

Safe practices for overnight stays

This guide explains safe practices when attending an event or activity includes overnight stays with children, young people and adults at risk.

Whether you are organising or supervising overnight stays, this advice will help keep everyone safe.

For organisations and clubs

Have and implement policies and guidelines

Have clear policies and guidance that outlines your organisation's safeguarding measures to keep everyone safe when staying somewhere overnight. Include:

- safeguarding measures before and during the overnight stay
- processes and requirements for people organising and supervising overnight stays
- the roles and responsibilities everyone has during the overnight stay, for example, appointing an organiser and supervisor
- how to report a concern and who to report it to
- expectations of safe and appropriate behaviour for everyone to follow before and during overnight stays.

Everyone understands what they need to do

Make sure everyone:

- is aware of and follows the policies and guidance for overnight stays with children, young people and adults at risk, and they understand what they need to do
- is encouraged and are safe to speak up if there are any concerns, particularly children, young people and adults at risk.

For organisers

Start planning early and assess the risks

Start planning well in advance and follow your club or organisation's policies on overnight stays. Have a focus on safeguarding when thinking about the logistics, for example, age, number of people travelling, supervision, and type of accommodation. Select the appropriate accommodation for the age, needs and number of people staying.

Conduct a full risk assessment covering all aspects of the stay, including accommodation, transportation, activities and others who are attending the event. Identify and document the risks, and the safeguarding measures to mitigate the risks.

Plan for emergencies

Develop emergency procedures for situations such as illness, injuries, or instances where someone feels unsafe.

Put together a list of local emergency services and who to contact in an emergency.

Appoint supervisors

Make sure supervisors and helpers are all safety checked before travelling.

Ask for expressions of interest for overnight stay supervisors. Make sure they understand what experience they need for the role, for example, first aid, understanding children and managing negative behaviour.

Appoint a lead supervisor who is responsible for overall supervision and decision-making. Make sure they have the right skills to handle situations that may arise before, during and after the trip.

Share information and get consent

Give parents and caregivers detailed information about the overnight stay. Include information about the type of accommodation, address, safeguarding considerations and your contact information. Make sure supervisors have contact details for all parents and caregivers.

Discuss the accommodation with the children, young people or adults at risk.

- Give them the opportunity to ask questions and provide their thoughts.
- Let them know that if they feel unsafe at any time, to tell an adult they trust or the travel leader straightaway.

Get written consent from parents or caregivers for each child, young person or adult at risk.



Ask parents or caregivers about:

- medical or dietary requirements, and get consent to administer medication if required
- relevant cultural, religious or support needs.

Transport and travel

Follow the policies, procedures and guidelines for safe transport and travel.

Accommodation and allocating rooms

Before travelling, assign rooms based on age and gender. Make sure children, young people or adults at risk are not sleeping alone with adults who are not parents or caregivers.

Confirm rooms have secure locks and access to inappropriate content or items are removed.

When staying in communal accommodation, like a marae or dormitory, ensure only pre-approved adults share sleeping spaces with children, young people, adults at risk. And no external groups.

Children, young people, adults at risk should always have their own bed.

Arrange supervision and support

Ensure there are enough supervisors for the ratio of adults to children, young people or adults at risk. Think about their ages and any special requirements.

All supervisors:

- are safety checked
- understand and follow policies, procedures and guidelines for overnight stays
- are trained in child safeguarding practices and managing negative behaviours
- understand how everyone should behave at the accommodation
- are aware of the risk areas and how to mitigate them, including emergency procedures and safeguarding practices
- have information about the children, young people or adults at risk such as their physical, emotional and medical needs.

Have at least one supervisor who has a current first aid certificate. For large groups consider more than one.

Provide supervisors and helpers with contact information (including for local emergency services) and ensure procedures are in place for regular check-ins.



Post-travel review

- Evaluate the overnight stay with supervisors and identify areas for improvement.
- Gather feedback from children, young people or adults at risk, and parents and caregivers to help with future planning.

For supervisors

Before you travel

- Make sure you know what to do before the overnight stay.
- Ensure you know who the lead supervisor is. They are responsible for overall supervision and decision-making.
- Get to know and understand:
 - the policies and procedures you must follow for overnight stays
 - how to manage risks, including for emergencies
 - relevant information about the children, young people or adults at risk, for example, medical or dietary requirements
 - the full itinerary, and details of the accommodation.

Get everyone's contact details

Take contact details with you and keep in a secure place. Get contact details for:

- other supervisors or helpers
- parents and caregivers
- the children, young people or adults at risk
- local emergency services, and travel and accommodation providers (if required).

Get written consent from parents and caregivers. Include consent to administer medication, if required.

Managing behaviour

- Set clear expectations, so everyone knows what behaviour is expected.
- Encourage the children, young people and adults at risk to report any concerns to an adult they trust, or to the travel leader.
- Address any inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying or rough play, immediately.

Transport and travel

Follow the policies, procedures and guidelines for safe transport and travel.

Getting to the accommodation

Inspect the accommodation to confirm it meets the agreed booking and safety standards.

Assign rooms according to the pre-approved accommodation plan.

During the stay

Keep children, young people and adults at risk safer when attending an event involving overnight stays.

- Avoid alone time with children, young people and adults at risk during the trip that you aren't the primary caregiver for. Follow the guidelines for working alone with children if this happens.
- Don't invite children, young people and adults at risk into your or any other adult's accommodation, and respect their privacy in personal spaces like their rooms, bathrooms, and changing areas.
- Dress appropriately in the presence of children, young people or adults at risk during the stay.
- Don't use devices like phones or cameras in areas such as toilets, bathrooms or anywhere children, young people or adults at risk are dressing or sleeping. Follow the safe practices for taking, sharing and storing images.
- Ensure children, young people, or adults at risk are supervised during the overnight stay, and it meets the required adult to child ratios.

More information

Travelling with children and young people – sportintegrity.nz

Working alone with a child or young person – sportintegrity.nz

Taking and sharing images – sportintegrity.nz

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