

The Church of England is investing in a ground-breaking programme of safeguarding training and resources, created especially for children and young people. The project was the brainchild of Becca Faal, Safeguarding Officer for the Diocese of Gloucester and founder of the Faal Safeguarding Consultancy.

Becca said, "Previous safeguarding training in the Church has been aimed solely at adults, but this doesn't go far enough. It's really important that everyone in our worshipping communities is informed about abuse, and empowered with the tools they need to make our spaces as safe as possible."

She hit on the idea while she was researching her MSc dissertation, "Can and should the Church educate children to protect themselves from abuse?"

Becca took a proposal to the Church of England National Safeguarding Team and secured funding to develop resources in consultation with children and young people. 90 children across three different dioceses (church areas) helped to create the materials – children from a Sunday school, two youth groups, a Cathedral choir, a church choir, and a diocesan children and young people's group.

She said, "Teaching children and young people what to expect from the people around them, knowledge of healthy relationships and boundaries, and who to speak to if they feel in danger, helps them to protect themselves and others.

"When more young people are able to identify concerning behaviour and abuse and the framework in place to protect them, it allows them to be more confident in reporting and standing up to abuse."

The resources include a film, lesson plans and leaflets for children and their parents.

Lisa Clarke, National Safeguarding Learning and Development Manager, said:

"The National Safeguarding Team were very pleased to commission the development of these resources, co-produced by children and young people for use with their peers. It is so important that children and young people are supported to recognise healthy behaviours, relationships and boundaries and have the confidence to speak out if something doesn't seem right. The resources produced are accessible and high quality and we are proud to have them available on the Safeguarding Training Portal."

The resources give youth workers, leaders of children's groups and Parish Safeguarding Officers an accessible and relevant way to share these important messages with young people and to open up conversations. They are designed to be used across worshipping communities within the Church of England, such as churches, schools, chaplaincies and youth groups.

The resources are free to download through the [Church of England Safeguarding portal](https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-news-and-releases/safeguarding-resources-developed-especially-young).