

# Safeguarding: example wording to use with callers

The scenarios used in the online training module are examples only, you do not have to use the exact wording during your own calls.

You can find your own form of words to reassure callers that they can talk openly to you, but if they give you identifying information, and you become aware of a serious risk to a child under 13, or a teenager or vulnerable adult who is unable to make a decision for themselves, Samaritans may need to pass that information on to relevant services.

There will be face to face training available in most branches, which will provide the opportunity to put what you've learned online into practice, and help you to find your own way of talking about safeguarding with the caller you are supporting.

Here are some examples of wording that volunteers have suggested:

## **If a caller starts a call by asking "Are you confidential?"**

"I don't know where you are, I can't see your number, and we don't trace calls."

"If you have not shared identifiable information we will not be able to act – regardless of what you tell us."

"If you provide any identifying information we may need act on your behalf if you later tell us you are at risk of being harmed"

*You may need to mention this more than once during a call and always do so if we are offering a follow-up call (examples later in this document).*

## **If you are on a call and become aware of a safeguarding concern:**

"What you've said makes me concerned/ worried for you... if you want me to, I may be able to try to get you some help... but I also need to let you know that if you give me information that identifies you, I might have to talk to someone else within Samaritans about your situation."

"What you've said makes me concerned/ worried for you... I'm not sure you're able to keep yourself safe at the moment as you are having trouble letting me know what you want to do. I'd like to try to get you some help... but I would need you give me some information about you to be able to do that. I would also need to talk to someone else within Samaritans about your situation."

"I'm concerned about what you've told me... but if you don't want me to try to get help for you, then as long as you don't tell me who you are/where you are, I can't do anything."

"Would you like me to try to get help for you? I can only do that if you give me information about who you are/ where you are, and if you give me that information, I may need to speak to someone else at Samaritans about trying to get help to you."

"If you would like me to try to get help to you, I will need information about who you are/ where you are, but if you don't want me to try to get help to you, then it's best if you don't share any information that would help me to identify you."

**Follow up call offer where there has been no safeguarding issues raised in the initial call:**

Example 1

*"We really want to make sure you have support from us when you need it, which is why we have offered to call you but before you give me your contact details, I need to explain that if we have identifying information, for example your phone number or address, and you disclose information in future calls about a harm/abuse situation for a child or vulnerable adult who clearly cannot make decisions for themselves, then we may have to share what you've told us to try and get help."*

Example 2

*"Before you give me your number, I need to just let you know that there are some very exceptional circumstances where we may need to share someone's details with people outside Samaritans. This only happens if we are really worried about someone we are talking to, who is in a real harm situation, and where it was clear from our call with them that they were really unable to make any kind of decisions for themselves."*

Other guidance can be found in the [Operations Manual](#)

**Follow up call offer with a teenager or vulnerable adult where there has been a safeguarding issues raised in the initial call but the caller clearly is able to make their own decision:**

We have been talking to the caller about sharing the abuse/harm situation with other people and they are really not sure if that is what they want to do. The caller has said they need to have a think about all the various options but need to go as they are due to be going out

*"Would you like someone to call you back in a few days to see how you feel about the options we have been talking about?"*

Yes ... that would be nice 'cos I am really not sure what to do for the best at the moment, and it would be good to talk through it all again.

*"When would be a good day?"*

Wednesday morning would be good at around 10am

*"Before you give me your number it might be helpful if I just run through what we do with it. We will try calling you around the agreed time on Wednesday... we can't promise it will be exactly 10 but if we say between 10 and 11am if that is OK. If we get through that is great we can talk and then we shred the number at the end of the call. If we don't manage to get hold of you for whatever reason we don't keep trying. We don't keep your number and again we shred the number once we have tried calling you."*

*"I probably do need to let you know that there are some very exceptional circumstances where we may need to share someone's details with people outside Samaritans. This only happens if we are*

*really worried about someone we are talking to, who is in a real harm situation and where it was clear from our call with them that they were really unable to make any kind of decisions for themselves.*

*“What we have talked about today is a harm situation, but based on our conversation it is very clear that you are able to make decisions. So unless that changed, this situation would not apply to you but as I said it is probably best that I mention it before you give me your number.*

*Are you Ok to do that and I will make sure that one of my colleagues calls you back tomorrow between 10 and 11am?”*

Yes that's fine... Thanks my number is xyz abcdefg

### **Third party referral where you have identifying information:**

[Introduce the conversation at an appropriate time, for example, if you have reason to believe they are a child or vulnerable adult, you may want to address this at the start of the call. In other cases, you may want to introduce this discussion only when they say something that suggests there could be a safeguarding concern]:

*“As I have your contact details, I need to let you know that there are rare occasions when we might need to discuss your situation with someone else at Samaritans, or in very exceptional circumstances, with someone outside of Samaritans. That only happens if we are really worried that you [or, a child or vulnerable adult that you talk to us about] are in a serious harm situation, and we’d always discuss this with you and explore other options first. Are you ok to carry on talking about what’s troubling you?”*

### **Example SMS message:**

[Introduce the conversation at an appropriate time, for example, you may want to say at the start of a conversation and remind the caller as appropriate during the conversation]:

"We can't see your number or locate you, if we're concerned about harm we may speak to others but only if you share info about yourself/ after discussion. ok?"

[Offering a call back in urgent situation, eg in process of ending their life]:

"Can I call you? I will need your number. We'd delete after the call, unless you want or need us to get help to you."