

EMEYF Under 18s Policy

1) Joining a group for the first time can be an intimidating experience, especially if you are away from home for the first time, or going to a foreign country, or you don't know any other participants. Can you remember a similar time when you may have felt threatened or frightened? This could have been because you didn't understand how others were behaving, because you were in a new situation, or because you were being asked to participate in an activity with which you did not feel comfortable. In light of this experience, what can you learn about how you can behave to prevent another young person experiencing it?

2) What importance do you give to naivety and innocence, the childlike trusting which we often lose later in life? Many European legislations consider young people to become an adult only when they turn 18. What can you do to ensure that young people can enjoy being adolescent and innocent until they are ready to become an adult? Remember that not everyone will be comfortable with aspects of your beliefs, assumptions, and topics of conversation. How do you share your deepest beliefs with them, while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them?

3) Are there some things that you find easier to tell friends at Quaker events than to tell friends and family at home? Sometimes a safe and friendly environment, and a thought provoking programme can lead participants to share secrets. Are you ready for others to share secrets with you, even if they are difficult to tell and painful? How can you help to comfort them and support them, and take any action which is needed to deal with the situation?

4) What would you do if an accident happened at an EMEYF gathering? Would you feel comfortable making any decisions about hospital treatment, if the casualty was not able to themselves? How can you help to keep everyone safe?

5) Though young people may still have a lot to learn, remember that we are all teachers and all pupils in some ways. There are many ways to learn: being told you are wrong, being shown the correct way, being left to discover things yourself, taking part in activities with people who have more experience than you, learning from your own mistakes, reading books, conversations, getting encouragement, by accident, etc. Think about the different ways you have learnt things during your life, including at school, at home, and at youth events. Remember that learning encompasses both by good example and from bad habits. Some things are difficult to learn as you grow up. Did you find some ways of learning easy, and others difficult? Was this different at different stages in your life? Were there any learning experiences that were frightening, insulting, ineffective, or even counterproductive? Are there some things that you would rather not have learnt? How can you help other young people, who may have different personal characteristics, to have a fulfilling learning experience?

6) Have you experienced an adult having power over a child, or over a more vulnerable adult? Are you alert to make sure that such power relationships are not abused at EMEYF events?

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