

## Young People and Health and Safety

Health and safety shouldn't be blamed for preventing young people from volunteering.

Health and safety law is not a barrier. A sensible, proportionate approach can be key to enabling volunteering and making sure things go smoothly and safely. It also avoids unnecessary bureaucracy.

In many cases health and safety law doesn't even apply. It generally only applies to employers, the self-employed and employees (though all charities will have a common law duty of care). When health and safety law does apply, [keep things in proportion – the HSE \(Health and Safety Executive\) website guidance tells you how.](#)

Encouraging cadets 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.

You can find [straightforward guidance on supporting young people at work on the HSE government website](#). Keep things in proportion to the risks – everyday ones will already be familiar to cadets, 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.

This guidance was produced as part of HSE's pledge to the #iwill campaign.

HSE will continue to:

- make it clear that health and safety law does not prevent cadets from volunteering
- continue to dispel the myths where health and safety is blamed for getting in the way of the wider benefits cadets can gain from volunteering
- encourage a sensible and proportionate approach to making sure things go smoothly and safely, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy

### Useful Resources:

- ['Can Do' guidance for organisers of voluntary events](#)
- [SRA guide for volunteer-run clubs](#)
- [#iwill national voluntary campaign](#)