

## FACTSHEET 1: RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

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Preparing to Recruit

Recruitment here refers to paid and unpaid or volunteer staff. It is important that organisations undertake the same rigorous procedures when engaging volunteers as when employing paid staff. Child abusers will identify and target organisations which are lax in relation to child protection awareness. Strong systems and communication of child protection commitment will help to deter abusers from applying for posts in your organisation.

- 1 Ensure your vacancy advert and job description/specification make clear the **organisation's commitment to child protection, promote the child protection** measures and the responsibility in the role to safeguard the welfare of children.
- 2 Include a self disclosure declaration on your application form- asking the person to list and detail any issues that a reasonable person would consider relevant to the position, including criminal history, dismissals from employment, professional complaints or disciplinary actions.
- 3 Be consistent and thorough in the collection, analysis and verification of information about applicants. Ensure you fully resolve any discrepancies in information.
- 4 Record each stage of the process in a checklist to ensure all necessary checks have been undertaken for all candidates. (a simple example checklist can be found in Factsheet 2).
- 5 If using an agency be sure they understand your organisation and its needs and

ascertain or prescribe the child protection procedures they will follow in recruiting.

### Recruitment Process

#### Sifting application forms

- 1 Check dates, locations and previous work experience thoroughly. Look for gaps in employment history, ensure dates are chronological and match up with any references/education/qualifications. Clarify dates if they are vague (e.g. Spring 2001-2003).
- 2 Look out for a patchy or inconsistent work history or frequent change of job/role and location.

Background Checks (a more detailed guide to what to check and how can be found in Factsheet 2: *Background and Vetting Checks*)

It is imperative that you do not simply rely on the contents of an application form and a **candidate's response at interview when making a decision to appoint, no matter how plausible they may seem or how much additional time it will take to conduct thorough background and reference checks.** Nor should you rely solely on a police check to confirm suitability to work with children. Many individuals who abuse and harm children do not have a criminal record and there are limitations on what a police check certificate will be able to tell you.

If something arises as a result of your checks do not automatically dismiss the candidate but discuss the issue with them and seek further information if you need to. Be balanced and fair with candidates, everyone can make mistakes in life and some times these can be the most valuable learning experiences, but do consider the information thoroughly and if you are not ultimately satisfied or comfortable that the candidate would be suitable to work with children in your organisation do not appoint them.

#### Assessing information returned on a police check

Take care to fairly assess the information and find out more if you need to, do not automatically discount a candidate simply because they have a criminal conviction.

Consider:

- 1 the nature of offence and type of post offered;
- 2 length of time since offence;
- 3 seriousness of offence and punishment imposed;

- 4 extent of criminal history, has it escalated over time? Is it still relatively recent?

The following linked documents are publications from the UK, however, although they refer to UK legislation they provide useful practical advice on the assessment of information relating to criminal convictions that would be relevant to all employers.

- 1 *Employing Ex-Offenders- a practical guide (UK publication)*  
[http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/PDF/CIPD\\_Employing\\_ex-offenders%20guide.pdf](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/PDF/CIPD_Employing_ex-offenders%20guide.pdf)
- o *A Brief Guide to Recruiting People with Criminal Records (UK publication)*  
<http://www.nacro.org.uk/data/files/nacro-2005020104-302.pdf>
- o *Recruiting ex-offenders: the employers' perspective (UK publication):*  
<http://www.nacro.org.uk/data/files/nacro-2006070300-216.pdf>

## Interviews

- 1 Be upfront in the interview and explain your **organisation's commitment to child protection** which means you may ask some challenging questions as you need to ensure any employee you recruit must be suitable to work with children.
- 2 Ask situational questions with a child protection focus that is relevant to your **organisation (e.g. what would you do if.....)**
- 3 Ask behavioural questions about child protection knowledge and experience(e.g. **examples of times in a candidate's past where they have faced certain situations and how they have dealt with them).**
- 4 **Don't be afraid to ask personal/difficult questions about any problems an individual may have had with children/allegations in the past (But ensure you do not breach Equal Opportunity law and discriminate).**
- 5 Be persistent and probe depth and nature of experience if the candidate is vague about their work history or previous employment.