

FUNDRAISING AND PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE SUPPORTERS POLICY

1. Fundraising

1a. Introduction

WellChild relies almost entirely on donations from individuals and organisations to carry out our vital work with seriously ill children, young people and their families. Giving to WellChild should be a positive experience for all of our existing supporters, new supporters or anyone contacting us and considering supporting WellChild in the future. We aim to inspire and engage people so that we can build long term relationships.

WellChild is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and we comply with their Code of Fundraising Practice and Fundraising Promise. We use the Regulator's logo on our fundraising materials to show that we are following their standards.

1b. Principles of Fundraising

WellChild's approach to fundraising encompasses the following four principles:

- **Respect** – Always being respectful and mindful of and sensitive to any particular need a donor may have. Striving to respect the wishes and preferences of the donor
- **Fairness and Inclusiveness** – Treating all donors fairly and not unfairly discriminating against any group or individual. When fundraising, the rights and dignity of our beneficiaries must be upheld at all times
- **Responsive** – Responding appropriately to the needs of our donors and adapting fundraising approaches to suit their needs and requirements
- **Accountability** – To take responsibility for our fundraising actions and ensure that fundraising is delivered to a high standard and complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice. Take proactive steps to ensure that our fundraising is not overly intrusive or persistent, and does not put members of the public under undue pressure to donate.

WellChild will strive to:

- Comply with all relevant law and regulation.
- Treat the information that supporters provide in line with our Data Protection Policy and never sell their personal information to third parties or undertake data matching, tele-matching or wealth screening.
- Ensure clear governance and management controls for the legal, safe and transparent raising of funds from a diverse range of sources.
- Provide clear guidance for working with supporters who are in vulnerable circumstances.
- Have clear rules for when donations may have to be returned to donors.
- Ensure an open and accessible complaints procedure is followed.
- Seek to engage with a diverse community of supporters.
- Ensure Commercial Partner arrangements fully comply with relevant legal requirements and are in the best interests of the charity and donors.
- Report regularly to Trustees regarding fundraising activity, including complaints and action taken to address these.
- Maintain accurate records and a clear audit trail of donor contact preferences/wishes.
- Acknowledge and thank supporters for their donations and not take them or their support for granted.

2. Protection of Vulnerable Supporters

2a. Introduction

WellChild recognises that inevitably a few of the many people we engage with through our fundraising activities may be classed as vulnerable and that we should be especially compassionate and respectful when engaging with these individuals.

Fundraisers must take all reasonable steps to treat a donor fairly, enabling them to make an informed decision about any donation. This must include taking into account the needs of any potential donor who may be in a vulnerable circumstance or require additional care and support to make an informed decision.

2b. Definition of a Vulnerable Supporter

WellChild defines a 'vulnerable supporter' as an individual who lacks the capacity to understand or make an informed decision about making a donation, or may be experiencing a situation whereby they are prone to increased vulnerability and may require additional support from others before making a decision to donate. Such individuals may be experiencing all or none of the following:

- Physical and/or mental medical conditions
- Disability
- Learning difficulties
- Times of stress or anxiety (eg. bereavement, redundancy)
- Financial vulnerability/hardship
- Language barrier
- Influence of alcohol or drugs
- A long-term or temporary mental health condition such as severe anxiety

2c. Identifying a Vulnerable Supporter

Vulnerability can be difficult to recognise and it can also change over time. Identifying vulnerable supporters is not based on specific personal characteristics like age but instead is on a case by case basis. It is not possible to formulate a comprehensive list of all indicators of vulnerability as this will differ from person to person but the following checklist can be used as a guide. Is the individual:

- Asking irrelevant or unrelated questions or displaying signs of forgetfulness?
- Unable to read or understand the information they are provided with and asking for it to be continually repeated?
- Responding in an irrational way to simple questions?
- Saying yes or not at times that it is clear they have not understood?
- Taking a long time or displaying difficulty in responding to simple questions or requests for information? Repeating simple questions such as 'who are you', 'what charity is it', 'what do you want'?
- Wandering off the subject and making unrelated statements?
- Saying they are not well or are not able to continue?
- Displaying signs of ill-health like breathlessness or making signs of exasperation or discontent?
- Giving a statement such as 'I don't normally do things like this, my husband/wife/son/daughter normally takes care of it for me'?
- Indicating in any way that they are feeling rushed, flustered or are experiencing a stressful situation?
- Having trouble remembering relevant information such as that they are already a donor or have recently donated?
- Donating an unexpectedly large gift with no prior relationship

In some instances WellChild may have been contacted by the supporter or a family member/carer to tell us that they are vulnerable or written communications might be incomprehensible indicating that the supporter does not have full capacity. If contacted by a third party, WellChild must be satisfied that the third party making the request is entitled to act on behalf of the individual. It is the third party's responsibility to provide evidence of this entitlement. Any action will be confirmed in writing to the supporter directly in case they did not wish the family member/carer to act on their behalf.

2d. If Vulnerable Circumstances are Suspected

If vulnerable circumstances are suspected additional steps will be taken such as:

- Checking and confirming the individual does want, and is able, to make the donation
- Asking if they would like to talk to anybody else before making a decision or suggest "maybe you need some more time to consider whether you'd like to support us."
- If they are in financial difficulty but still want to support the charity, suggesting other ways of making a difference without putting themselves in financial hardship
- Updating the database with accurate records that reflect the wishes of the individual or another person contacting WellChild on their behalf. We will not record sensitive information about a supporter's vulnerability unless they have given explicit permission for us to do so.

If a donation has already been received and following investigations there are concerns about the individual's capacity to have made the donation, it will be returned.

3. Staff Training

Relevant training will be provided to all staff and volunteers involved in fundraising and it is their responsibility to ensure they comply with this policy. Any contracts with third party fundraising organisations will ensure those organisations comply with this policy and the Code of Fundraising Practice.

4. Complaints

WellChild is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and working in an open and accountable way. We know, however, that there may be times when we don't meet our own high standards. In this instance a complaint may be made to WellChild and this should be dealt with in accordance with our Complaint Handling Procedure seriously, promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially and measures put in place where necessary to prevent the situation from occurring again.

5. Further Reading

The Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice:

www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/code-of-fundraising-practice

The Fundraising Regulator's Fundraising Promise:

www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Fundraising-promise-v2.pdf

The Institute of Fundraising Treating Donors Fairly 2016 Guidance:

www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/treatingdonorsfairly