

Bristol Nightline Disclosure Policy

- 1. Confidentiality is a foundational value of Bristol Nightline, offering callers a safe and protective environment in which they can be open and honest**
 - 1.1. Certain call themes mean confidentiality must be broken
 - 1.1.1. Terrorism (required by law)
 - 1.1.2. Significant harm to a child or vulnerable adult
 - 1.1.3. Significant risk of death
 - 1.2. Nightline must follow SU safeguarding policies relating to children
 - 1.3. Suicidal ideation should not be considered incapacitating
 - 1.4. Anonymised statistical data may be shared with stakeholders
 - 1.4.1. Stakeholders include Nightline Association, Bristol SU and University of Bristol
 - 1.4.2. This must not include identifying information

- 2. The Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 states that a person who has reasonable grounds for suspecting another person has committed an offence must make a disclosure to the police**
 - 2.1. Terrorism is defined as: “the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or an international governmental organization or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause”.
 - 2.2. Terrorism can involve:
 - 2.2.1. Serious violence against a person
 - 2.2.2. Serious damage to property
 - 2.2.3. Endangering another person’s life
 - 2.2.4. Creating a serious risk to the health or safety of the public
 - 2.2.5. Being designed to interfering with an electronic system
 - 2.3. If a volunteer suspects Terrorism, the caller must be warned about this policy and the need to break confidentiality
 - 2.4. The police must be contacted immediately and provided with all available information
 - 2.4.1. If there is a bomb threat, the caller should be asked for the exact location of the bomb

- 3. In the case of children, situations may arise when confidentiality must be broken in the interest of an individual’s welfare**
 - 3.1. Volunteers are unlikely to be aware of the caller’s age
 - 3.1.1. Volunteers should treat calls as confidential unless the caller identifies themselves as a child
 - 3.2. The coordinator(s) are the main contact for any safeguarding referrals made
 - 3.3. All Volunteers are responsible for identifying situations concerning abuse of children and implementing this policy
 - 3.4. Nightline is a service intended for use by students
 - 3.4.1. If it becomes clear that the caller is a child under the age of 16 volunteers should signpost them to Childline (0800 1111)

- 3.4.2. If the caller wishes to remain on the call, Volunteers should reassure the caller that they are happy to continue speaking to them, but signpost the caller to Childline at regular and appropriate intervals.
- 3.4.3. Volunteers must inform the caller that they may need to report any information they disclose that identifies a child at risk of harm
- 3.5. If the caller, either as a child themselves, or as a third party, mentions current child abuse, or that a child is at risk of abuse, any identifying details should be passed on to the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline
- 3.6. Bristol Nightline volunteers should inform the caller that they are required to pass on information they have
 - 3.6.1. If the volunteers believe that doing this may put the child in serious danger, they may pass on information without obtaining the caller's permission
 - 3.6.2. If the caller is willing for this information to be passed on, volunteers should ask the caller further questions to obtain the information required to make a referral, including identifying details of the child
 - 3.6.3. If the caller is unwilling for this information to be passed on, the call may continue but must volunteers must ensure that the caller is aware that any details they provide will be passed on
- 3.7. The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline can be contacted on 0808 800 5000 to report any safeguarding information Bristol Nightline obtains
 - 3.7.1. If a child is identified to be at imminent risk, the NSPCC should be contacted immediately by the other volunteer listening in
 - 3.7.2. If the volunteer has information about the situation of abuse and identifying information about the people involved they should make a referral to the Bristol First Response Helpline 0117 903 6444
 - 3.7.3. If the caller is a child is at risk who is requesting immediate assistance volunteers must ask for their location and call the police immediately
- 3.8. The coordinators and Safeguarding Officer at Bristol SU should be informed as soon as possible if details of child abuse are passed on

4. A suicide call as any call where the caller considers ending their life as an option. An imminent suicide call as any call where the caller has taken, or is about to take, steps to end their life at the time of the call.

- 4.1. If a caller alludes to suicide, a volunteer should explore this and may introduce the topic of suicide to clarify whether the caller is thinking of suicide as an option
- 4.2. In any suicide call, volunteers should clarify if there is imminent risk of suicide
 - 4.2.1. This may include asking about plan, method, access to means of suicide
 - 4.2.2. For non-imminent suicide calls volunteers should clarify risk again if the call continues for more than 30 minutes, or if there is any indication of risk change
- 4.3. If a call is assessed as an imminent suicide call, the volunteer must immediately:
 - 4.3.1. Offer to call for an ambulance
 - 4.3.2. Explain that the caller must tell us their location if they want help, but

- can stay anonymous if they wish not to receive help
- 4.3.3. If the caller refuses help, explain that we may need to call for help anyway if the caller discloses their location
- 4.3.4. The caller must be informed that help has been called, if it is safe to do so
- 4.4. If the caller consents for Nightline to call for help on their behalf, Nightline must immediately do so
 - 4.4.1. If a caller refuses help, the volunteer should offer to take down emergency information in case the caller becomes incapacitated
 - 4.4.2. The volunteer should offer to call help again every 15-20 minutes or when deemed appropriate
 - 4.4.3. The second volunteer must call 999 while the call-taking volunteer stays on the line with the imminently suicidal caller
- 4.5. To best help the caller, the call-taking volunteer should ascertain and pass on emergency information, including but not limited to the following details:
 - 4.5.1. Location of the caller at present, ideally an address
 - 4.5.2. Access to the building (is there a code, or door that needs to be broken down)
 - 4.5.3. Method (including substance and quantity if overdose)
 - 4.5.4. Phone number (both a contact for the helpline and the caller's mobile)
 - 4.5.5. Caller's name and date of birth (to access medical records)
 - 4.5.6. Any other medical conditions, and current medications the caller takes
- 4.6. Nightline must pass on only relevant information for emergency services
- 4.7. The volunteer should stay on the line as long as possible, until help arrives
- 4.8. If needed emergency services should be given the contact details of the coordinator
- 4.9. If emergency services have been called Bristol SU should be notified

With Thanks

Disclosing Information to Third Parties Policy, Nightline Association (Sharma G., 2017)
Safeguarding Policy, Nightline Association (Policy Team, 2019)
Suicide Policy Guide, Nightline Association (RPA Team, 2018)
Student Engagement Team, Bristol Students Union (McGough H., 2020)