



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Risk Assessment Form

OK don't panic! Assessing risk is really a matter of common sense – you wouldn't want your Group Members, the public (or yourself!) to be hurt as a result of your activities. Risk Assessments are a tool to help you think through the possible risks and reduce them as much as possible.

The Health & Safety Executive website has a great section you might find worth reading - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/index.htm>

We're recommend you check out <http://www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/volunteering.htm>

A quote from the HSE website:

Encouraging young people to volunteer for social action activities may mean they're exposed to new environments that carry a degree of risk. But this should be set alongside the learning and development opportunities that volunteering for social action can give, and is all part of growing up and learning how to make a contribution to society. HSE fully recognises and supports these wider benefits.

In thinking about all the unusual risks that your Group might face in undertaking your Go Make a Difference project, don't forget the normal every day common sense stuff ...

The HSE can say it better than us ... *Keep things in proportion to the risks – everyday ones will already be familiar to young people, but bear in mind that they aren't fully mature - physically, mentally or emotionally - and won't necessarily be aware of risks in the same way as an adult. Think about what you need to tell them about keeping safe, and how much supervision they may need to do so.*

Let's give you an example – Once upon a time (not so very long ago) a dedicated youth leader completed his Risk Assessment and decided he could encourage his group of young people to get involved in some local community action. The young people were really enthusiastic and wanted to record their community contribution on their phones. One of the group was so focused on filming they walked straight out into the road and were hit and injured by a car.

Road Safety is something that can be forgotten when young people get excited. It's something Group leaders need to remember!

So how do I do a Risk Assessment?

If you've never completed a Risk Assessment (RA) before, ask others – there may be someone who is very familiar with completing RA's who would be willing to assist you. It's not difficult. You need to think through the activity you are going to undertake – step by step – from beginning to end. At each step in your project, identify any hazards (anything that may cause harm) that may exist and write them in the first column on the table below. We suggest you continue stepping through your project, identify all the hazards and then go back and complete the rest of the table.

The idea is not to totally eliminate all risks – that won't happen. Identify the hazards – decide who may be harmed and how – assess the risk and control the risk as much as practical – and then consider if the risk that remains is acceptable. If it's too great a risk, then change your plan.

There's an example form completed below. We also have some RA's that have been completed for outdoor gardening work (contact us if a copy would be helpful). Whilst RA's completed by others can give us some ideas, remember you really need to think through your plans step by step and look at the risks your Group face.

Weather! The risk you face can change considerably dependent on the weather. Wet – slip risk? Hot – dehydration risk? cold – hypothermia risk?

Time of day (or night). Activity that might be acceptable at midday may be unacceptably risky at midnight. Think how the time of day (light; traffic; noise) can affect your plans.

Retain the Risk Assessments for your Group records.



Risk Assessment

Example

Group name _____
 Completed by _____ Date _____

What are the hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to prevent harm	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done (date)
Crossing main Road to meet at park	Team members over excited and risk averse	Have Team Leader meet them on far side of road and cross to park together	Ensure group members know where we are meeting and why	PG	Before first group meeting	
Stranger danger	Team members on their own	Advise on danger and what to do if approached. Keep group together – minimum in pairs	Ensure leaders are aware of hazard and maintaining observation of Group throughout activity	AB	Before first group meeting	
Contamination from rubbish	Group members, spillage onto clothes and skin	Provide protective overalls	Ensure team members advise leader if contamination on skin or soaks through overalls	PG	Before first group meeting	
Risk from needles and sharps	Group members engaged in litter pick by picking up sharp objects (eg glass cut) or needles (penetrating)	All Group members will wear gloves. Litter pickers available for picking up glass.	Obtain sharps container. Demonstrate use at the Park	TF	Before first group meeting	
Exposure to wet/cold weather	Group members (and leaders) getting wet and cold – risk hypothermia, risk of exhaustion	Requested Group members to bring waterproof coat. (NB risk of contaminants on personal clothing)	In the event of heavy rain or extreme cold the activity will be called off. Provide hot drinks	PG	Before first group meeting	
Exposure to very hot weather	Risk of sunburn, sunstroke and exhaustion wearing overalls	Advising Group- members to wear suitable clothes for the prevailing weather	Provide sunblock Provide cold drinks	PG	Before first group meeting	



Risk Assessment

Group name _____

Completed by _____ Date _____

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