

**Autism All Stars Foundation UK**

**Policy on the Use of Children’s & Vulnerable Adults’ Photographs**

Rationale

Every charity needs and welcomes positive publicity, and photographs of our charitable events are an excellent way to add life and colour to both our literature and our on-line pages on Facebook and Twitter. In the case of Autism All Stars Foundation UK, the use of photographs is seen as essential for the following reasons:

1. People on the autism spectrum are predominantly visual learners. This means they process pictures with far greater ease than written text or verbal instruction, and gain far more from images than those with neuro-typical brain function.
2. Conditions such as Dyslexia and Irlen Syndrome are common amongst people on the autism spectrum, making reading difficult. As a result a number of our members and supporters either have poor reading skills or are entirely unable to read. We feel it would be discriminatory to exclude these members when forming our policies.
3. Conditions such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are also common amongst people on the autism spectrum, and the inclusion of easily processed visual stimuli can be essential in holding the attention of such members and supporters.
4. Autism All Stars Foundation UK is fully aware of the dangers of publishing images of children and/or vulnerable adults on the internet and takes the safeguarding of its members and supporters very seriously. However, we consider the use of internet communication absolutely vital to our organisation. People on the autism spectrum typically have great difficulty with social interaction, both on a one-to-one and group basis. As a result, many autistic people communicate primarily via the internet, and since our charity is specifically targeted towards teenagers and adults with autism, we feel our ability to reach and support a huge number of these autistic people is greatly enhanced by the use of images on-line.
5. Copies of this policy are clearly displayed on our website under the heading ‘Safeguarding’.
6. Clauses 1 – 4 below state the specifics of our policy regarding use of images showing children and/or vulnerable adults.

Policy Clauses

1. Unsupervised one-to-one photographs of children and/or vulnerable adults at any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK, without other adults being present, is expressly forbidden. Anyone found in breach of this condition will be immediately removed from the event, barred from future events, and have their photographic equipment handed to police for further investigation.

 2. Videos of any areas at an Autism All Stars Foundation UK event other than the main public event area itself, which are made without prior consent from the CEO, Mrs Helen Wallace-Iles, are expressly forbidden. Anyone found in breach of this condition will be immediately removed from the event, barred from future events, and have their video recording equipment handed to police for further investigation.

3. Photographs taken using cameras and/or video recordings and images captured on mobile phones by the public at any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK are permitted provided they do not breach the conditions stated in clause 1 or those stated in sub clause 3a below.
a) All images and recordings made at any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK are expected to be used responsibly. Anyone found using such images or recordings in an inappropriate manner which is likely to cause either hurt or offence to any of our members or supporters will be reported to the police and dealt with accordingly. We take the privacy, well-being and self-esteem of our members and supporters very seriously and expect all members of the public attending our events to do the same.

4. Autism All Stars Foundation UK reserves the right to take photographic and video images of any event they organise. Our policy regarding the use of recordings and images is to ensure that all parents and carers are fully aware that we may occasionally use images and recordings of children and/or vulnerable adults in our promotional literature, on our website, and on our Facebook or Twitter pages, and that their consent will be explicitly requested for the use of any such images where individuals are identified by name. Safeguards in place regarding this policy are as follows:

a) The following disclaimer is to be clearly displayed at the point of entry to any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK:
“Please note that occasional photographs will be taken at this event which may be used to promote our charity in the future both in literature and on-line. No names will be used in connection with any images without prior consent. By attending this event you are agreeing to the possibility of your photograph being used in this way. If you have any objections, please advise our event photographer. Have a great time at our event!”

b) Designated photographers must hold a current Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) certificate and be known personally to the trustees of Autism All Stars Foundation UK.

c) Designated photographers are to identify themselves as such before taking photographs of individuals engaged in activities at any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK.

d) All attendees of any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK have the right to refuse their photograph being taken, as stated in the disclaimer.

e) Images showing children and/or vulnerable adults in a state of undress are considered unacceptable for publication by Autism All Stars Foundation UK. Should the occasion arise where children and/or vulnerable adults are photographed in swimming, P.E. or gymnastics attire, then any such photographs will be personally assessed for suitability by trustees of Autism All Stars Foundation UK before publication. Such images will show children and/or vulnerable adults from the waist upwards only. Images of children and/or vulnerable adults in the water showing heads, shoulders and chests are generally considered acceptable, but each image will be assessed on its individual merits before publication.

f) Small, low quality images only may be downloaded from Autism All Stars Foundation UK’s Facebook and Twitter pages. These images will adhere strictly to the terms described in clause 4f and are to be used only in accordance with the expectations stated in clause 3a.

g) No member of the public is identified by either their first or surname in any images used by Autism All Stars Foundation UK either in our literature or on-line without prior consent. Taking photographs of events attended by large crowds, considered in the Data Protection Act to be a public event, does not require the permission of everyone in the photograph. However the permission of any identified persons needs to be granted before the photograph is put on public display and this stipulation will be adhered to.

h) The ability for members of the public to identify themselves by tagging their name onto a picture on Autism All Stars Foundation UK’s Facebook and Twitter pages is disabled.

i) Autism All Stars Foundation UK’s Facebook page is checked on a daily basis to ensure the suitability of any unauthorised images which may be posted, and to check for any unsuitable comments left regarding posted images. Anything considered in breach of the terms described in clause 4f will be removed and the person responsible either warned or banned from the page depending on the severity of the breach.

j) Should parents or carers have any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or video making, they should report the matter to a member of Autism All Stars Foundation UK, who will make a note of the incident in the same manner as when recording any issue of child protection.

k) Should video images or photographs taken at any event organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK be used by film companies or on television without consent, parents and carers can make a complaint to the Office of Communications (Ofcom) who can be contacted directly via their website at www.ofcom.org.uk.

l) Any images taken by designated photographers at events organised by Autism All Stars Foundation UK will be stored securely. Any requests for copies of such images other than by individuals within the picture itself will be denied. All images will be considered for suitability on their individual merit before being copied.

m) Should the charity receive any requests from individuals to remove images of themselves or a person they care for from our social media accounts or website, we will comply with these requests immediately.

#### Photographs in Newspapers

All charities thrive on positive publicity in local or national newspapers and magazines and most parents and carers are delighted to see a photograph of their child or vulnerable adult in the press. A vital part of our work is to raise the self-esteem of people on the autism spectrum as well as that of their families and carers, and Autism All Stars Foundation UK consider press coverage of events an excellent way of boosting morale. Newspapers have their own code of conduct with strict guidelines set by The Press Complaints Commission regarding the photographing of children and vulnerable adults, and we expect all representatives of the press to adhere to these guidelines at all times during our events. Charities obviously benefit from the publicity generated by having their name linked to participants at their events. Our policy is to allow newspapers to use participants’ names with their photographs providing parents and/or carers have given their consent.

Equal Opportunities

In line with proposals set out in the Department of Education’s Every Child Matters policy and in the Department of Health’s Autism Strategy, Autism All Stars Foundation UK will ensure that any images displayed or published in their literature or on-line will, whenever possible, represent people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, genders and faiths. Children, teenagers and adults of all abilities will be included in any photographic images used.