeguarding, or the wellbeing of participants—so these can be addressed proactively.

Young people

Young people must be provided with a clear and age-appropriate safety briefing at the beginning of each programme and after any major change. This should include a summary of the key risks and safety measures, delivered in a way that supports understanding and encourages questions. Briefings should be adapted to the needs of the group or individuals, ensuring everyone feels informed and confident. Special attention should be given to access needs, including:

- Physical or learning disabilities
- Health conditions or medication requirements
- Emotional wellbeing or mental health support
- Allergies and dietary restrictions

These considerations should be integrated into the planning and delivery of the activity, and young people should be reassured that their needs are understood and supported.

Suggested Safety Briefing Contents

Event or activity-specific safety briefing may include the following:

- Introduction by the lead worker
- Aim and overview of the session
- Identification of session leaders and any external staff
- Location of youth workers during the session (if not leading)
- Timings and schedule
- Transport arrangements and guidance on valuables
- Catering details and dietary considerations
- Weather forecast and reminders about appropriate clothing, hydration, and snacks
- Key hazards to be aware of during the activity
- Location of first aid kit and designated first aider
- Use of any safety equipment and instructions for correct use
- Emergency procedures, including fire exits and evacuation points
- Areas that are out of bounds or activities that are not permitted
- Welfare check: updates on injuries, medical needs, or other relevant information
- Access needs check: confirm any disability, health, wellbeing, or allergy-related support required
- Staff concerns: opportunity for staff to raise any issues or observations before the session begins
- Medication reminders: ensure young people have their medication or have handed it to staff
- Behaviour expectations and code of conduct
- Encouragement to look out for one another and report any safety or wellbeing concerns
- Opportunity for young people to ask questions
- Confirmation of understanding through interactive questions or check-ins