

Good Practice Guidelines for use of photography/video at children's events within the Church of Scotland

As an agency committed to caring for and protecting children, we must ensure our actions and those of our congregation are appropriate. These guidelines provide only a framework for good practice and might be interpreted in slightly different ways depending on the situation

- No video or photographic footage should be publicly displayed (i.e. notice-board, local press or world wide web) without prior notice being given by the group and an opportunity for objection to be received.
- Neither names nor any personal information should be displayed alongside any photographs.
- Mobile phones can be used to take photographs and videos which can be immediately uploaded onto the web or social networking sites without permission. Therefore, group leaders should discourage the use of mobile phones during church activities. The group may wish to produce a mobile phone code of conduct to ensure safe usage. Congregations may find helpful to refer to the Safeguarding Office website which includes links to organisations providing guidelines on safe use of mobile phones and the internet.
- During large events, arrangements can be made by the host to provide video or photographic stills of the participants in action. This allows the performance to go ahead with limited interruption, and allows the child who is not to be photographed to take part.
- An open "photoshoot" can be held at the end of the performance (sensitively distracting any children not to be photographed) to allow families to take their own private shots.
- Special consideration should be given where taking photographs or video footage might be misinterpreted, or the images could be seen as provocative (eg beach trip or gymnastics display etc). It is not to say, however, that with the right planning, these events cannot be recorded and enjoyed.
- Responsibility of storage and destruction of photographic material should be taken at sessional level and written agreement should be made for this purpose.

Photography and video recording are important methods of recording social activity and providing an historic record – illustrating and validating important moments in people's lives. This process is a powerful and personal one, and therefore, we must respect the rights of everyone to make the choice whether or not to be photographed.