



PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Freedom Method

For governance, funders, schools, universities, public bodies, employers and partner organisations.

Know. Notice. Respond. Change.

KNOW

NOTICE

RESPOND

CHANGE

A practical framework for safe participation and action on forced marriage, FGM and Dishonour Abuse.

Pilot framework. This document is for governance, testing, partnership and evaluation. It should not be described as a proven national standard before pilot and independent review.

Online: freedomcharity.org.uk/contact-us/

Downloaded or printed: hello@freedomcharity.org.uk

A method, not a pack

The Freedom Method is the operating system behind Take Action with Freedom. It is designed so that young people, students, communities and workplaces can take meaningful action without being turned into informal safeguarding professionals.

The central idea

Awareness is not the finish line. People need accurate knowledge, the ability to notice what matters, a safe response when concern arises, and practical ways to change the conditions that allow harm or misunderstanding to continue.

The method is deliberately modular. A short starter guide gets someone moving. Live campaign resources, activity cards, current facts, training and setting-specific guidance sit around it. This keeps the programme current without redesigning the whole system every time law, guidance, evidence or campaign priorities change.

Four public routes

Freedom Youth Groups	11–17 in schools, sixth forms and recognised youth settings	Youth guide + adult lead guide + activities
Freedom Student Groups	University and college students	Student starter guide + live campaign tools
Freedom Community Action	Adults, community groups and local networks	Community guide + conversation/event tools
Freedom at Work	Employers, staff networks and professional settings	Workplace guide + training/partnership route

The Freedom Method

The Freedom Method

Every Freedom route uses the same four moves. The detail changes by age and setting; the safety line does not.

KNOW	Build accurate knowledge. Separate evidence, law, guidance and opinion.
NOTICE	Recognise warning signs, coercion, unsafe assumptions and gaps in the way people or organisations respond.
RESPOND	Listen, stay within role, use the agreed safeguarding or support route and never investigate or contact family members yourself.
CHANGE	Turn learning into safer practice, better information, campaigning, partnerships or system change - then review what worked.

What changes across settings

The words remain the same; the responsibility does not. A 12-year-old may explore and create. A 17-year-old may help plan and present. A student group may campaign on campus. A workplace may strengthen policy, training and referral routes. The Freedom Method gives them a shared logic without pretending they have the same authority.

The non-negotiable safeguarding line

Listen. Do not investigate. Do not promise secrecy. Do not contact family members or alleged perpetrators. Do not mediate. Use the agreed safeguarding or support route. If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Real influence, adult responsibility

Freedom Youth Groups should give young people something genuine to shape while keeping adult safeguarding duties with the responsible adults and organisations.

Two routes within one Youth Group

11–14 EXPLORE & CREATE

Learn the issues; ask questions; test language; make art, displays, short films or presentations; help adults see what young people misunderstand or need explained better.

15–17 CAMPAIGN & LEAD

Research an issue; plan approved awareness activity; present; contribute to campaigns; test resources; help shape Freedom's youth work; take on more planning where appropriate.

A young person should be able to say

- I know why I am being asked to take part.
- I know what I can genuinely influence.
- I can say no, take a break or choose a different role.
- I do not have to disclose personal experience.
- I can take part without being photographed or speaking publicly.
- I know who the responsible adult is.
- Freedom tells us what changed because of our input.

Youth Advisory Council

A small Youth Advisory Council can sit alongside broad participation. It should be selective for purpose, not prestige: clear terms, diverse recruitment, support, feedback loops and defined decisions on which members can have real influence.

The adult creates the conditions for young people to lead

- Hold the setting's safeguarding, permission, supervision and escalation responsibilities.
- Agree the scope of the group before activity begins.
- Keep case information out of ordinary group notes and campaign files.
- Check travel, venues, online activity, photography, speakers, fundraising and use of Freedom's name as required.
- Do not ask young people to disclose lived experience to make a campaign more powerful.
- Make participation accessible and voluntary.
- Contact Freedom before public co-branding, media representation or activity presented as being run by Freedom.

DBS

DBS eligibility depends on the actual role and activities. It is not a blanket requirement for everybody who supports a Freedom group. The responsible organisation must use current eligibility guidance and assess the duties being carried out.

Lived experience

Lived experience sits alongside, not inside, ordinary participation. People may contribute without ever telling their story publicly. Any storytelling or media involvement requires a separate consent, risk and support process.

- Do no harm.
- Choice over what, when and with whom someone shares.
- No automatic spokesperson role.
- Specific consent for each public use.
- Consider safety and re-identification risk, not just consent forms.
- Acknowledge and, where appropriate, compensate expertise.
- Report back on the impact of someone's contribution.

The PDF is not the programme

The strongest participation programmes keep a stable core and update the actions around it. Freedom should do the same.

Starter guides	Short, setting-specific, designed to be used rather than merely read.	Stable; review annually
Current Facts	Approved facts, legal/guidance notes and sources.	Review whenever evidence or law changes
Live Actions	Current campaigns and time-limited opportunities.	Update throughout the year
Action Cards	Reusable planning, event, safeguarding and reflection tools.	Stable; improve from feedback
Learning	Short induction and optional deeper modules.	Version controlled
Leader resources	Adult lead, committee handover, workplace implementation.	Setting-specific
Help route	Separate from participation pages and always easy to find.	Current at all times

Brand and source control

- Use the supplied Freedom logo exactly as provided: no redraw, recolour, distortion, crop that changes the mark, or AI recreation.
- Use one controlled Current Facts source so old statistics do not remain trapped in PDFs.
- Separate Freedom policy positions from law, statutory guidance, research evidence and opinion.
- Every public resource carries version and review information.
- Use the website Contact Us form online; printed/downloaded resources use hello@freedomcharity.org.uk.

What the programme is trying to change

The method should be evaluated as a chain of plausible contribution rather than as a claim that awareness activity alone prevents abuse.

Problem	People may misunderstand forced marriage, FGM and Dishonour Abuse; warning signs can be missed; local responses can be unsafe or inconsistent; young people and communities may be involved tokenistically.
Mechanisms	Better knowledge; repeated practice of safe response; genuine participation; trusted local messengers; clearer organisational routes; feedback that improves Freedom's resources.
Activities	Groups, workshops, action cards, campaigns, community conversations, workplace learning, signposting, advisory participation and partnerships.
Outputs	Active settings; trained participants; actions completed; resources used; questions captured; safe signposting; recommendations made.
Short-term outcomes	Improved knowledge; clearer boundaries; greater confidence to respond safely; stronger youth voice; more accurate public communication.
Medium-term outcomes	More consistent local participation; better organisational routes to help; stronger campaign quality; improved Freedom resources; sustained groups and partnerships.
Longer-term contribution	A wider culture in which abuse is recognised earlier, discussed more accurately, met with safer routes to specialist help, and challenged through informed institutional and community action.

Assumptions to test

- Participants can access and understand the material.
- Responsible adults and organisations have workable safeguarding routes.
- Freedom can support quality control as participation grows.
- Local action is more useful when connected to current facts and clear specialist help.
- Young people and communities remain engaged when they can see that their contribution changes something.

Measure learning, quality and safety - not just attendance

Did people learn?	Knowledge of key distinctions; ability to identify unsafe responses; confidence to signpost.	Short baseline + post-activity questions; follow-up where useful.
Was participation meaningful?	Participants understood purpose; could influence something real; felt able to opt out; received feedback.	Youth/participant pulse survey; facilitated reflection.
Was activity safe?	Safeguarding concerns, near misses, complaints, inappropriate data collection, unsafe media use.	Incident/learning log; periodic governance review.
Did action improve anything?	Resource changed; route to help improved; recurring misconception reduced; decision influenced; partnership created.	Action record; before/after audit; decision log.
Did it last?	Active groups/settings; handovers; repeat activity; retention.	Quarterly programme data.
Was it worth the resource?	Staff time, direct cost, cost per active setting, resource reuse, volunteer burden.	Delivery log + proportionate value-for-money review.

Pilot before scale

- Test comprehension separately with 11–14s and 15–17s.
- Observe whether adults understand the safeguarding boundary.
- Track where approval, data, events or fundraising create friction.
- Check whether participants actually use the action cards.
- Follow up after 8–12 weeks to see what continued.
- Document what Freedom stopped, simplified or changed because of evidence.
- Seek independent review before presenting the method as a national standard.

Make good practice usable without losing the source

Freedom can allow others to learn from or adopt the method while remaining clear about origin, safeguarding responsibility and brand ownership.

Proposed adoption policy - governance approval required

Small-scale nonprofit use could be permitted under stated conditions. Large-scale implementation, rebranding, commercial use, training delivery in Freedom's name or substantial adaptation should require a written agreement. This is a proposed operating position, not legal advice.

- Credit Freedom Charity as the originating organisation.
- Do not weaken the core safeguarding rules.
- Do not present an adapted resource as an official Freedom publication without approval.
- Do not use the Freedom name or logo without permission.
- The adopting organisation remains responsible for its own safeguarding, insurance, legal duties, data and delivery.
- Where agreed, share learning and evaluation back with Freedom.

Protection before public launch

- Confirm written IP assignment from external designers or contractors for commissioned work.
- Agree the public licensing terms through appropriate legal review.
- Consider trade-mark availability if Freedom wishes to protect "The Freedom Method" or other programme names.
- Keep source files and version history under Freedom's control.

Test it before calling it a standard

The method should earn authority through safe delivery, participant experience and evidence. Publication of attractive guides is not the same as validation.

- Test the Youth Guide separately with 11–14s and 15–17s and revise language they do not understand.
- Have the adult-lead and disclosure process reviewed by Freedom's safeguarding lead.
- Complete data-protection and consent review for participation, photographs, feedback and lived-experience work.
- Ask trustees to approve the framework, governance route and risk ownership.
- Complete written IP assignment and appropriate legal review of licensing/adoption terms.
- Pilot across deliberately varied settings and record failures as well as successes.
- Seek independent evaluation or peer review before describing the method as a national standard or evidence-based model.

The claim Freedom can make at launch

Freedom has developed a safeguarding-first participation method informed by established international practice and current UK guidance. Stronger claims about effectiveness should follow the pilot and evaluation.

Talk to Freedom about the method

For adoption, pilot, research collaboration, evaluation or partnership enquiries:

Online: freedomcharity.org.uk/contact-us/

Downloaded or printed: hello@freedomcharity.org.uk



Need help?

Taking action with Freedom does not make you a safeguarding professional. If somebody needs help, use the safeguarding or support route you have been given. Do not investigate, contact family members or try to manage a case yourself.

Immediate danger

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

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Help: freedomcharity.org.uk/helpline/

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