

### Wise advice from the experts!

We should never become complacent when it comes to safeguarding and always foster an attitude of 'never stop learning'. We can also enhance our knowledge and support each other with helpful advice; therefore, we have collated some wise words from the sector for us to consider. Our Designated Lead Practitioners who lead on safeguarding were asked to share just one sentence with words of wisdom that would be helpful to us all in our day-to-day care of children.

Have a read through the list and pick a sentence that resonates with you. You may even have your own top tip that is at the heart of your practice.

- Be kind to yourself, take time to switch off. Relax and breathe - you know what you are doing.
- Ask lots of questions about anything you are unsure of – no matter how small it may seem.
- Encourage children to have a 'kind heart' in play.
- Always take professional advice.
- Practice in an open and honest way. Be a good listener and share information.
- Be proactive, don't be afraid to be the first one to speak out.
- Always trust your instinct. If you have a concern or gut feeling follow it. Remember you know your children.
- It's always better to do something. Think "what if I am right?" and not "what if I am wrong?".
- If in doubt act upon it.
- Listen, record and repeat. If it's not written down, it didn't happen. Log all details where there are concerns about a child. Record absolutely everything – every conversation, incident, phone call including dates and times.
- Always be supportive to families to ensure the safety of their child. Always be patient. Always listen very carefully and go in with an open mind.
- Don't be afraid to have uncomfortable conversations. Don't be scared to challenge parents or other professionals. Don't worry about upsetting parents or professionals if something needs saying.
- Have an open mind and see the bigger picture. Don't take everything at face value – keep alert. Don't judge a book by its cover.
- If you have a niggly don't be afraid to follow it through. Have a discussion with parents.
- Keep calm, stick to facts, if in doubt talk and ask for help.
- Having a few Designated Lead Practitioners in a setting is best practice so you can support one another.
- Do the best that you can, ask for help and advice if you need it. Abuse and neglect is not your fault.
- Remember the needs of the child are always paramount.
- Use all agencies out there. Don't be insular, discuss with others.
- If you have any concerns, be persistent and don't give up.
- Do the best you can. Speak to others if you are unsure where to go next.
- Remain professionally inquisitive.
- Keep looking and listening. If uncomfortable with anything report it on.
- We are all here to help each other. We are not expected to know everything but taking the time to find out who may be able to provide support is always a good move.
- Don't be afraid to challenge parents.
- If as a professional I feel intimidated by a parent imagine how it must feel for a child living in the home environment.
- Do what you are supposed to do and don't cut corners. Don't be frightened to share information.
- Be accountable for your own practice and involve other professionals too.
- We really need to actively listen to children and hear their voice.
- Do what you are supposed to do and to the best of your ability.
- Remember ABC – Accept nothing, Believe nothing and Check it out.
- Always encourage a positive safeguarding culture in your setting.

