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ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
INSTITUTE

TRAINING FRAMEWORK & TOOLKIT

**SAFE & SOUND:
DEVELOPING A PEER-LED SAFEGUARDING
EDUCATION MODEL FOR TEENAGERS ACROSS
EUROPE.**





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ABOUT THE ERASMUS+ PROJECT / DISCLAIMER



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The project produced two documents: a research report and this training toolkit. Both are available free of charge on the project [website](#).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

P.1	FOUNDATIONS.....	P.01
1	INTRODUCTION	P.02
2	PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK	P.07
P.2	DELIVERING THE PROGRAMME.....	P.14
3	TRAINER'S MANUAL.....	P.15
4	MODULE 1: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY.....	P.23
5	MODULE 2: FOUNDATION OF SAFEGUARDING.....	P.28
6	MODULE 3: PARTICIPATION, POWER & RESPONSABILITY	P.34
P.3	FROM LEARNING TO PRACTICE	P.40
7	PEER-LED SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVES	P.41
8	EVALUATION, LEARNING & REFLECTION	P.52

PT. 1

FOUNDATIONS



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Creating safe environments is a shared responsibility. Whether working with children, young people or adults, organisations have a responsibility to promote environments where people are treated with dignity, respect and care. Achieving this requires more than policies and procedures. It also depends on relationships, organisational culture and opportunities for people to feel safe, listened to and able to participate.

The ***Safe & Sound Training Toolkit*** has been developed as the practical application of the research undertaken through the Safe & Sound project. The research explored adolescent development, safeguarding, psychological safety, meaningful participation, peer-led approaches, contextual safeguarding and the conditions needed for safe delivery in non-formal youth work. Its findings and design principles provide the evidence base for the programme presented in this toolkit.

The programme is designed to support trainers, educators, youth workers and other professionals in creating safer and more inclusive environments for children and young people. Through a combination of experiential learning, reflection, dialogue and practical application, participants develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that can strengthen safeguarding practice and meaningful participation within their own contexts.

Safe & Sound takes a holistic and preventative approach to safeguarding. It recognises that young people are more likely to communicate, seek support and participate when they experience psychological safety and trusted relationships. At the same time, the programme is clear that peer participation does not replace adult responsibility. Peer-led safeguarding is understood as supported peer facilitation within an adult-accountable safeguarding system.

This toolkit is intended as a practical resource that can be adapted to different educational, youth, community and voluntary settings. It provides the overall programme structure, guidance for delivery and activities that be adapted according to the needs and context of participants. It does not prescribe a single way of delivering the programme; rather, it provides a framework for applying the Safe & Sound approach responsibly.

1.2 WHY THIS PROGRAMME?

Adolescence is a period in which relationships, peer influence, identity and participation play an important role in how young people experience and understand the world around them. Safeguarding education therefore needs to create opportunities for young people to explore safety in ways that are relevant to their experiences and that allow them to participate meaningfully.

The Safe & Sound research identifies a particular opportunity for peer-led safeguarding education within non-formal youth work. Young people often turn to peers when they experience difficulties or need support, making peer relationships an important part of the safeguarding environment. At the same time, the research highlights that peer-led approaches cannot operate safely or effectively without appropriate adult support, supervision, clear boundaries and organisational responsibility.

The programme therefore brings together three connected areas:

1 Psychological Safety.

Creating environments where young people feel respected, listened to and able to participate.

2 Foundations of Safeguarding.

Developing an understanding of safeguarding responsibility, boundaries and responding to concerns.

3 Participation, Power and responsibility.

Exploring meaningful youth participation while recognising that safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations.

Together, these areas provide the foundation for a preventative and participatory approach to safeguarding. The aim is not to make young people responsible for protecting themselves or others, but to support them to understand safety, contribute to safer environments and know when and how to seek support.

The programme ultimately brings this learning into practice through the development of a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative, allowing participants to consider how the principles explored through the programme can be applied within their own context.

1.3 EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Safe & Sound programme is grounded in a learner-centered, experiential and participatory approach. Meaningful learning occurs when participants are actively engaged in the learning process and are able to connect new knowledge with their own experiences, perspectives and contexts.

Rather than relying primarily on the transmission of information, the programme encourages participants to explore concepts through experience, dialogue, collaboration and critical reflection. Activities are designed to create opportunities for participants to question assumptions, consider different perspectives and apply their learning to situations relevant to their professional, voluntary or community practice.

The programme values the knowledge and experiences that participants already bring to the learning environment. Trainers therefore act as facilitators of learning, creating psychologically safe and inclusive spaces in which participants can contribute, ask question, exchange experiences and engage in collaborative problem-solving.

The learning journey gives attention to knowledge, practical skills and attitudes, recognising that safeguarding practice requires more than understanding concepts. Reflection is embedded throughout the programme, enabling participants to connect learning with practice, consider their own role and identify opportunities for continued development.

The approach also reflects an important principle of Safe & Sound: participants should experience the principles explored through the programme, not simply learn about them. The learning environment should therefore model respect, meaningful participation, inclusion, reflection and shared responsibility throughout the learning process.



1.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The design and delivery of the Safe & Sound programme are informed by a set of guiding principles. These principles underpin the learning environment, the content of the programme and the way in which activities are facilitated.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY. Participants should experience a learning environment in which they feel respected, valued and able to contribute without unnecessary fear of embarrassment or judgement. Psychological safety supports open dialogue, meaningful participation and reflective learning.

MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION. Participants are encouraged to take an active role in shaping the learning process. Participation goes beyond simply being present or expressing an opinion; it involves creating opportunities to contribute, be heard and influence the learning experience.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. The programme places learning through experience at the centre of its approach. Activities encourage participants to explore, discuss, practice and apply ideas, allowing understanding to develop through doing as well as through discussion and reflection.

REFLECTION. Reflection is integrated throughout the programme to encourage participants to examine their experiences, assumptions and practice. It supports participants in connecting learning with their own contexts and identifying opportunities for continued development.

INCLUSION. The programme recognises that participants bring different experiences, background, abilities and ways of engaging with learning. Trainers are encouraged to adapt activities and facilitation approaches where necessary so that participants have equitable opportunities to participate.

ADULT ACCOUNTABILITY. Peer participation does not replace adult safeguarding responsibility. The programme recognises that young people can make meaningful contributions to safeguarding while adults and organisations retain responsibility for creating safe conditions, providing appropriate support and responding to concerns.

CONTEXTUAL APPLICATION. Safe & Sound provides a framework rather than a single perspective model. Participants are encouraged to consider how the principles and approaches explored can be adapted responsibly to their own educational, youth, community or voluntary contexts, taking account of their organisational setting and existing safeguarding responsibilities.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING. Safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility rather than a one-time topic. The programme encourages participants to continue developing their knowledge, reflecting on their practice and contributing to safer and more inclusive environments beyond the training itself.

1.5 ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit has been designed as a practical resource to support trainers and organisations in understanding, delivering and applying the Safe & Sound approach. It provides a structured framework while allowing activities and approaches to be adapted to the needs, experiences and context of participants.

The toolkit is organised into the following chapters:

Part I – The Safe and Sound Approach

- **Chapter 1** – Introduction, the current chapter, introduces the Safe and Sound programme, including its purpose, educational philosophy and guiding principles.
- **Chapter 2** – Programme Framework presents the overall programme, including its aims, learning outcomes, competency framework, learning approach and learning journey.

Part II – Delivering the Programme

- **Chapter 3** – Trainer's Manual provides practical guidance for preparing, delivering and reviewing the programme, including considerations relating to psychological safety, safeguarding, participation, group composition and inclusion.
- **Chapter 4** – Module 1: Psychological Safety explores the foundations of psychological safety and its role in creating environments where children and teenagers feel safe, respected, listened to and able to participate.
- **Chapter 5** – Module 2: Foundations of Safeguarding introduces core safeguarding principles, responsibilities, boundaries, risks and appropriate responses to concerns.
- **Chapter 6** – Module 3: Participation, Power and responsibility explores meaningful participation, power dynamics and the conditions needed for young people to contribute safely through peer-led safeguarding approaches.

Part III – From Learning to Practice

- **Chapter 7** – Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives supports the development and documentation of initiatives through which participants apply the learning within their own contexts.
- **Chapter 8** – Evaluation, Learning and Reflection brings together learning from the research, training experience and Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives. It considers what the project tells us about the approach, provides recommendations for future implementation and identifies areas for further development.

The chapters are designed to follow a logical progression, but they can also be used independently where appropriate. Trainers and organisations can therefore use the toolkit according to their own needs while maintaining the core principles and safeguarding boundaries of the Safe & Sound approach.

CHAPTER 2

PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

This chapter provides an overview of the Safe & Sound Programme before trainers move into the detailed modules and session plans. It explains the programme's purpose, structure, learning outcomes and design principles, and shows how the different elements connect to form a progressive learning journey.

2.1 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Safe & Sound is a practical training programme designed to strengthen awareness, meaningful participation and safer environments for children and teenagers. It brings together three interconnected areas of learning: psychological safety, foundations of safeguarding, and participation, power and responsibility.

The programme is grounded in non-formal, learner-centred and experiential learning. Participants are encouraged to connect new knowledge with their own experiences and contexts through dialogue, practical activities, reflection and application.

The programme recognises that young people can make meaningful contributions to safer environments, while safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations. Peer-led safeguarding is therefore understood as supported peer facilitation within an adult-accountable safeguarding system.

Programme at a Glance.

AIM. To develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to strengthen safeguarding and create safer, more inclusive and participatory environments for children and teenagers.

TARGET AUDIENCE. Adults working with or responsible for children and teenagers, including youth workers, educators, volunteers, care workers, programme coordinators, safeguarding leads and other practitioners or adult leaders.

DELIVERY APPROACH. Face-to-face, learner-centred, experiential and participatory learning grounded in non-formal education.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE. Three interconnected modules progressing from psychological safety, through safeguarding, to participation, power and responsibility.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION. The learning comes together through the development of a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative relevant to the participants' context.

DURATION. Approximately 30 contact hours across the three modules.

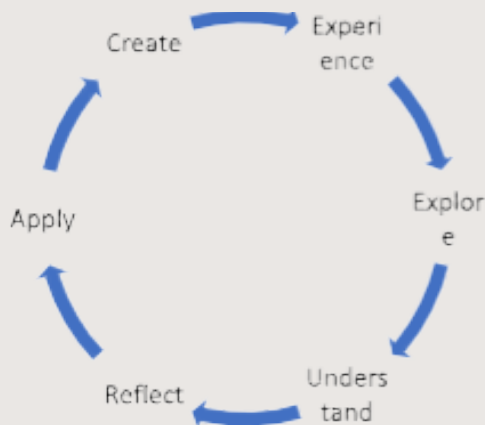
2.2 THE SAFE & SOUND LEARNING APPROACH

The Safe & Sound learning approach draws on established theories of experiential, reflective and participatory learning. These perspectives have been brought together to create a practical learning model suited to non-formal education and youth work.

At its core, the programme recognises that learning develops through experience, reflection, understanding and application rather than through the passive transfer of information. This is consistent with experiential learning approaches, particularly the work of Dewey (1938) and Kolb (1984), which emphasise experience as an important starting point for learning and the role of reflection and application in developing understanding.

Reflection is further supported by approaches such as Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) and Schön (1983), which highlight the importance of returning to experience, examining it critically and considering how learning can inform future practice. Gibbs (1988) provides a further practical framework for structured reflection.

The Safe & Sound programme translates these perspectives into a simple learning journey:



The stages are intended as a flexible framework rather than a fixed sequence. Learning may move between stages, return to previous stages or combine several stages within a single activity. This reflects the cyclical and contextual nature of learning described in experiential learning literature.

The model also incorporates a progression towards creating or developing something new. The Create stage is informed by the revised taxonomy of Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), which places creating among the more complex cognitive processes. Within Safe & Sound, this is reflected in the development of a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative, through which participants apply and bring together their learning.

Experiential learning alone, however, does not fully describe the Safe & Sound approach. The programme also places meaningful participation at its centre. Participation frameworks such as Hart (1992) and Lundy (2007) provide useful perspectives for understanding how children and young people can be given genuine opportunities to express their views, be heard and influence matters that affect them. These principles are particularly relevant to Module 3 and to the development of peer-led safeguarding approaches.

The approach is also situated within the traditions of non-formal education and youth work, including the practical learning approaches promoted through the Council of Europe T-Kit series. This supports the use of active, participatory and reflective methods that can be adapted to different groups and contexts.

Taken together, these perspectives provide the foundation for the Safe & Sound learning approach. They support a programme in which participants are not simply introduced to safeguarding concepts, but are given opportunities to experience, question, reflect on, practise and apply them.

Importantly, the model is not intended to reproduce any one learning theory in full. Rather, Safe and Sound brings together relevant elements from established approaches and adapts them to the specific purpose of safeguarding education, meaningful participation and peer-led practice.

THE SAFE AND SOUND LEARNING JOURNEY

The six-stage learning journey provides a common thread throughout the programme:

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Experience	Connect learning with participants' experiences, situations or existing understanding.
Explore	Examine experiences, perspectives, behaviours and different ways of understanding an issue.
Understand	Introduce and clarify relevant concepts, principles and responsibilities.
Reflect	Consider what the learning means for participants' attitudes, roles and practice.
Apply	Use learning in practice or realistic situations.
Create	Bring learning together to develop practical responses, approaches or initiatives.

The peer-led safeguarding initiative provides the opportunity to bring this progression together. Participants apply learning from across the three modules to develop an initiative that is relevant to their own context and considers psychological safety, safeguarding, meaningful participation, power and responsibility.

The initiative is not intended to place safeguarding responsibility on young people. Rather, it provides a structured opportunity to explore how young people can contribute meaningfully to safeguarding within an appropriately supported and adult-accountable environment.

2.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES & COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The Safe & Sound programme translates the findings of the project research into a practical training model. The research identified a number of principles that should shape the design and delivery of peer-led safeguarding education. These principles provide important boundaries for the programme and help ensure that participation and peer-led approaches remain safe, meaningful and appropriately supported.

DESIGN PRINCIPLE	APPLICATION IN SAFE & SOUND
ADULT ACCOUNTABILITY	Safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations and is not transferred to young people.
PEER FACILITATION	Young people can contribute as peer facilitators within an appropriately supported adult safeguarding system.
AGE DIFFERENTIATION	Peer facilitators are drawn from the oldest age band (17–19). Age bands (13–14, 15–16, 17–19) are not mixed in groups where disclosure is foreseeable. Groups should not be formed by bringing together young people who are already known to be high-risk. Activities and expectations otherwise take account of differences in age, development and readiness.
INCLUSION AND FEWER OPPORTUNITIES	Activities should provide equitable opportunities for participation and be adapted to different needs and circumstances.
TRAUMA-INFORMED DELIVERY	The programme should avoid unnecessary pressure to disclose, communicate boundaries clearly and respond appropriately to distress.
SAFE SPACES	Learning environments should support trust, respect, psychological safety and meaningful participation.
CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE	Participants should understand the limits of confidentiality and how concerns are handled within the relevant safeguarding system.
HARM BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE	The programme recognises that safeguarding concerns may involve harm between participants and the appropriate response arrangements must be in place.
DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING	Online environments and digital forms of harm are considered as part of the wider safeguarding context.
GROUP COMPOSITION	The composition of groups should be considered as part of safe programme design.

DESIGN PRINCIPLE	APPLICATION IN SAFE & SOUND
SUPERVISION	Peer facilitation should be supported by appropriate adult supervision and organisational oversight.
YOUTH PARTICIPATION	Young people should have meaningful opportunities to contribute, rather than being included only as passive recipients.
CONTEXTUAL ADAPTATION	The programme can be adapted to different organisational and cultural contexts while maintaining its core safeguarding principles.
REFERRAL PATHWAYS	Participants and responsible adults should know where and how concerns can be referred within the relevant safeguarding system.

These principles should be understood as interconnected rather than as separate requirements. Together, they support the central Safe & Sound approach: meaningful youth participation within a safe and adult-accountable safeguarding framework.

2.4 LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The programme develops three interconnected dimensions of learning: knowledge, skills and attitudes and behaviours. Together, these support participants in moving from understanding safeguarding concepts to applying them responsibly within their own contexts.

KNOWLEDGE

By the end of the programme, participants should be able to:

- Explain psychological safety and its relevance to children and teenagers;
- Describe key safeguarding principles, responsibilities and ethical considerations;
- Recognise factors that support or undermine safe, inclusive and participatory environments;
- Explain the relationship between participation, power and safeguarding;
- Understand the principles and conditions of peer-led safeguarding approaches.

SKILLS

Participants should develop the ability to:

- Identify risks, protective factors and barriers to safe participation;
- Apply practical approaches that contribute to psychologically safer environments;
- Recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns within their role and responsibilities;
- Facilitate meaningful participation and consider power dynamics;
- Apply safeguarding and participation principles to practical situations;
- Develop contextually appropriate approaches or initiatives.

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

The programme seeks to encourage participants to:

- Value the dignity, voice and participation of children and teenagers;
- Listen to young people and take their experiences seriously;
- Recognise their own power, responsibilities and boundaries;
- Remain open to reflection and the review of existing practice;
- Demonstrate respect, inclusion and empathy;
- Contribute proactively to safer and more inclusive environments.

2.5 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND LEARNING JOURNEY

The programme consists of three interconnected modules. Each module builds on the previous one while contributing to the overall aim of strengthening safeguarding and meaningful participation.

MODULE 1 - PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

This module introduces the foundations of psychological safety and its role in creating environments where children and teenagers feel safe, respected, listened to and able to participate. Participants examine psychological safety, relationships, communication, group dynamics and the role of adults in creating environments where young people can communicate, ask questions and seek support.

MODULE 2 - FOUNDATIONS OF SAFEGUARDING

This module introduces the core principles of safeguarding and the responsibilities that underpin safeguarding practice. Participants explore risks and protective factors, boundaries, ethical considerations and appropriate responses to concerns. The module reinforces that safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations.

MODULE 3 - PARTICIPATION, POWER AND RESPONSABILITY

The final module explores meaningful participation and the relationship between power, responsibility and safeguarding. Participants examine how young people can contribute to safer environments through peer-led approaches, while considering the support, boundaries and adult accountability required for this to take place safely.

2.6 PROGRAMME IN PRACTICE

The Safe & Sound programme is designed as a connected learning experience rather than three standalone modules. Psychological safety establishes the conditions for safe engagement; safeguarding provides the knowledge, principles and responsibilities needed to recognise and respond to concerns; and participation, power and responsibility explore how young people can contribute meaningfully within those safeguarding structures.

The programme uses experiential and participatory methods throughout, including discussion, practical activities, scenarios, reflection, collaboration and application to participants' own contexts. The detailed methods and session plans are provided in the following chapters of the toolkit.

The programme is designed to be adaptable to different organisational and cultural contexts while maintaining its core principles, learning outcomes and safeguarding boundaries.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Progresses from experience to exploration, understanding, reflection, application and creation.

Connects psychological safety, safeguarding, and meaningful participation.

Uses a learner-centred, experiential and participatory approach.

Develops knowledge, skills, and attitudes and behaviours.

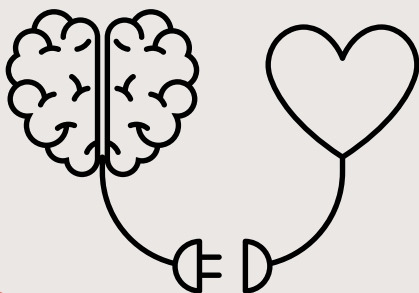
Recognises young people's capacity to participate while maintaining adult accountability.

Addresses peer-led safeguarding as supported peer facilitation within an adult-accountable safeguarding system.

Supports participants to translate learning into practice through a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative.

PT. 2

DELIVERING THE PROGRAMME



CHAPTER 3

TRAINER'S MANUAL

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This chapter provides practical guidance for trainers preparing for and delivering the Safe & Sound programme. It focuses on the trainer's role in creating the conditions for safe, inclusive and meaningful learning while allowing activities and approaches to be adapted to different groups and contexts.

The guidance follows three stages:

Prepare → Deliver → Review

The trainer's role is not simply to deliver information. Safe & Sound uses a learner-centred and experiential approach in which participants are encouraged to explore, question, reflect and apply learning. The trainer therefore facilitates the learning process while maintaining appropriate safeguarding boundaries and responsibilities.

3.1 TRAINER PROFILE

Safe & Sound addresses sensitive safeguarding topics and requires trainers to be able to facilitate participatory learning while maintaining appropriate safeguarding boundaries. The programme should therefore be delivered by trainers who have an appropriate combination of knowledge, experience and facilitation skills, including:

- Sound understanding of safeguarding principles and responsibilities when working with children and young people.
- Experience of working with children, teenagers or adults in educational, youth, community or similar settings.
- Experience in facilitating participatory and experiential learning.
- An understanding of psychological safety, meaningful participation and the importance of adult accountability.
- The ability to manage group dynamics and facilitate discussions around potentially sensitive topics.
- Awareness of their own role, boundaries and responsibilities when concerns or disclosures arise.

Trainers should also be familiar with the safeguarding procedures and referral pathways applicable within the organisation or setting in which the programme is delivered.

Where a trainer does not have sufficient safeguarding knowledge or experience to manage the content and situations that may arise, an appropriately qualified or experienced safeguarding professional should be involved in the delivery.

3.2 PREPARE

Good preparation helps create a learning environment that is safe, inclusive and appropriate for the participant group. Preparation should consider both the practical arrangements and the needs, experiences and circumstances of participants.

Know the Participant Group

Adolescence is not a single developmental stage. The Safe & Sound target group of 13–19 spans different stages of adolescent development, including early adolescence, mid-adolescence and late adolescence. These stages may differ in terms of peer sensitivity, autonomy, relationships, confidence, communication and readiness to take on responsibility.

Trainers should therefore consider the age and developmental composition of the group when selecting activities, examples, discussion formats and levels of responsibility. Age should not be treated as the only indicator of readiness, as individual developmental differences also need to be considered. Particular care should be taken when planning mixed-age groups or activities involving sensitive topics or potential disclosure.

Know the Programme

Trainers should be familiar with the purpose of each module, its learning outcomes and the intention behind individual activities. Safe & Sound is not intended to be delivered as a rigid sequence. Trainers may need to adjust the pace, explain concepts differently, adapt examples or allow additional time for reflection. Understanding the purpose of an activity is therefore more important than following its instructions mechanically.

Prepare Resources and the Learning Environment

Trainers should prepare all materials, resources and equipment in advance and ensure that they are accessible and ready for use. This includes any printed or digital materials, presentation resources, activity materials and other resources required for the planned session.

Good preparation reduces unnecessary interruptions and allows the trainer to remain focused on the group and the learning process. A trainer who feels prepared and confident is better able to create a calm, responsive and psychologically safe learning environment.

The physical learning environment should also be considered in advance, including seating arrangements, accessibility, opportunities for small-group work, privacy where sensitive discussions may arise, and access to breaks or quieter spaces where appropriate.

Anticipating Sensitive Issues

Safeguarding, relationships, power and psychological safety can involve experiences that are difficult or sensitive. Trainers should consider in advance:

- Which topics may be particularly sensitive.
- How participants can take a break or step away from an activity.
- What safeguarding and support procedures apply in the delivery context.
- Who is responsible for responding if a concern is raised.
- Where participants can be signposted for further support.

The programme should not depend on participants sharing personal experiences. Scenario-based discussion and hypothetical examples should be used where possible so that meaningful learning can take place without requiring disclosure.

3.3 DELIVER

Create a Psychologically Safe Learning Environment

The learning environment should model the principles explored throughout Safe & Sound. At the beginning of the programme, trainers should establish clear expectations around:

- Respect for different experiences and perspectives.
- Listening without judgement.
- The right to choose how much to share.
- Appropriate confidentiality and its limits.
- Respectful challenge of ideas rather than individuals.
- The right to pause or step away from an activity.

Participants should be clearly told that they are not expected to disclose personal or sensitive experiences in order to participate successfully.

Psychological safety does not mean avoiding challenging conversations. It means creating conditions in which participants can engage with challenging topics with appropriate support, clarity and respect.



Manage Sensitive Discussions and Disclosures

Safeguarding education may involve topics that are sensitive, personal or emotionally challenging. Trainers should therefore create clear boundaries around discussion and be prepared to respond appropriately if a participant becomes distressed or raises a concern.

The programme is not intended to investigate individual cases or provide case-specific legal or professional advice. Where a participant shares a concern or makes a disclosure, the trainer should:

- Remain calm and listen without pressing for unnecessary details.
- Avoid making promises of absolute confidentiality and explain relevant limits clearly.
- Acknowledge the participant's concern and explain what will happen next.
- Follow the relevant organisational safeguarding and referral procedure.
- Signpost or refer the participant to the appropriate person or support service.
- Avoid taking on responsibility for resolving the situation personally unless this is part of their designated role.

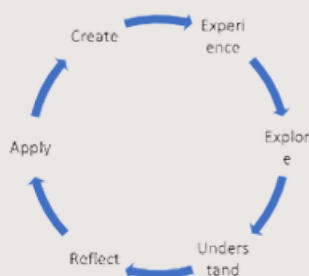
Co-facilitation can be particularly valuable when delivering safeguarding-related content. Having two facilitators allows one person to maintain the learning process while the other can provide individual support if a participant becomes distressed or a concern needs to be addressed. This helps protect both the participant and the learning environment, while ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are handled by the appropriate person.

The way trainers respond to sensitive discussions is also part of the learning experience. Participants are not only learning what to do when sensitive issues arise; they are also observing how such conversations can be handled with calmness, respect, appropriate boundaries and care. The trainer should therefore model the approach that participants are expected to develop and apply in their own work.

The programme should not depend on participants sharing personal experiences. Sensitive topics can be explored through scenarios, case examples, hypothetical situations and structured reflection, allowing participants to engage without being expected to disclose personal information.

Facilitating the Learning Journey

The Safe & Sound learning journey is:



The trainer should avoid turning the learning journey into a purely theoretical process. The training environment itself should demonstrate the principles being explored.

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Experience	Participants encounter the principles through activities, interactions and relevant experiences.
Explore	Participants examine what they have experienced and consider different perspectives.
Understand	Key concepts, principles and responsibilities are introduced and clarified.
Reflect	Participants consider what the learning means for their own attitudes, behaviour and practice.
Apply	Participants practise using their learning in realistic situations.
Create	Participants identify ways to strengthen practice and develop contextually appropriate approaches, including their Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative.

Meaningful Participation

Participation should be understood as more than asking questions or inviting opinions. Participants should have different ways of contributing and should not be expected to participate in exactly the same way.

Depending on the activity, trainers may use:

- Whole group discussions.
- Small-group or paired work.
- Individual reflection.
- Written activities.
- Practical exercises.
- Scenario-based learning.

Trainers should remain attentive to group dynamics, including domination of discussions, reluctance to participate, tensions and assumptions that may affect the learning environment.

The research emphasises that meaningful participation requires genuine opportunities to contribute rather than participation that is merely symbolic.

Managing Group Composition and Dynamics

Group composition is particularly important when addressing safeguarding and peer-led approaches. Trainers should consider the size, characteristics and relationships within the group and whether these may affect participation or safety.

Where a particular activity creates discomfort, imbalance or unnecessary risk, the trainer should be prepared to modify the activity, change group arrangements or pause the exercise.

For peer-led safeguarding activities, appropriate adult supervision and organisational accountability must remain in place. The research identifies facilitation quality, group composition and supervision as substantive elements of the model rather than simply administrative arrangements.

Adapt for Inclusion and Accessibility

Safe & Sound is intended to be adaptable to different participant groups and contexts. Trainers should consider accessibility from the outset rather than only responding when a participant identifies a need.

Adaptation may include adjusting the complexity of activities, language, examples, pace, group size and methods of participation. Trainers should also consider developmental readiness and the composition of the group, including age differences, existing relationships and individual support needs.

Adaptation should maintain the intended learning outcomes, safeguarding principles and adult responsibilities. This is particularly important because the research identifies disability and neurodiversity as a direct design consideration: approaches relying heavily on verbal group participation can under-serve participants who communicate or engage differently.

Know the Limits of the Training

Safe & Sound provides education and practical learning around safeguarding. It does not replace:

- Organisational safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Statutory or professional safeguarding responsibilities.
- Specialist therapeutic or psychological support.
- Legal advice.

Trainers should know the safeguarding and referral arrangements that apply in the setting where the programme is delivered and ensure that participants are not left uncertain about where concerns should be directed.



3.4 REVIEW

Review is part of the learning process and supports continuous improvement of both delivery and the programme itself.

Gather Participant Feedback

Trainers should provide opportunities for participants to reflect on the learning during and at the end of the programme. Feedback may consider:

- Relevance of the content.
- Learning methods and activities.
- The learning environment.
- Accessibility and participation.
- Confidence in applying the learning.
- Areas for improvement.

Feedback can be informal during the programme or collected through a structured evaluation at the end.

Reflect on Delivery

Following delivery, trainers should consider:

1. What worked well?
2. Which activities generated meaningful learning?
3. Were participants able to connect the learning to their own context?
4. Were any activities too difficult, sensitive or demanding?
5. Was the pacing appropriate?
6. Were adaptations necessary and effective?
7. Were any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns raised?
8. What should be changed for future delivery?

Trainer reflection should focus not only on whether activities were completed, but on whether the intended learning and participation were achieved.

Use Feedback to Improve

Feedback and trainer observations should inform future delivery where appropriate. Repeated issues may indicate a need to clarify instructions, adapt an activity, adjust timing, improve accessibility or strengthen trainer guidance.

This creates a continuous improvement cycle in which the programme can respond to the experience of participants and organisations while maintaining its core principles and learning outcomes.

3.5 TRAINER CHECKLIST

Before the Programme

- ☐ I understand the programme structure and learning outcomes.
- ☐ I know the participant group and any relevant accessibility or learning needs.
- ☐ I have reviewed the relevant activities and materials.
- ☐ I understand which topics may require particular sensitivity.
- ☐ I know the applicable safeguarding and referral procedures.
- ☐ I know who is responsible for receiving and escalating safeguarding concerns.
- ☐ The learning environment is suitable for individual, small-group and whole-group work.

During the Programme

- ☐ I am modelling psychological safety, respect and inclusion.
- ☐ Participants understand that personal disclosure is not required.
- ☐ Confidentiality and its limits have been explained appropriately.
- ☐ I am providing different ways for participants to engage.
- ☐ I am monitoring group dynamics and adapting where necessary.
- ☐ I am maintaining adult safeguarding responsibility and appropriate boundaries.
- ☐ I am using the learning journey to connect experience, reflection and application.

After the Programme

- ☐ Participant feedback has been collected.
- ☐ I have reflected on the effectiveness of the activities and delivery.
- ☐ Any safeguarding or wellbeing issues requiring follow-up have been addressed through the appropriate procedures.
- ☐ Relevant adaptations or improvements have been recorded for future delivery.

CHAPTER 4

MODULE 1 : PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

4.1 MODULE OVERVIEW

Psychological safety provides the foundation for creating environments in which children and teenagers feel safe, respected, listened to and able to participate. It influences how young people communicate, build relationships, ask for help, express concerns, make mistakes and engage with the people and environments around them.

This module introduces participants to the concept of psychological safety and explores the factors that can strengthen or undermine it. Attention is given to the role of adults, relationships, communication and the wider environment in shaping how safe a child or teenager feels.

Psychological safety is not something that can be created through a single activity or intervention. It develops through everyday interactions, relationships and practices, and is influenced by the wider culture and environment in which children and teenagers participate.

The level of trust and familiarity within a group may also influence how psychological safety develops. Participants who already know one another may require less time to feel comfortable contributing and engaging in discussion, while groups made up of people who are unfamiliar with one another may need more time and intentional opportunities to build trust and establish a safe learning environment. Trainers should therefore consider the existing relationships within the group and adapt the pace and approach accordingly.

As the first module of Safe & Sound, Psychological Safety also establishes an important principle for the programme as a whole: participants should experience the principles being explored, not simply learn about them. The training environment should therefore model respect, inclusion, choice, participation and openness throughout the learning process.



4.2 MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The module follows the Safe & Sound Learning Model introduced in Chapter 2. In this module, particular attention should be given to Experience and Reflect, as participants are encouraged to notice how psychological safety is experienced and how their own behaviour and communication can influence the learning environment.

By the end of the module, participants should be able to:

Knowledge

- Explain the concept of psychological safety.
- Identify factors that can support or undermine psychological safety for children and teenagers.
- Recognise the relationship between psychological safety, participation and safeguarding.

Skills

- Identify behaviours and environmental factors that influence psychological safety.
- Recognise potential signs that a young person may not feel psychologically safe.
- Apply practical approaches that can contribute to psychologically safer environments.

Attitudes and Behaviours

- Value the importance of creating environments where children and teenagers feel respected and heard.
- Recognise the impact of adult behaviour and communication on young people's sense of safety.
- Demonstrate greater awareness of their own role in creating psychologically safe environments.



4.3 MODULE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The module is organised around four connected areas of learning. These provide a framework for trainers to select and adapt activities according to the needs, experience and context of their participants.

1. Creating a Safe Learning Environment. The module begins by exploring what helps people feel safe, respected and able to participate. Participants are encouraged to consider how group environments, relationships and adult behaviour influence people's willingness to contribute and engage. The learning environment should model the principles being explored throughout the module.

2. Understanding Psychological Safety. Participants explore the concept of psychological safety and consider what it means in the context of children and teenagers. Attention is given to factors that can strengthen or undermine a young person's sense of safety, including communication, relationships, trust, inclusion and the wider environment.

3. Psychological Safety in Practice. Participants consider how psychological safety is influenced by everyday interactions and behaviours. They explore situations in which an environment may appear safe while particular behaviours, relationships or dynamics may make participation more difficult for some young people. This provides an opportunity to connect the concept to practical situations and to consider how adults can respond.

4. From Understanding to Practice. The module concludes by bringing learning into participants' own contexts. Participants identify practical ways in which they can strengthen psychological safety through their communication, relationships, activities, team practices or wider organisational environment. The focus should remain on realistic and achievable changes rather than presenting psychological safety as something that can be solved through a single intervention.

Adapting the Module

The content and sequence of activities should be adapted according to the participants, their level of experience and the context in which the training is delivered. Trainers may adjust:

- The depth and complexity of discussion.
- The balance between individual, pair and group activities.
- The pace of learning.
- Opportunities for reflection and application;
- The format of activities, examples and scenarios to support accessibility and different ways of participating.

Adaptation should not change the core learning outcomes or the principles underpinning the Safe & Sound approach.

4.4 TRAINER CONSIDERATIONS

Because Psychological Safety is both the subject of the module and a principle of the programme, trainers should pay particular attention to how the learning environment is created and maintained.

Trainers should consider:

- How participants are invited to contribute.
- Whether participants have genuine choices in how they participate.
- How mistakes and different opinions are handled.
- Whether some participants are dominating discussions.
- Whether quieter participants have alternative ways of contributing.
- How disagreement and tension are managed.
- Whether activities unintentionally require personal disclosure.
- Whether participants may be experiencing discomfort or distress.
- Whether the pace and format of activities are appropriate for the group.

Trainers should remember that psychological safety does not mean avoiding challenge or disagreement. Participants should be able to encounter different perspectives and engage with challenging ideas while being treated with respect and given appropriate support.

The trainer should continually ask: ***Are we creating the kind of environment we are asking participants to create for children and teenagers?*** This question can provide a useful thread throughout the module.

4.5 MODULE REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

At the end of the module, participants should have an opportunity to reflect on their learning and connect it to their own practice.

Reflection may invite participants to consider:

- What do I understand differently about psychological safety?
- What have I noticed about my own behaviour or practice?
- What factors in my setting may strengthen or undermine psychological safety?
- What is one practical change I could make?
- What would I like to explore further?

The reflection should provide a bridge into the next module while reinforcing the idea that psychological safety is an ongoing aspect of practice rather than a one-time intervention.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Psychological safety develops through everyday interactions, relationships and environments, not through a single activity.

The level of trust and familiarity within a group affects how psychological safety can be established and should inform the trainer's approach.

Adults have a significant influence on whether children and teenagers feel safe, respected and able to participate.

Small changes in communication, behaviour, group dynamics and the learning environment can influence psychological safety.

Creating psychological safety requires ongoing attention, reflection and adaptation.

CHAPTER 5

MODULE 2 : FOUNDATIONS OF SAFEGUARDING

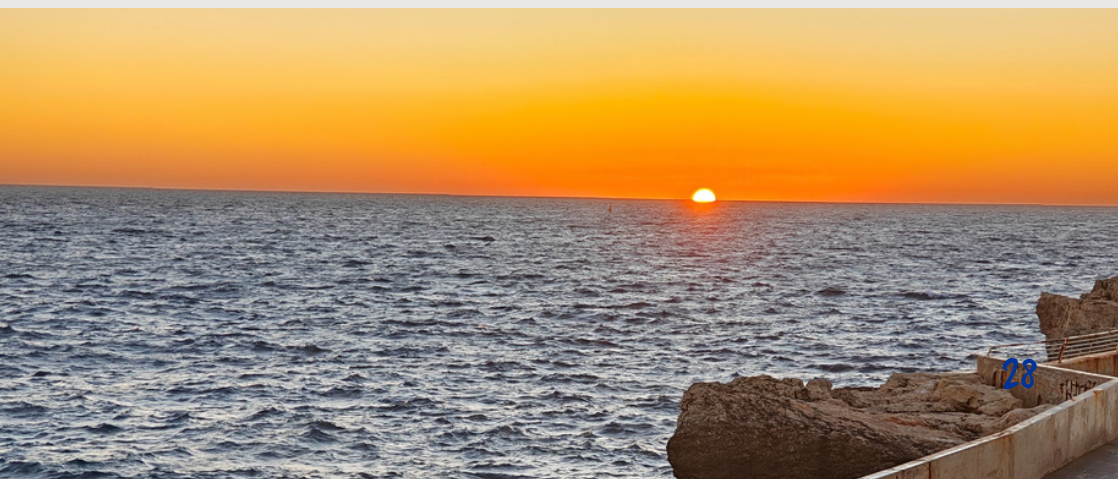
5.1 MODULE OVERVIEW

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility that requires adults and organisations to take active steps to promote the safety, dignity and wellbeing of children and teenagers. Effective safeguarding involves more than responding when something goes wrong. It includes creating environments that reduce risks, recognising concerns, understanding responsibilities and knowing how to respond appropriately when concerns arise.

Building on the foundation of psychological safety established in Module 1, this module introduces participants to the core principles of safeguarding and explores how these principles apply in practice. It considers the factors that may increase or reduce risk, the importance of appropriate boundaries, the responsibilities of adults and organisations, and the role of clear procedures for responding to concerns.

The module takes a preventative and practical approach. Participants are encouraged to consider safeguarding as part of everyday practice and organisational culture rather than as a separate process that is activated only when a concern is identified.

The module also establishes an important boundary for the Safe & Sound approach: **young people can contribute to safer environments, but safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations.** Understanding this distinction is essential before exploring participation and peer-led safeguarding in Module 3.



5.2 MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The module follows the Safe & Sound Learning Model introduced in Chapter 2. In this module, the learning journey supports participants in moving from their existing understanding and experiences of safeguarding towards clearer knowledge of risks, responsibilities, boundaries and appropriate responses, and then applying these to practical situations.

By the end of the module, participants should be able to:

Knowledge

- Explain the purpose and key principles of safeguarding.
- Identify factors that may increase or reduce risks to children and teenagers.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of adults and organisations in safeguarding.
- Recognise the importance of appropriate boundaries when working with children and teenagers.
- Explain the importance of appropriate responses, reporting and referral when safeguarding concerns arise.

Skills

- Identify potential safeguarding risks and protective factors within different environments.
- Recognise situations or behaviours that may indicate a safeguarding concern.
- Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate professional or adult boundaries.
- Identify the appropriate steps to take when a concern arises within their role.
- Apply safeguarding principles to practical situations and scenarios.

Attitudes and Behaviours

- Recognise safeguarding as an ongoing responsibility rather than a one-time requirement.
- Value the importance of acting in the best interests of children and teenagers.
- Recognise the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries and professional conduct.
- Understand the importance of taking concerns seriously and responding appropriately.
- Recognise the limits of their own role and the importance of seeking appropriate support or referring concerns.



5.4 MODULE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The module is organised around five connected areas of learning. Together, these provide participants with a foundation in safeguarding and support them in understanding how safeguarding responsibilities apply in practice. Trainers should adapt the depth, examples and activities according to the participants and context while maintaining the core learning outcomes and safeguarding principles.

1. UNDERSTANDING SAFEGUARDING. The module begins by establishing a shared understanding of what safeguarding means and why it is important when working with children and teenagers. Participants explore the purpose and scope of safeguarding, including the importance of prevention, protection and appropriate responses to concerns. The module also considers how safeguarding relates to safety, wellbeing and the wider environment in which children and teenagers participate.

2. BOUNDARIES AND RESPONSABILITIES. Appropriate boundaries are an important part of creating safe environments. Participants explore the boundaries expected of adults working with children and teenagers, including professional conduct, relationships, communication, use of authority and responsibility. The module also introduces ethical considerations in safeguarding practice and encourages participants to consider how adult behaviour, power and decision-making can affect young people. The distinction between participation and responsibility is reinforced throughout the module: children and teenagers can contribute to safer environments, but adults and organisations remain responsible for establishing appropriate safeguards, supervision and support.

3. RECOGNISING RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS. Participants explore factors that may increase vulnerability or create safeguarding risks, as well as factors that can contribute to protection and resilience. This includes consideration of risks that may arise within relationships, groups and physical environments, as well as digital environments and online interactions. Participants are encouraged to consider both individual and contextual factors rather than viewing risk solely as something located within the child or teenager. Understanding protective factors also allows participants to consider how relationships, organisational practices, supportive environments and meaningful participation can contribute to safer settings

4. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS. Participants explore what it means to respond appropriately when a safeguarding concern is identified or shared, including when a child or teenager makes a disclosure. The emphasis is on recognising concerns, listening appropriately, maintaining clear boundaries, understanding the limits of confidentiality, and knowing when and how to seek help. Participants should understand that responding to a disclosure does not mean investigating the situation themselves. The exact reporting, referral and escalation processes will depend on the organisation and context in which the programme is delivered. Trainers should therefore connect this learning to the procedures and responsibilities applicable within their own setting.

5. SAFEGUARDING IN PRACTICE. The module brings the learning together through practical situations that allow participants to consider how safeguarding principles apply in everyday work.

Scenarios and other practical approaches can be used to explore how participants identify risks and protective factors, consider boundaries and ethical issues, recognise potential concerns and determine appropriate responses. Scenarios can be used to explore questions such as:

- What concerns might be present?
- What factors may increase or reduce risk?
- What are the responsibilities of the adults involved?
- What boundaries need to be considered?
- What should happen next?
- What support or referral may be required?

The purpose is not to test participants on a single correct response to every situation, but to develop their ability to recognise safeguarding considerations, understand their role and responsibilities, and seek appropriate support or action when required.

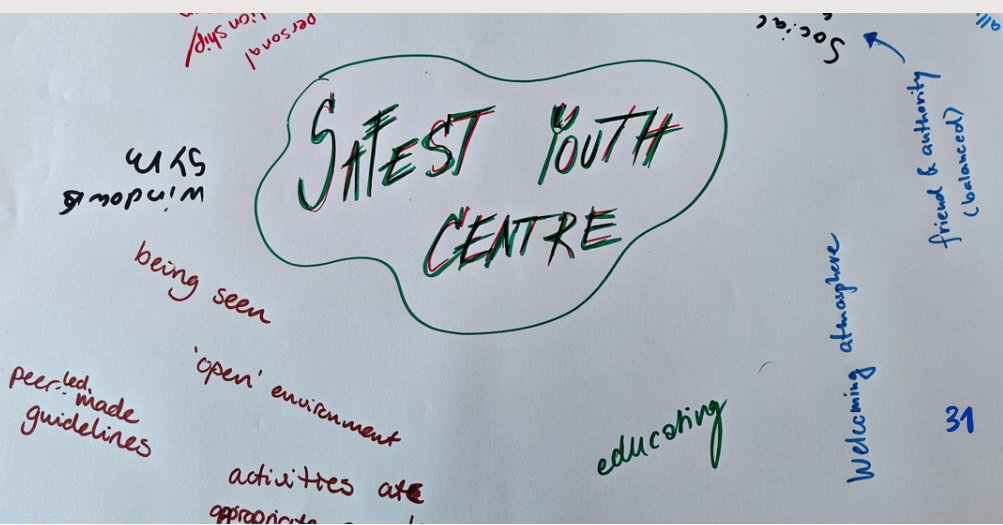
ADAPTING THE MODULE

Safeguarding practice is influenced by organisational procedures, professional roles and the context in which people work. Trainers should therefore adapt examples, scenarios and discussion according to the participants' roles and experience.

Trainers may adjust:

- The complexity of scenarios.
- Examples used to illustrate safeguarding principles.
- The balance between discussion, reflection and practical application.
- The amount of time given to topics.
- Examples according to the participants' professional or voluntary context.
- The format of activities to support accessibility and different ways of participating.

The core learning outcomes, safeguarding boundaries and principle of adult accountability should remain consistent.



5.5 TRAINER CONSIDERATIONS

Safeguarding discussions can involve **sensitive situations** and may lead participants to reflect on experiences from their own work or personal lives. Trainers should therefore create an environment in which participants can engage with challenging material without being expected to disclose personal experiences.

Trainers should pay particular attention to:

- Establishing clear boundaries around personal disclosure.
- Reminding participants of the limits of confidentiality where appropriate.
- Using scenarios and hypothetical situations where these are more appropriate than personal examples.
- Monitoring participants' responses to sensitive content.
- Avoiding unnecessary discussion of identifiable or case-specific information.
- Ensuring that participants understand their role and responsibilities.
- Being clear about the difference between listening to a concern and investigating it.
- Knowing the relevant safeguarding and referral procedures for the setting.
- Ensuring that participants know where to seek further guidance or support.

Where a concern or disclosure arises during training, trainers should follow the principles outlined in Chapter 3 and the safeguarding procedures applicable to the organisation and context.

5.6 MODULE REFLECTION REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

At the end of the module, participants should have an opportunity to reflect on how their understanding of safeguarding connects with their own role and context.

Reflection may invite participants to consider:

- What do I understand differently about safeguarding?
- What safeguarding risks or protective factors do I notice more clearly?
- Are there any boundaries in my current practice that I need to consider?
- Do I understand what my responsibilities are when a concern arises?
- Do I know where to seek support or refer a concern within my setting?
- What is one practical change I could make to strengthen safeguarding in my context?

This reflection should reinforce that safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility and provide a foundation for the next module, where participants explore meaningful participation, power and peer-led safeguarding.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Safeguarding is an ongoing, preventative responsibility, not only a response to concerns.

Safe environments depend on appropriate relationships, boundaries, organisational practices and adult responsibility.

Safeguarding risks can arise from both individual and contextual factors.

Adults should understand their own role, responsibilities and boundaries when working with children and teenagers.

Safe environments depend on appropriate relationships, boundaries, organisational practices and adult responsibility.

Concerns should be taken seriously and addressed through the appropriate organisational safeguarding and referral procedures.

Young people can contribute to safer environments, but safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations.

CHAPTER 6

MODULE 3: PARTICIPATION, POWER AND RESPONSABILITY

6.1 MODULE OVERVIEW

Meaningful participation recognises children and teenagers as active contributors to the environments and communities in which they live and participate. When young people are given genuine opportunities to express their views, influence decisions and contribute to matters that affect them, participation can strengthen relationships, confidence, belonging and engagement.

At the same time, participation takes place within relationships where power and responsibility are not equally distributed. Adults and organisations retain responsibilities that cannot be transferred to children and teenagers, particularly in relation to safeguarding.

Building on the foundations of Psychological Safety and Safeguarding, this module explores the relationship between participation, power and responsibility. Participants consider what meaningful participation looks like, how power operates within relationships and groups, and how adults can support young people to contribute without placing inappropriate responsibility on them.

The module then introduces peer-led safeguarding as a supported approach through which young people can contribute to creating safer environments. In Safe & Sound, peer-led safeguarding is understood as supported peer facilitation within an adult-accountable safeguarding system.

The final part of the module brings the learning together through the development of a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative, allowing participants to consider how the principles explored throughout the programme could be applied within their own context.



6.2 MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The module follows the Safe & Sound Learning Model introduced in Chapter 2. In this module, the **Create** stage provides a direct bridge to the development of the Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative, bringing together learning from psychological safety, safeguarding, participation, power and responsibility.

By the end of the module, participants should be able to:

Knowledge

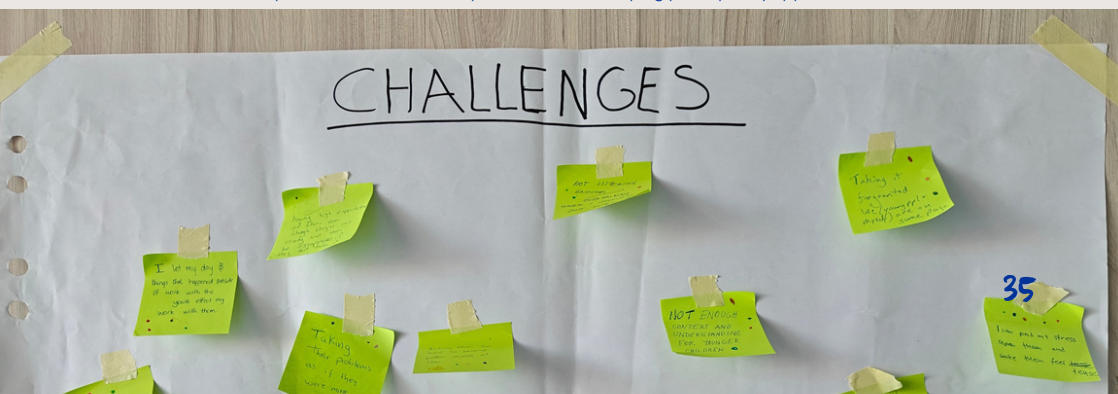
- Explain the concept of meaningful participation and distinguish it from tokenistic or symbolic participation.
- Recognise how power operates within relationships between adults and young people.
- Explain the relationship between participation, power and safeguarding.
- Describe the principles and conditions of supported peer-led safeguarding.
- Explain the importance of adult accountability, boundaries, supervision and support within peer-led approaches.

Skills

- Identify opportunities and barriers to meaningful participation.
- Recognise power dynamics that may influence young people's participation.
- Facilitate opportunities for young people to contribute safely and meaningfully.
- Distinguish between appropriate peer involvement and responsibilities that should remain with adults.
- Apply safeguarding and participation principles when developing a peer-led approach.
- Develop a contextually appropriate Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative.

Attitudes and Behaviours

- Value children and teenagers as active contributors rather than passive recipients.
- Recognise and reflect on their own power and influence when working with young people.
- Demonstrate respect for young people's views, experiences and choices.
- Recognise the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries and adult accountability.
- Support meaningful participation without transferring safeguarding responsibility to young people.
- Remain open to reflection and adaptation when developing participatory approaches.



6.3 MODULE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The module is organised around five connected areas of learning. Trainers should adapt the depth, examples and activities according to the participants and context while maintaining the core learning outcomes and the principle of adult accountability.

1. UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPATION. The module begins by exploring what it means for children and teenagers to participate meaningfully. Participants consider the difference between being present, being consulted and having genuine opportunities to contribute and influence decisions. Attention is given to the conditions that allow participation to be meaningful, including being listened to, having appropriate information, having choices and understanding how contributions are used. Participation should be understood as an ongoing process rather than a single activity or opportunity to express an opinion.

2. POWER AND RESPONSABILITY. Participation takes place within relationships that involve different forms and levels of power. Participants explore how age, role, authority, knowledge, experience and organisational structures can influence how young people participate and how their contributions are received. The module encourages participants to reflect on their own power and responsibility when working with children and teenagers. It also considers how power can be shared appropriately without transferring responsibilities that adults and organisations must retain. In particular, participants explore the distinction between giving young people a meaningful role and placing safeguarding responsibility on them.

3. FROM PARTICIPATION TO PEER-LED PRACTICE. Participants explore how meaningful participation can develop into supported peer involvement. Peer-led approaches can provide opportunities for young people to share knowledge, support participation and contribute to safer environments. However, effective peer-led practice requires appropriate preparation, clear roles and boundaries, adult support and supervision. The transition from participation to peer-led practice should therefore be understood as a supported process rather than simply asking young people to take on a role.

4. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS. This section introduces the Safe & Sound approach to peer-led safeguarding: *supported peer facilitation within an adult-accountable safeguarding system*. Participants consider what this means in practice and explore the conditions required for peer-led safeguarding to operate safely and meaningfully. These include appropriate adult support, clear boundaries, supervision, accessible referral pathways and organisational accountability. The role of young people is to contribute to awareness, participation and safer environments. They should not be expected to investigate concerns, manage safeguarding cases or carry responsibility that belongs to adults or organisations.



5. DEVELOPING THE PEER-LED SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVE. The final part of the module brings together learning from all three modules through the development of a Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative. Participants apply their understanding of psychological safety, safeguarding, participation, power and responsibility to develop an initiative that is relevant to their own context.

The initiative should consider:

- the needs and context of the young people involved;
- how meaningful participation will be supported;
- the role and boundaries of young people;
- the role and responsibilities of adults and the organisation;
- psychological safety and inclusion;
- potential safeguarding risks and protective factors;
- appropriate support, supervision and referral arrangements;
- how the initiative could contribute to a safer environment.

The initiative should also take account of the age and developmental characteristics of the young people involved. A peer-led role that is appropriate for an older teenager may not be appropriate for a younger participant. Age, developmental readiness, group composition and the nature of the activity should therefore inform decisions about participation, responsibility and the level of adult support required. The initiative is intended as a practical application of the Safe & Sound approach rather than a fixed model that must be replicated in every setting.

ADAPTING THE MODULE

Participation and peer-led approaches need to reflect the context in which they are being applied. Trainers should therefore adapt examples, scenarios and activities according to participants' roles, experience and the young people or settings with whom they work.

Trainers may adjust:

- the complexity of discussions and scenarios;
- examples of participation and power;
- the balance between discussion, reflection and practical application;
- the amount of time dedicated to developing the initiative;
- examples according to the participants' organisational or professional context;
- the format of activities to support accessibility and different ways of participating.

The core principles of meaningful participation, safeguarding and adult accountability should remain consistent.

6.4 TRAINER CONSIDERATION

Participation can be affected by power dynamics within the learning group itself. Trainers should therefore pay attention to how participation is facilitated and whether all participants have genuine opportunities to contribute.

Trainers should consider:

- Whether participation is genuinely voluntary and meaningful.
- Whose voices are being heard and whose may be missing.
- Whether some participants are dominating discussions or decision-making.
- How disagreement and different perspectives are handled.
- Whether activities unintentionally reproduce unequal power dynamics.
- Whether participants are being encouraged to question existing practices.
- Whether the distinction between participation and responsibility remains clear.
- Whether peer-led approaches are being discussed within appropriate safeguarding boundaries.

The trainer should also model meaningful participation throughout the module. Participants should experience opportunities to contribute, influence aspects of the learning process and have their perspectives taken seriously.

When discussing peer-led safeguarding, trainers should be particularly clear that peer involvement does not remove the responsibility of adults or organisations to provide safe conditions, appropriate supervision and responses to safeguarding concerns.

6.5 MODULE REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

At the end of the module, participants should have an opportunity to reflect on how their understanding of participation, power and responsibility connects with their own practice.

Reflection may invite participants to consider:

- What does meaningful participation look like in my setting?
- Where do I hold power and how might this influence young people's participation?
- Am I creating opportunities for young people to influence decisions that affect them?
- Where is the boundary between meaningful peer involvement and inappropriate responsibility?
- What support would young people need to participate safely?
- How could the principles of Safe & Sound be reflected in my Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative?

The final reflection should reinforce the connection between the three modules and support participants in considering how the Safe & Sound approach can be applied beyond the training.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Meaningful participation means creating genuine opportunities for children and teenagers to contribute, be heard and influence matters that affect them.

Participation must be considered alongside power and responsibility.

Adults should reflect on their own power and use it responsibly when working with young people.

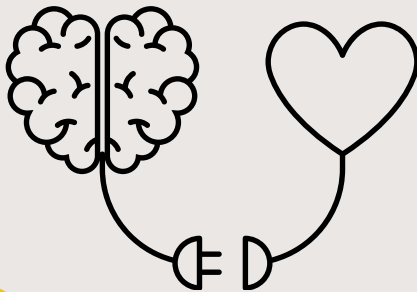
Peer-led safeguarding requires appropriate preparation, support, boundaries and supervision.

Young people can contribute to safer environments, but safeguarding responsibility remains with adults and organisations.

The Safe & Sound approach can be adapted to different contexts while maintaining its core principles.

PT. 3

FROM LEARNING TO PRACTICE



CHAPTER 7

PEER-LED SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVES

7.1 FROM LEARNING TO PRACTICE

The Safe & Sound programme is designed to connect learning with practice. Across the three modules, participants explore psychological safety, safeguarding, participation, power and responsibility, and consider how these concepts relate to their own settings.

The **Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiative** brings these areas of learning together through practical application. It gives participants an opportunity to identify a safeguarding-related need or opportunity within their context and develop a response that involves young people in a meaningful and supported way.

The initiative is not a separate activity added to the programme. It represents the point at which participants apply the principles explored throughout the learning journey and consider how they can be translated into practice.

Different groups and organisations may therefore develop very different initiatives. The focus is not on producing a particular type of activity, but on applying the Safe & Sound approach appropriately within the group's own context.

7.2 DEVELOPING THE INITIATIVES

When developing an initiative, participants should consider both what they want to achieve and how it can be done safely and meaningfully. The development process should take account of the young people involved, the setting in which the initiative will take place and the resources and support available.

Participants should consider:

- **The purpose** – What safeguarding-related issue, need or opportunity does the initiative address?
- **The participants** – Who will take part? What are their ages, experiences and developmental characteristics?
- **Participation** – How will young people contribute to the design, delivery or decision-making within the initiative?
- **Roles and responsibilities** – What will young people be responsible for, and what remains the responsibility of adults and the organisation?
- **Safeguarding** – What risks or concerns could arise, and what procedures or support are needed?
- **Psychological safety and inclusion** – How will the activity create an environment where participants can engage safely and equitably?
- **Practical requirements** –
 - What time, resources, space, supervision and other support are needed?
- **Evaluation** – How will participants and supporting adults know whether the initiative achieved its intended purpose and what could be improved?

The development process should bring together learning from all three modules:

- **Psychological Safety** – creating conditions in which young people feel safe, respected, listened to and able to participate;
- **Foundations of Safeguarding** – recognising risks, protective factors, boundaries and appropriate safeguarding responsibilities;
- **Participation, Power and responsibility** – creating meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute while maintaining clear adult accountability.

Particular attention should be given to **age and developmental readiness**. A role or activity that is appropriate for an older teenager may not be suitable for a younger participant. Decisions about participation, responsibility and adult support should therefore consider the age and developmental characteristics of the group, as well as the nature of the activity.

Once developed, the initiatives can be tested within the organisation's own context. Testing provides an opportunity to observe how the approach works in practice, gather feedback and identify areas that may need to be adapted.

7.3 INITIATIVES DEVELOPED AND TESTED

The partner organisations developed and tested initiatives adapted to their respective contexts. While the activities differed in theme, format and age group, each created an opportunity for young people to engage with safeguarding-related issues through active participation and practical experience.

The following examples document the initiatives developed and tested by the partner organisations. They are presented using a common format to make the activities easier to understand and compare, while retaining the specific approach used by each partner.

THE NETHERLANDS – PASTA EXPERIMENT

SECTION 1: GENERAL ACTIVITY	
Duration	Approximately 1 hour
Resources	Pasta, water, pasta sauce, salt, cinnamon, cooking pan, cooking utensils and a suitable heat source
General Description	The Pasta Experiment uses a practical cooking activity to explore exclusion, inclusion and the impact of bullying on individuals and groups. The activity uses contrasting cooking experiences to allow young people to observe how the inclusion or exclusion of one participant affects both the process and the final result. The activity concludes with a group discussion in which participants are encouraged to identify differences between the experiences, reflect on how exclusion felt and consider what the experience may represent in everyday life. The activity can be adapted to another suitable recipe where necessary.
SECTION 2: SAFEGUARDING	
Safeguarding Needs being addressed	The activity focuses on the impact of exclusion and bullying, the importance of inclusion and the effect that harmful peer behaviour can have on individuals and the wider group. It aims to promote empathy, respect and positive peer relationships while creating an opportunity to discuss emotional harm and safer, more supportive environments.
SECTION 3: PEER-LED	
Youth responsibility	Young people participate actively in the cooking process and, depending on their age and skills, may carry out different parts of the activity independently. They participate in the discussion, contribute their perspectives and help maintain a respectful space for peer discussion. They also support the clean-up process where appropriate.
Adult responsibility	Adults provide the initial instructions, prepare the resources and remain present throughout the activity to provide support appropriate to the age and needs of the group. Adults establish the conditions for a safe activity and initiate the final discussion while allowing young people to contribute their own observations and interpretations.

SECTION 4: EVALUATION	
Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation considered the differences between the inclusion and exclusion experiences, participants’ emotional and group reactions, their ability to identify the effects of exclusion and their ability to reflect on possible responses. The evaluation also considered the extent to which the peer-led format provided sufficient support for meaningful reflection and participation.
Evaluation	The contrast between the different cooking experiences provided a strong and memorable way for participants to recognise the effects of exclusion. The practical nature of the activity made differences in group dynamics visible and encouraged genuine emotional reactions. However, the evaluation also showed that very limited adult guidance created uncertainty for some participants, who looked to adults for support. Peer leaders also found it difficult to move from describing what happened to exploring how exclusion could be addressed in real-life situations. The experience therefore highlighted the value of retaining the contrast- based approach while providing a minimal framework for safety and reflection, such as open questions or a way for participants to pause the activity when needed.



MALTA – OPEN-UP!

SECTION 1: GENERAL ACTIVITY	
Duration	Approximately 3-3.5 hours
Resources	Pasta, water, pasta sauce, salt, cinnamon, cooking pan, cooking utensils and a suitable heat source
General Description	OPEN-UP! uses interactive and creative activities to explore emotions, emotional awareness and their connection to safer relationships and environments. The session begins with movement-based icebreakers before introducing a range of emotions through classification activities and charades. Participants then work in groups to create and continue short stories involving different emotional situations, identifying the emotions experienced by the characters. The session concludes with a short opportunity for clarification and a participant evaluation activity. The activities combine movement, creativity, group work and reflection to encourage young people to recognise and discuss emotions in themselves and others.
SECTION 2: SAFEGUARDING	
Safeguarding Needs being addressed	The activity focuses on emotional awareness, emotional boundaries and regulation, and the importance of creating safer environments with less conflict and violence in youth settings.
SECTION 3: PEER-LED	
Youth responsibility	Young people participate actively in the cooking process and, depending on their age and skills, may carry out different parts of the activity independently. They participate in the discussion, contribute their perspectives and help maintain a respectful space for peer discussion. They also support the clean-up process where appropriate.
Adult Responsibility	Adults provide appropriate fact-checking and support, remain present throughout the activity and supervise the group to help maintain emotional safety. They participate where appropriate and provide professional input when questions or concerns arise.

SECTION 4: EVALUATION	
Evaluation Criteria	The activity was evaluated through participant feedback on each component and through reflection by the youth leaders. Evaluation considered engagement, usefulness, emotional learning and areas that could be improved.
Evaluation	The activity was positively received overall. Icebreakers and charades generated particularly strong engagement, while the emotion-based and discussion activities encouraged reflection and emotional awareness. The discussion component produced more varied feedback, suggesting that reflective activities may benefit from additional structure and facilitation. Overall, the combination of interactive activities and reflection provided a positive balance for the participating group.



SLOVAKIA – SAFEGUARDING SPEED DATING AND GROOMING

Section 1: General Activity	
Duration	Approximately 2 hours
Resources	Flipcharts, markers, pens, printed conversation scenarios, small pieces of paper and refreshments
General Description	An interactive safeguarding activity designed to introduce participants to prevention and protection, trust and confidentiality, safeguarding responsibilities, online risks and grooming. The session combines individual reflection, group discussion, movement-based activities and practical scenarios. Participants establish shared rules, explore their understanding of safeguarding through an agree/disagree activity, discuss safeguarding questions through a speed-dating format, analyse a grooming scenario and receive a short information input on risk assessment and organisational safeguarding procedures. The session concludes with participant evaluation.
Section 2: Safeguarding	
Safeguarding Needs being addressed	General safeguarding principles, prevention and protection, trust and confidentiality, boundaries, risk awareness, online safety and grooming.
Section 3: Peer-Led	
Youth responsibility	Participants contribute to the creation of shared rules, express their views throughout the activities, identify questions and topics for discussion, take part in peer discussions and analyse safeguarding scenarios.
Adult Responsibility	Adults guide the overall session, manage time, facilitate and moderate discussions, encourage the involvement of all participants, support the creation of a safe environment, provide clarification and safeguarding information, and ensure that the questions and scenarios used are appropriate.

Section 4: Evaluation	
Evaluation Criteria	Participant feedback on the overall approach to safeguarding and on the main activities, including the Agree–Disagree activity, Speed Dating and Grooming scenario. Participants evaluate both their enjoyment of the activities and what they felt they learned.
Evaluation	Evaluation was conducted through four feedback stations using two 1–10 scales: one measuring participants' enjoyment of the activity and another measuring their perceived learning. Participants were also given space to provide written comments and reflections on the topics and activities.



SERBIA – SAFEGUARDING STOPLIGHT

Section 1: General Activity	
Duration	3 hours
Resources	PowerPoint presentation, coloured circles in stoplight colours, sheets of paper
General Description	The activity brought together 31 youth workers, who were divided into four groups. The session began with an introduction to safeguarding led by five participants who had previously taken part in the Safe & Sound training in Malta. Participants were first invited to share their own answers and knowledge, with additional information provided where needed. The groups were then presented with six safeguarding situations and discussed and assessed each one according to its level of risk, using the stoplight approach. The activity concluded with a group reflection on the most useful learning for their organisation and areas where further improvement or development may be needed.
Section 2: Safeguarding	
Safeguarding Needs being addressed	The activity addressed grooming, physical abuse and digital abuse, while supporting participants to recognise and discuss different levels of safeguarding risk.
Section 3: Peer-Led	
Youth responsibility	The participants who had previously completed the Safe & Sound training contributed to the development and delivery of the activity. They introduced the topic, supported the organisation of the groups and responded to participants' questions where appropriate.
Adult Responsibility	Adults were responsible for the practical organisation of the activity, including the venue, equipment and refreshments, and for providing support when questions arose that the youth facilitators could not answer.

Section 4: Evaluation	
Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation was conducted within the four groups. Participants were invited to reflect on the usefulness of the activity for their organisation, areas for improvement, and safeguarding topics requiring further attention.
Evaluation	Evaluation was conducted within the four groups. Participants identified what they considered most useful for their organisation, areas that could be improved, and safeguarding topics that they considered relevant for further attention.

7.4 LEARNING FROM THE INITIATIVES

The initiatives demonstrate that peer-led safeguarding can take different forms depending on the needs, experience and context of the group. The activities explored different safeguarding themes and used different methods, but they all created opportunities for young people to engage with safeguarding issues through active participation and practical experience.

The experiences also highlight the importance of **adapting activities to the group and context**. Factors such as age, developmental readiness, group size, existing relationships, available space and the level of experience of participants can influence how an activity works in practice.

The Slovakia experience, in particular, showed that repeating an activity with different groups provided opportunities to adjust instructions, questions, logistics and facilitation based on what was learned from previous sessions.

The initiatives further demonstrate the value of **clear structure and appropriate facilitation**. Experiential and discussion-based activities can create strong opportunities for engagement, but participants may need clear explanations, purposeful questions and sufficient time to process what they have experienced. In some cases, activities that initially generated useful discussion required additional guidance to help participants connect the experience with safeguarding principles or real-life situations.

The experience also reinforces the importance of **appropriate adult support and clear boundaries**. Peer-led approaches can create meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute, but young people should not be left to manage situations that require adult safeguarding responsibility. The level of adult involvement may vary according to the activity, age and developmental readiness of the group, but appropriate supervision, guidance and access to adult support remain essential.

The initiatives also show that **experiential activities can make safeguarding issues more accessible and easier to discuss**. Activities involving movement, scenarios, practical tasks, discussion and reflection provided different ways for participants to engage with topics that can otherwise be difficult or unfamiliar. At the same time, the experience of the partners suggests that interactive methods need to be balanced with opportunities for explanation and deeper reflection.

Finally, the initiatives highlight the value of **evaluation and ongoing adaptation**. Feedback from facilitators and observations during implementation helped identify what worked well, what required adjustment and where further support or clarification was needed. This reinforces the Safe & Sound approach of treating implementation as a process of learning and refinement rather than as the delivery of a fixed set of activities.

Taken together, these experiences illustrate how the Safe & Sound principles can be translated into practice while remaining adaptable to different contexts. The learning from the initiatives, together with the wider training experience, is considered further in the following chapter.



CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION, LEARNING AND REFLECTION

The Safe & Sound approach was developed from the project research and tested through the training programme and the development of Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives. Evaluation therefore focused not only on whether activities were delivered, but on what the combined experience of the project can tell us about the approach, its practical application and the conditions needed for it to work safely.

8.1 EVALUATING THE SAFE & SOUND APPROACH

The Safe & Sound approach brings together experiential and participatory learning, psychological safety, safeguarding education and meaningful youth participation within an adult-accountable framework.

Evaluation therefore considered three connected sources of learning:

- The research, which established the evidence base, design principles and boundaries of the model;
- The training programme, which provided an opportunity to test the learning approach and its delivery in practice;
- The Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives, which provided an opportunity to apply the learning in practical contexts.

The evaluation framework developed through the research distinguishes between process, learning, safeguarding and outcome indicators. This provides a basis for considering whether the programme was delivered as intended, what participants gained from the learning experience, whether appropriate safeguarding conditions were maintained and what changes can reasonably be identified. The evaluation does not seek to claim that peer-led safeguarding education prevents abuse or reduces safeguarding incidents, as the evidence and scope of the project do not support such conclusions.

This distinction is important to the Safe & Sound approach. The programme aims to strengthen knowledge, awareness, skills and participation within an adult-accountable safeguarding framework. It is not intended to replace existing safeguarding systems, professional support or organisational responsibilities.

8.2 LEARNING FROM THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training experience provided positive evidence for the overall learning approach. Participants responded particularly well to practical and interactive activities, group discussions, reflection and opportunities to exchange experiences. The learning environment was generally perceived as positive and supportive, while the facilitation style and group dynamics contributed to engagement and participation.

This supports the underlying Safe & Sound principle that participants should experience the principles explored through the programme rather than simply receive information about them. The use of experiential and participatory methods created opportunities for participants to connect concepts with their own experiences and consider how they could be applied in practice.

At the same time, the feedback identified several areas for refinement. Participants highlighted the need for clearer structure and instructions in some activities, more time for reflection and discussion, improved pacing and stronger links between activities and their intended learning outcomes. Some participants also identified a need for a stronger balance between experiential activities and more structured theoretical input.

These findings do not suggest a need to replace the Safe & Sound methodology. Instead, they indicate that the methodology benefits from clearer structure, sufficient processing time and deliberate connections between experience, reflection, theory and application.

The training experience therefore reinforces the value of the Safe & Sound Learning Model while also highlighting the importance of how the model is facilitated. Experiential learning is most effective when participants understand the purpose of an activity, have sufficient time to process it and can clearly connect the experience to the concepts and practice that follow.

8.3 LEARNING FROM THE PEER-LED SAFEGUARDING INITIATIVES

The Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives provided the practical application of the programme. They allowed participants to move beyond understanding the principles of Safe & Sound and consider how these could be translated into activities or approaches within their own contexts.

The initiatives should be considered against the core requirements established through the research and training programme, including:

- Meaningful participation rather than symbolic involvement.
- Appropriate consideration of age and developmental readiness.
- Clear roles and boundaries for young people.
- Appropriate adult support and supervision.
- Organisational safeguarding responsibility.
- Clear pathways for responding to concerns.
- Attention to psychological safety and inclusion.
- Consideration of the risks and protective factors within the specific context.

The initiatives also demonstrate an important feature of the Safe & Sound approach: peer-led safeguarding is not a fixed activity or single model. Its application may differ according to the organisation, group, age and context, while the core principles and safeguarding boundaries remain consistent. The evaluation of the initiatives should therefore focus not only on what was produced, but on how participants and organisations adapted the principles to their own settings and what this revealed about the feasibility, support requirements and potential challenges of applying the approach.

8.4 OVERALL LEARNING FROM THE PILOT

The experience of developing, delivering and applying the Safe & Sound approach provides several broader insights into the model and the conditions needed for its effective use.

First, the project supports the value of combining **experiential, reflective and participatory learning** within safeguarding education. Participants benefit from opportunities to connect concepts with experience, explore different perspectives, reflect on their own practice and apply learning to practical situations. At the same time, the experience shows that these methods work best when they are supported by clear objectives, appropriate structure and sufficient time for reflection and processing.

Second, **psychological safety is both a subject of the programme and a condition for its delivery**. The learning environment needs to model the principles that participants are being asked to understand and apply. Respect, inclusion, meaningful participation and appropriate responses to discomfort or disagreement are therefore not separate from the learning content; they are part of how the programme is delivered.

Third, the project reinforces that **peer-led safeguarding requires adult support and organisational accountability**. Young people can contribute meaningfully to safer environments, but peer involvement needs clear boundaries, appropriate preparation, supervision and access to adult support. The approach cannot operate safely as a stand-alone peer responsibility.

The project also highlights the importance of **age, developmental readiness and group composition**. Adolescence is not a single developmental stage, and the appropriateness of a peer role, activity or level of responsibility may vary according to the young people involved. The model therefore needs to allow for differentiation rather than assuming that the same approach will be suitable for all groups.

Finally, the project indicates that **adaptation is an essential part of the model**. Safe & Sound is most useful when its core principles are maintained while activities, examples, pacing, participation methods and practical application are adapted to the needs of participants and the context in which the programme is delivered.

Taken together, these insights suggest that the strength of the Safe & Sound approach lies not in a fixed set of activities, but in the combination of its **learning model, safeguarding principles and conditions for safe application**. Further implementation can continue to test and refine how these elements work together in different settings.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE APPLICATION

Based on the research, training experience and development of the Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives, the following recommendations are proposed for future implementation of the Safe & Sound approach:

1. **Maintain the experiential and participatory approach.** Active learning, discussion, reflection and practical application should remain central to the programme.
2. **Provide clear structure around activities.** Learning objectives, instructions and links between activities should be clear, while still allowing space for participation and exploration.
3. **Allow sufficient time for reflection and application.** Participants need opportunities to process experiences, connect them with relevant concepts and consider how learning applies to practice.
4. **Differentiate according to age and developmental readiness.** Activities, expectations and levels of responsibility should take account of the age, developmental characteristics and composition of the group.
5. **Maintain clear boundaries around peer roles.** Young people should be supported to contribute without being placed in roles that involve inappropriate responsibility for safeguarding others.
6. **Ensure appropriate adult support and safeguarding arrangements.** Supervision, reporting and referral pathways, organisational procedures and access to appropriate support should be established before peer-led activities are implemented.
7. **Adapt the approach to the organisational context.** Organisations should be encouraged to adapt activities and methods to their setting and participants while maintaining the core principles of psychological safety, meaningful participation and adult accountability.
8. **Continue to evaluate and refine the approach.** Future implementation should use participant feedback, facilitator reflection and evaluation of initiatives to identify what works well, what requires adjustment and what additional support may be needed.

Areas for Further Research and Organisational Reflection

The project also identifies areas that would benefit from further research and organisational reflection. Future work could explore how peer-led safeguarding approaches function over a longer period, how young people's participation can be sustained beyond individual activities, and what organisational conditions support effective implementation.

Organisations using the approach may also benefit from reviewing their own safeguarding environment before implementation. This could include considering roles and responsibilities, reporting and referral pathways, supervision arrangements, recruitment and vetting, digital safeguarding, management of harm between young people, accessibility and inclusion, and the level of safeguarding knowledge available within the organisation

Such analysis should be undertaken in accordance with the organisation's own legal and safeguarding responsibilities and, where necessary, with appropriate professional advice. The Safe & Sound toolkit does not provide legal guidance or replace existing safeguarding frameworks.

8.6 CONTINUING THE SAFE & SOUND APPROACH

Safe & Sound should be understood as a developing approach rather than a fixed intervention. The project provides a practical framework informed by research, tested through training and applied through Peer-Led Safeguarding Initiatives.

Organisations using the toolkit are encouraged to maintain the core principles of the approach while adapting practical delivery to their participants, setting and safeguarding structures. Continued reflection, evaluation and adaptation can support the approach as it is used in different contexts.

The central principle remains consistent: young people can be meaningful contributors to safer environments, but they should never be expected to carry safeguarding responsibilities that belong to adults and organisations.

In this sense, Safe & Sound is not simply about teaching safeguarding. It is about creating the conditions in which people can learn about safety, participate meaningfully, contribute responsibly and continue strengthening safeguarding practice over time.

