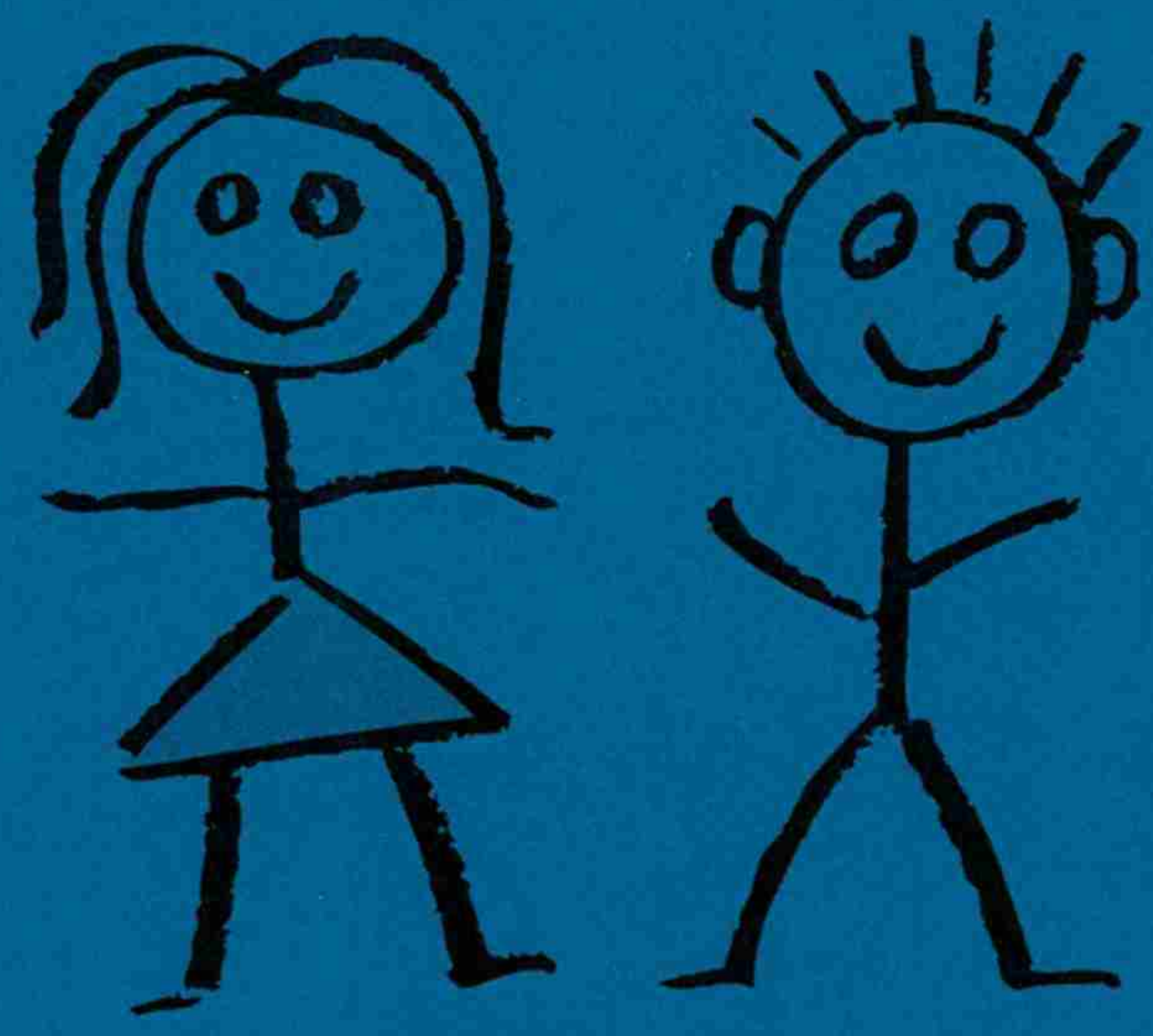


AUGUST

Main Com

THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Policy, procedures and good practice for the prevention of child abuse



Diocese of Chichester
2002

Historical allegations

It is quite common for adults who were abused as children to make allegations of the abuse some years after the event. This may be as a result of seeing the abuser approaching another child, or perhaps their own children have reached the age when they themselves were abused.

The adult making the allegation may need advice about where to seek counselling and support.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser must be informed of all allegations involving a member of the church.

It will be the responsibility of the adult concerned to decide whether they wish to seek legal redress. It is the responsibility of the parish, following consultation with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, to decide whether there might be children now at risk. If so, a referral will be made to the local Social Services Department.

Advice about child abuse referrals or concerns about children

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser is available to discuss concerns about children and young people or the behaviour of adults. It is also possible to seek advice from the local Social Services Department without giving identifying details. "Childline" (Tel: 0800 1111) will also give confidential advice; see pages 101-104 for information on resources. The seeking of advice should not delay a referral. Delay can prevent a conclusive investigation from being carried out.

Recording: the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998

It is important to keep accurate records of any child protection concerns, disclosures or allegations. Facts observed or disclosed should be accurately recorded, signed and dated. Opinions should not be included. If any records are to be kept without the subject of the record's knowledge, it should be made clear why this is so, for instance if there appears to be a worrying pattern of behaviour which needs to be monitored. Try to be consistent about what is kept so that it can be justified if necessary. Actions taken and decisions made should all be noted. It should be recorded who knows about the information, for example, the subject of the record, the child's parents etc.

All records should be kept securely either by the Parish Child Protection Representative or the incumbent. All confidential material should be placed with the rural dean during an interregnum or equally safe arrangements made. The advice at present is that Confidential Declaration forms should be kept indefinitely by the Bishop or incumbent. Information should not be kept once a situation has been resolved. If you have any concerns about keeping a particular record please consult your "Data Controller" or the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.