National Conference 2019: Volunteering – taking the next step

The Intergenerational Approach to Working with Minors

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Overview

• Working with Minors in the VO Sector

• The interaction of the different age groups of volunteers
Working with Minors
- Legal issues, duties and responsibilities
- Safety
- Minors in our VO

- Structural issues
- The internal workings of our VO
- The Staff
Legal issues, duties and responsibilities
Duty of Care
Accountability
Reporting
Laws
Safety
Safety is Pro-active
Retroactive Measures
Assessment
Regulations
Leadership plays a big part
Minors in our VO
Who is a Minor?

What’s so special about minors?

Roles minors play
Their Vulnerability

The Law affords them greater protection

They are the future present today
Structural issues
VO’s Vision & Youth Formation

How it is put into practice – ‘mentalita’

Interaction with the Outside World

Cooperation and Compliance
The internal workings of our VOs
Policies

Procedures - Training

Recording

Complaints: how do we handle them?

Conflict as a constructive crisis
The Staff
Recruitment

Mix of Staff: is there space for all?

Staffing - Different functions

Complementarity
Minors in our VOs

- Both as Volunteers as well as ‘clients’

- Keeping an eye out for them
Sources of harm...

A person associated with your organisation, staff, volunteer, visitor, or another minor

Another person in the community, e.g. family friend, neighbour or a stranger

A family member, including a parent, sibling, grandparent or other relative

A minor may actually harm themselves
Child Abuse

It can happen everywhere!
Attention!

• Take care of minors’ wellbeing
• Do not keep concerns to yourself
• Be careful: do not placing minors in uncomfortable situations
• Be mindful of health and safety regulations
• Do not give preferential treatment to anyone
Do...

• Maintain appropriate relationships with minors

• Build Healthy Relationships … be mindful of safety and sexual boundaries.

• Use Consent forms … information sheets … signed
The Law and VOs

2012: POMA: Protection Of Minors (Registration) Act

2019: Minor Protection Act
and specifically...

**VOs working with minors** need to:

- File Court Applications for **POMA**
- Follow **Mandatory Reporting** guidelines
• Court Applications for **POMA**
  --- these are free and easy *but*… !!!

• Mandatory **Reporting**:
  “See something – Say something!”
Responding to a concern

1. Remain **calm**
2. Take concerns seriously, **don’t dismiss them**
3. Listen with an **open mind**
4. Take **notes** and then **report** appropriately.
Okay, phew...

Take a breath... 😊
The interaction of the different age groups of volunteers is a two-way process.
Different Benefits

• Some Volunteers have the benefits of youth
  - enthusiasm, energy, fresh ideas…

• Others the benefits of age
  - wisdom and life experience
The benefits of older Volunteers

A model, champion, leader, guide, adviser, ‘counsellor’, coach, protector...

A tutor and role model able to assist new volunteers in discovering more about their role in the VO
“I don’t speak their language”

• An intergenerational approach:  
  The Johnny Bosco’s Learning Club

• Passing on the learning:  
  The Homework Club
Volunteers who have the benefit of age

• Can guide younger volunteers on how to go about their duties - and afford stability to the VO;
• Can contribute towards setting acceptable yet practical standards in their practice;
• Can contribute towards the formation of the long-term vision of young volunteers.
The best approach is often one of PRESENCE with, to, and for the young
### My background bit:

### Repressive
- Making the regulations known
- Supervision to detect of transgressions
- Then inflicting punishment
- A disciplinary figure that maintains distance

### Preventive
- Making the regulations known
- Supervision with the attitude of a caring parent
- Speaks to, guides, gently corrects
- Befriends the young person and wins their respect

### The SALESIAN system:

an approach that is **“Preventive”**

rather than **“Repressive”**
Learning Respect
[ and putting it into practice ]

Getting to know others across generations:
• Il-Gawhar tal-Isla

Acknowledging our elders
• Nominazzjonijiet Anzjanita Attiva
Focus on building **reciprocal respect** between volunteers of all ages and young people.

Be **pro-active** and **lead by example** – use your talents and the benefits that come with your age and status in life, regardless your age!

Use **common sense** when it comes to safety - be aware of **risks** and take **appropriate measures**.

**AND… work with others** not on your own!
Thank you for listening!

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Group discussion:

• What struck me? What is there in the intergenerational approach and on working with minors in VOs that I find particularly interesting or challenging?