

011 Match Confidentiality Policy

Board Approval Date: 12/6/2018

In order for Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Christchurch to provide a responsible and professional service to young people, it is necessary for mentors, young people and their parents/guardians to be asked to divulge information about themselves and their families. BBBS respects the confidentiality of mentors, young people and their families' information, and with the exception of situations listed below, shares information about mentors and young people only among the BBBS or professional staff. The right to confidentiality applies not only to written information but also to video, film, pictures or use of mentor and young people's names in BBBS publications. All personal information is the exclusive property of BBBS; it is not the property of BBBS workers mentors or young people.

Any violation- of this confidentiality policy must be reported at the earliest opportunity to the supervisor of the individual concerned and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

Access to Confidential Information

- All mentors may have access to their own personal information, including their application forms, supervision records, police checks and references. Mentors who wish to view their own personal information should contact a Mentoring Co-ordinator. Confidential information relating to mentors is stored securely in the BBBS of Christchurch office. All computers are password-protected.
- Young people's records and other information relating to them is stored securely to prevent accidental or intentional viewing by anyone who is not a volunteer or a BBBS employee. All paper documentation relating to closed matches greater than six months old will be destroyed using a shredder.

Match Confidentiality

- Mentors will keep all one-to-one conversations with their young person confidential except within the limits of confidentiality below. Young people should be encouraged to understand the limits of confidentiality through their child safety training prior to match.
- Mentors must not pass on any information about a young person to any individual or organisation outside of BBBS of Christchurch without the young person's informed consent and the Mentoring Co-ordinator's agreement. This includes information about the participation of the young person in the programme.

Limits of Confidentiality

Releasing information to other agencies

- Information will be released to other individuals or organisations only upon presentation of an authorised consent to release of information form appropriately signed by the mentor and/or young person(s). Photographs and first/chosen name identifying information regarding mentors and young people may be used in BBBS publications or promotional materials if the mentor and/or young person and parent have given consent.

- Information shall be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
- Information shall be provided to any BBBS legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the BBBS. Such information is considered privileged information, and the law protects its confidentiality.

Match relationship

If a mentor receives information that a young person may be a danger to him/herself, and/or to others, necessary steps must be taken immediately to protect the appropriate individual.

- In the case of a potential suicide attempt or self-harm by the young person, the Mentoring Co-ordinator and the parents/carer/guardian must be informed immediately.
- In the case of a young person behaving violently towards others, the Mentoring Co-ordinator must be informed immediately. Remember also that actual or threatened violence to an individual is a criminal act.
- If a young person communicates specific intent to commit an unlawful act to their mentor, the Mentoring Co-ordinator must be informed immediately and appropriate authorities must be notified by the Mentoring Co-ordinator. This type of situation typically signifies a desire by the young person to 'let someone know' how they are feeling about their circumstances and quite often, a young person in this situation can be persuaded to 'do the right thing'.
- Where a young person discloses, or any other person (e.g. a BBBS worker or mentor) has serious concerns about abuse, sexual, physical or emotional, the BBBS policy, *Dealing with Suspected or Alleged Child Abuse* shall be followed.
- If a young person reports their involvement in a criminal act, the mentor must immediately notify the Mentoring Coordinator, who will determine whether or not the police shall be notified.

Supervision

Mentors are encouraged to use both individual and group supervision sessions to bring accountability and safety to their practice. To this end, mentors may share experiences and information from their relationship with a young person. When sharing in group supervision, mentors should talk about their young person using first names only. Group and individual supervision sessions are confidential; therefore, what is said in the group should stay in the group.

NOTE:

- The Governance Policy will have a statement regarding board members' confidentiality
- The Staffing Policy will have a statement regarding staff members' confidentiality