

## **USBC Children and Young People “New Media” policy**

Above all the over-riding attitude is a concern for the people we are working with and for their well-being.

“New Media” is defined in this document as **any** technology that is used to communicate a message, but is not limited to, websites, instant messaging (e.g. MSN, Facebook), social networking sites (e.g. Myspace, Bebo, Facebook), Micro blogging sites (e.g. Twitter), forums, news sites, online collaborative tools (e.g. Wikipedia), mobile phones, games consoles (e.g. Xbox, Playstation, Wii) and such things as CD-ROMs and DVD's.

A conversation in this context can be an exchange of emails, instant messaging, private messaging, social networking message posts or text messages.

Everyone involved in using new media must read and adhere to the USBC Child Protection policy and Good Practice Guidelines.

### **1. What needs to be included in any information we provide**

- a. We need to be transparent in all our information. Every website we create or have influence over needs to have a section clearly labelled with a reference to our Child Protection Policy. This section will spell out what our policy is and what our working practices are.
- b. All our sites must have a clear link to the main USBC website, either through the USBC logo or a clearly marked statement that states that the activity is part of USBC.
- c. All text messages (sms) and multimedia messages (mms) messages must have a reference to USBC or the group.
- d. We will stop communicating with young people by any means when requested and remove relevant details from our files.

### **2. Best Practices of those using new media**

#### **Telephone and Text:**

- a. Telephone conversations with young people should be conducted with care. It is strongly recommended that you withhold your number when calling young people, unless there is a good reason for this. This reason should be communicated to the Elder responsible for Youth and Children's work, or the most relevant other person. A 'conversation' in this context is defined as any communication that is more than simply information sharing or receiving. Information sharing/receiving examples include, but are not limited to, notifying of time of session start or young person texts to say they are 'not coming' to a previously arranged event. Be aware that if you contact them via text message, your number is not withheld. The content of any significant 'conversation' should be written down and given to the children's advocates. Further guidance on these procedures can be found in the Safeguarding guidelines.
- b. Telephone and text communication should not happen between 10pm and 8am.

- c. If possible, a record of any significant sms, mms or email conversations should be kept and archived.
- d. All text messages sent and received must be copied to the Elder responsible for Youth and Children's Work.

**Email:**

- e. USBC email addresses should be used for children and young people activities (not personal email addresses). These emails must also include the approved USBC footer.
- f. Email lists should be used if you are going to be contacting a group on a regular basis. Email groups are a way to email a large number of people where you do not need to enter the email addresses each time, and the recipients addresses will not show up. This will therefore protect their personal information being released. These Email groups can be set up by speaking to the website coordinator.

**Websites and Instant Messaging:**

- g. Under no circumstances are personal details to be exchanged on a USBC maintained site. If someone posts personal details on a site then the post must be deleted or modified to remove the details.
- h. USBC leaders and approved volunteers should use their real names for chat purposes.
- i. All USBC discussion boards will be monitored by USBC leaders or approved volunteers and inappropriate material removed.
- j. Any websites relating to groups at USBC should have the Statement 'Upper Stratton Baptist Church recognizes its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Safe from Harm 1994 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010'.

**Social Networking:**

- k. USBC staff and approved volunteers will not invite or accept requests to be friends/followers (or whatever term is used by the new media concerned) with the young people, they meet and work with through their role at USBC on personal social networking sites.
- l. Any social networking sites established (e.g. POGS Twitter or oZone Facebook) must be agreed with the Elder for Children and Young Peoples Work.
- m. Care should be taken to ensure that personal pages on social media sites have suitable privacy settings so that your information is not accessible to young people.

**General:**

- n. No conversation is to be entered into that involves sexual or pornographic websites, if they do come up in conversation either ignore the comment or terminate the conversation immediately.
- o. Any photographs used on our websites or publicity will be such that no young people are identifiable unless consent has been sought from the parents and the young person. Furthermore, all consent forms for USBC projects will give parents the

option to request that their child is not included in any publicity including the USBC website. Any photographs will be vetted to make sure they are acceptable.

- p. Images of young people participating in any activity have the potential for abuse by paedophiles. Therefore, any images we put on our websites will be checked to ensure that the possibility of manipulating them is minimal.
- q. USBC staff and approved volunteers should not use New Media as an outlet to broadcast any negative or damaging comment or safeguarding concern relating to USBC. Any concerns should be discussed with a Team Leader, the Safe to Grow Coordinator or the Youth and Children's Elder.
- r. Full wording must be used (abbreviations such as lol can be interpreted as lots of love or laugh out loud).
- s. Any group that provides internet access should ensure there is a filter on the access to prevent young people discovering inappropriate content or images..
- t. Contact data should be secure. Since phones, laptops and portable storage devices are easily lost or stolen, storing children's contact details on a personal device (e.g. phone or laptop) should be avoided if possible. If it is unavoidable then appropriate measures must be taken to secure them. It is required that all laptops or personal computers should have a password applied. If the feature is available, it is strongly recommended that mobile phones should have PIN code access. Similar consideration must be given to portable storage devices (e.g. memory sticks or drives). Data should not be downloaded to discs unless encrypted. Please seek advice should you need a way to store this data securely on USBC systems.
- u. USBC leaders and approved volunteers should take every precaution to ensure that contact data and new media are protected from unauthorised access. This means that devices should not be left unlocked or unattended.
- v. Letter to parents should be sent out at the beginning of each new year to the parents/guardians of all young people stating what data is stored, and how data stored will be used. Parents should also be asked to complete photo/video permissions.