

Exceptions to confidentiality

There are some **exceptions to group confidentiality**. Please report any concerns to the group leader or safeguarding officers: Debbie and Karen. In the circumstances below they would then possibly be referred onto the police, a court or a doctor. Any offences listed below **must be genuinely believed to be true by you** and fit the criteria below to be reported, and confidentiality to be broken. See also 'Young Person's Gillick Competency'. We would always bring something to Peer supervision before breaking confidentiality.

Possible exemptions to confidentiality

Crime: There is **no duty to report crimes, except in specific circumstances**. Generally, confidentiality can be maintained **unless the information is requested via a court order**. If someone (without a court order) is asking about a crime you might know about from the group, then a response of **"I cannot answer due to agreed confidentiality"** is enough.

Serious Crime: When a crime could result in **serious harm to the public** (such as murder, manslaughter, rape, treason, kidnapping, **child abuse**, abuse of a vulnerable adult, etc.) **we can legally breach confidentiality to report it**.

Harm to self and others: If someone's **mental state means we strongly suspect they could harm themselves or others**, it may be appropriate to **contact the police and/or their doctor**.

Peer supervision (& professional supervisors for Counsellors): Regular discussion with colleagues from the Group in Peer Supervision– helps keep us safe. We can discuss any possible course of action and offload any emotion we are holding from the group.

When we legally MUST break confidentiality

Terrorism: If we have been confidentially told **information directly relating to any terrorist activity**, we have an **obligation to report it** to the authorities.

Drug Trafficking: If we have information on **drug trafficking and/or money laundering**, we are **expected to report it**. This one may be more of a grey area though, so if in doubt we can seek legal advice.

Driving offences: If we are **told of a serious driving offence** in the group **and the police ask for the details** we've been told, for example who was driving, **we are obliged to tell the police**. However, this has only once been tested and a GP was only fined £5 for failing to reveal which person was driving after he treated people who were in an accident and fled the scene.

Missing children/young people: If a child or young person is missing, abducted or run away and we have confidential knowledge of their whereabouts, the **family court can make a 'recovery order' to force you to reveal their whereabouts**. Failure to comply could mean you get charged with 'contempt of court'.

Serious Crime: A court can request information of crime using a **'serious crime discloser order'**. It will normally mean **reporting what you know about the crime to a police officer or to the court**.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): If someone **under 18 report having had FGM or shows signs of having had FGM**, it is our duty to report it to the authorities.

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