



Fundraising with Children

Can we engage with children when fundraising?

Yes but you need to ensure that you they have an appropriate role and you take the relevant precautions.

Do we need permission from parents/guardians?

Yes. Participation in any fundraising activity must be via an authorising adult. For children up to the age of 16, it must be for the parents to decide.

What age limits are there for collections?

The minimum age of collectors varies depending on the type of collection and geographical area:

- Static collection box collectors must be 16 years of age or over
- For licensed lotteries, children under 16 cannot sell tickets.
- Children under 16 cannot count collected money.

England & Wales

- For public collections (on the street or house-to-house), age restrictions can vary with each local authority – check whether it is 16 or 18 in your area.
- For some collections (e.g. where money is collected from members of a club or society), collectors of 14 years of age or older may be eligible.

Within the London Metropolitan Police District

- Public collectors must be 16 or over, unless the collection is in connection with a procession. If the collection is in connection with a procession, collectors may be 14 or older, as long as they are accompanied by a responsible adult (for 14 - 16 year olds).

Scotland

- For house-to-house collections, collectors must be 16 or over
- For street collections, collectors must be 14 or over.

There are no restrictions with regard to younger children accompanying adults who act as the collectors.

If children are required to collect money, e.g. in the form of sponsorship for an event, instructions ought to state that they should be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Do all adults working with children need to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) in England and Wales or Disclosure Scotland?

Not all adults coming into contact with children will need to undergo a CRB or Disclosure Scotland check. If your organisation's employees, contractors or volunteers are to have regular unsupervised (i.e. parents and/or carers do not attend) access to children, CRB checks may be required. Risk assessments ought to be carried out to determine whether a check is necessary. Whether a CRB check is required will also depend on whether the contact with children is considered to be a training, caring or supervising role or where the individual is in sole charge of the child(ren). It will also depend on whether the contact is a one-off or frequent occurrence. The CRB website contains useful information on which types of positions qualify for a CRB check: <http://www.crb.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=1855>.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority will be introducing additional mandatory safeguarding checks in October 2009, in addition to CRB checks. Further information is available at www.isa.gov.org.

How can we reach children who might want to get involved?

Local schools are likely to be the most accessible way to engage children with your charity. See the Institute's [Fundraising in Schools Code of Fundraising Practice](#) for further information.

Schools may be more likely to engage in your activity if it can be incorporated into the children's education. A well-planned campaign to work with children could provide mutual benefits, bringing support and funds to your charity whilst also introducing children to charitable causes and helping them understand how they can empower change. By taking part in fundraising activities, children can develop a variety of skills that they can use in other aspects of their life, whether it is learning to empathise or generating support, for example.

An alternative would be to register with [G-Nation](#), a Citizenship Foundation programme that encourages teachers and pupils to engage with charities. Charities can [register themselves as organisations online](#) (www.g-nation.co.uk).

Can we collect children's details?

It can be difficult to judge whether a child is capable of giving fully informed consent so the Information Commissioner recommends, as good practice, that parents be consulted about important decisions involving their children. However, the Data Protection Act recognises the right of the data subject (i.e. the child) and that decisions should only be taken on their behalf if they are not capable of making the decision independently.

While there is no explicit age set out in legislation, as a general rule, children over the age of 12 can be asked to supply their details (e.g. name and address) if they understand what they are being asked to do. If you believe the child(ren) to be particularly vulnerable or unable to give consent, you cannot ask them to supply their details. In many cases, this will be a difficult judgement to make so it is best practice to obtain parents' permission, where possible.

It is vital that you make clear why you are collecting the children's details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of the communication. Do not offer a reward or incentive to providing the information and only keep the minimum amount of data about the children. Also remember that you cannot ask a child to disclose information about other people.

Requirements for collecting email addresses are stricter in the sense that a specific opt-in is required to send emails. See the [Data Protection Code of Fundraising Practice](#) or contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information.

If collecting children's details, further to compliance with data protection regulations, additional safeguards should be put in place to regulate the number of people to have access to the data and ensure its security.

Any information collected from anyone under 14 years of age must not be disclosed without consent from the relevant parent or guardian.

Also see ['Do we need to follow any specific guidelines if our website is aimed at children?'](#)

Can we send mail to children?

While there are no specific laws relating to children and fundraising, you must always comply with Data Protection. As an issue of best practice, mail ought not to be sent to children solely for fundraising purposes, but sending a newsletter aimed at a young audience may be a good way of generating interest in your charity and cause. Remember that, like adults, children must have supplied a specific 'opt-in' to receive emails whereas non-electronic mail simply has to offer an 'opt-out' – you cannot send untargetted mass-marketing emails to people with whom you have never had any contact. See the [Data Protection Code of Fundraising Practice](#) or contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information.

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It is imperative that communications aimed at children (those under 18 years of age) is appropriate and does not exploit their vulnerability. Furthermore, orders cannot be accepted from someone that you know or suspect to be a child, without the consent of the child's parent or guardian.

Do we need to follow any specific guidelines if our website is aimed at children?

If information is collected from children via websites, strong safeguards must be in place. Remember that children generally have a lower level of understanding than adults so notices about how their information will be used needs to be written in a language they can understand.

You will need consent from a parent or guardian if asking a child to provide personal information unless you can reasonably believe that they understand the consequences of what they are doing and are capable of making an informed decision and you are categorically able to verify their age

The age at which a child can make an informed decision will vary with the complexity of the situation and the capacity of the child. However, the Information Commissioner recognises TrustUK's (www.trustuk.org.uk) standard as a useful general benchmark:

'TrustUK approved webtraders recognise children need to be treated differently from adults. They will not market their products in any way that exploits children, nor will they collect information from children under 12 without first obtaining the permission of a parent or guardian. They will not collect personal data about adults from children.' **WebTraderUK - Code of Practice**

In this example, children are considered as those under 16 years of age.

You cannot collect information about other people from children. Furthermore, activities such as encouraging them to reveal information to win a prize, is likely to breach the Data Protection Act. If you intend to disclose or transfer personal information collected from children to third parties, you must have explicit consent from the child's parents or guardian unless you are sure that the child appreciates the consequences of their actions.

Also see '[Can we collect children's details?](#)'

What constitutes parental consent?

Generally, it is not enough to ask children to confirm their parents have consented by using a mouse click. If you need parental consent but decide that verifying the consent will involve disproportionate effort, the Information Commissioner recommends that you should not carry out your proposed activity.

What can we do to safeguard children at fundraising events?

Where children will be present at a fundraising event, ensure that the welfare and safety of the children is a paramount consideration throughout, from pre-event planning, activities on

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the day and follow-up work. This extends to all those who will be present at the event - when using external suppliers at the event, obtain references or checks on the people who will be attending, where possible.

It is best to obtain consent from parents/guardians before involving children in a fundraising event, where possible. You should encourage adults responsible for the children to attend the event with the children. In some cases, this will not be possible but do endeavour to obtain an emergency contact number for parents/guardians that can be used if necessary during the event.

You should provide children with a named contact at your organisation who can be contacted if they have any concerns both before and at the event.

Always ensure there are a minimum of two adults at events with children and try to avoid a situation whereby one adult is alone with a child outside others' sight or hearing. It is important to immediately report any concerns you have about a child, or any allegations made to you about or by a child – remember to respect their views and wishes.

While you may be keen to take photos of your event for future records and newsletters, only take photos of children with consent from the relevant parents/guardians.

Don't remain in contact with a child after the event, other than for fundraising purposes.

If in doubt about how you should proceed, seek advice from child protection and safeguarding experts.

Useful information

Charity Commission – child protection

<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/supportingcharities/protection.asp#4>.

Criminal Records Bureau

<http://www.crb.gov.uk/>

Data Protection Code of Fundraising Practice

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codesoffundraisingpractice/codesdirectory/dataprotection>

Disclosure Scotland

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/>

Every Child Matters – safeguarding information

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/>

Fundraising in Schools Code of Fundraising Practice

June 2008

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codesoffundraisingpractice/codesdirectory/fundraisinginschools.htm>

G-Nation

<http://www.g-nation.co.uk/>

Handling Cash Donations Code of Fundraising Practice

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codesoffundraisingpractice/codesdirectory/handlingofcashdonations.htm>

Independent Safeguarding Authority

www.isa.gov.org

Information Commissioner's Office

www.ico.gov.uk

London Metropolitan Police – public collections

<http://www.met.police.uk/charities/index.htm>

Management of Static Collection Boxes Code of Fundraising Practice

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/bestpractice/thecodes/codesoffundraisingpractice/codesdirectory/managementofstaticcollectionpoints.htm>

We Are V

www.wearev.org.uk

The Institute of Fundraising would like to take this opportunity to thank NSPCC for their help in developing this briefing. NSPCC has had safeguarding in fundraising guidance in place for a number of years and would, should you wish to contact NSPCC, be happy to talk to your organisation about how this has worked in practice.

Please remember that our guidance is for information purposes only and does not constitute professional legal or accounting advice. The Institute of Fundraising does not endorse any third party products or services. If any third party products or services are mentioned, this is for information purposes only.

About the Institute of Fundraising

The **Institute of Fundraising** is the professional membership body for fundraisers, working to promote the highest standards in fundraising practice and management. The **Institute of Fundraising's** mission is to support fundraisers, through leadership, representation, standards setting and education, to deliver excellent fundraising.

Committed to raising standards in fundraising practice and management, we engage with charities, Government, media, the general public and other bodies to positively influence the The Institute of Fundraising is a charity registered in England and Wales (No 1079573) and Scotland (No SC038971) as well as a company limited by guarantee (No 3870883). VAT registration number 547 8930 96. June 2008

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UK fundraising environment. We work to nurture the knowledge and standards of all those who undertake fundraising, offering an extensive range of training and networking opportunities.

The Institute represents over 5,000 fundraisers and 300 fundraising organisations, providing information and support services for Individual and Organisational members.

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