



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: **P**rotection **O**f **M**inors (Registration) **A**ct

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

The SALESIAN system:

an approach that is
“Preventive”

rather than
“Repressive”

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



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?