

Parent/Carer Consent Guidance at AIUK

At AIUK we want to be a progressive and inclusive place for all ages, and therefore when thinking about consent for under 18's to engage in our work, we want to balance empowering under 18s whilst respecting the parental responsibility parents and carers have and the laws around that. We have therefore decided that when an activity is low risk 16-17-year-olds are allowed to give their own consent to engage and parent/carers consent does not need to be sought. However, where there are more high-risk activities AIUK will need both the under 18 and the parent/carers consent for engagement.

For under 16's we require consent from both the parent/carers and child for all events/activities.

High risk activities include activities where the risk of harm to the under 18 is increased. This could include where travel is needed (so they could not independently get home), where there are overnight stays, where there is involvement in public campaigns (particularly where they are going to have their identity shared), or where the under 18 will be taking on responsibilities for the AIUK activism. For clear examples see below.

For lower risk activities, 16–17-year-olds don't need parent/carers consent. These are more day-to-day activities, such as attending one off event run by AIUK or public events such as protests AIUK are attending (but not running). However, where there is on-going involvement which is low risk, you should ask for emergency contact details, and ask them to share information with their parents, including information about activities.

If you think that an activist, role or event could pose risk to an under 18, then seek parental consent, if you are unsure if an activity is risky you can contact the Safeguarding Manager via safeguarding@amnesty.org.uk to discuss if consent is needed.

When seeking parent/carers consent, make sure to communicate directly with the parent/carers.

When they don't want parent/carers to be contacted:

There may be occasions where you think that consent should be sought, but the under 18 does not want parents to be contacted. In these scenarios, the first thing to do is discuss with the under 18 why this is, could it be overcome by someone involved in running the activity speaking to them to reassure parents/carers. If they don't want this, then it may be that the under 18 cannot be involved in the activism. You could instead explore other options for engagement in AIUK's activism, such as school groups or if they are 16–17-year-olds they could be involved with lower risk activities.

Examples:

1. **Taking on a lead activist role** – there are likely to be face to face meetings which involve travel and potential overnight stays. They are taking on responsibilities to organise and run events and activism – **therefore, need parent/carers consent.**
2. **Being a member of the Section Board** – they will have to attend meetings and their name will be publicly shared, increasing risk of them being contacted by strangers about human rights and AIUK's work – **therefore, need parent/carers consent.**
3. **Being involved in a protest or march** – if an individual is involved in organising and will be a public figure (for example being on a float or giving a speech), **then consent will be needed.** However, if they want to attend a protest or march, as a member of the public **they do not need consent.** If they want to help organise and be behind the scenes, this is low risk, so a 16–17-year-old **would not need consent.**

Parent/carers consent is not a straightforward concept, so if you have any questions don't hesitate to contact an AIUK staff member or the AIUK Safeguarding Manager.