

Risk Awareness, Assessment & Management

An overview of how risks are identified,
calculated and managed



Business Compliance Solutions



Don't let them
put you in a spin

Who am I?



- Business Compliance Solutions
- British Gymnastics Welfare Officer, Administrator, & Health & Safety Officer - Virtuosity gymnastics club
- Qualified Primary/Early Years teacher
- Administrative Secretary and Trustee for a Scout group
- Administrator, Health & Safety Officer & Welfare Officer for Julie Noble School of Performing Arts
- Committee Member and Trustee of the Anxiety Society
- Data protection/processing manager
- Administration support for STRM

Vicky Irwin



I live in Westcliff with my husband and daughter, plus a dog, two cats and a guinea pig.

How did I learn to assess risks?



My journey into assessing risks began almost 30 years ago. I was training to be a primary school teacher and one of the most important things we had to learn to do was write risk assessments for activities, school trips etc. This was pre-internet, and the only template I had was provided by the university.

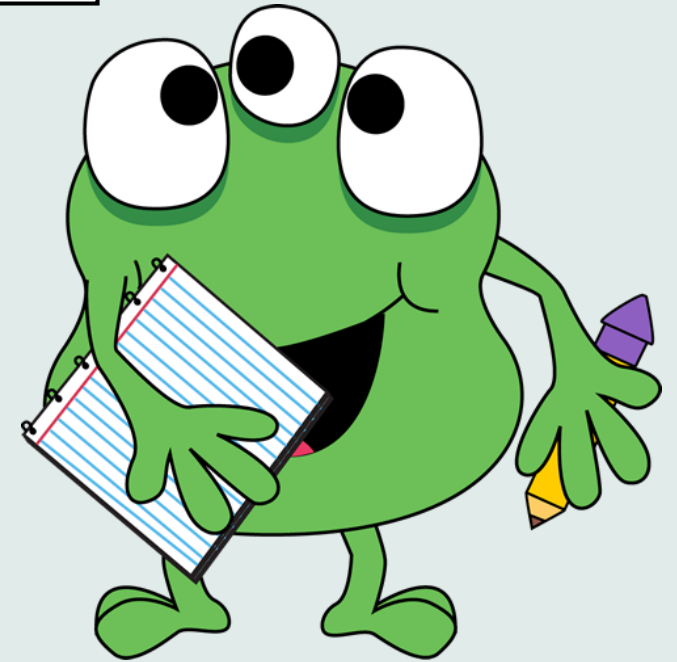


I'll be honest, it was very difficult, and I used to hate having to write them as I was constantly plagued by **self-doubt**. What if I get it wrong? What might happen if I miss a huge risk? You'll find those questions appearing throughout this presentation.

With the assistance of great mentors and several decades of experience in writing assessments, I am now a confident risk assessor and love sharing my knowledge with others. I can (and have) completed risk assessments for a wide variety of situations, and for different reasons.

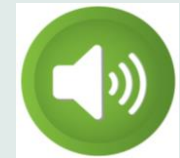


Who did something risky today?



Unmute yourself





Anyone injure themselves?

Unmute yourself

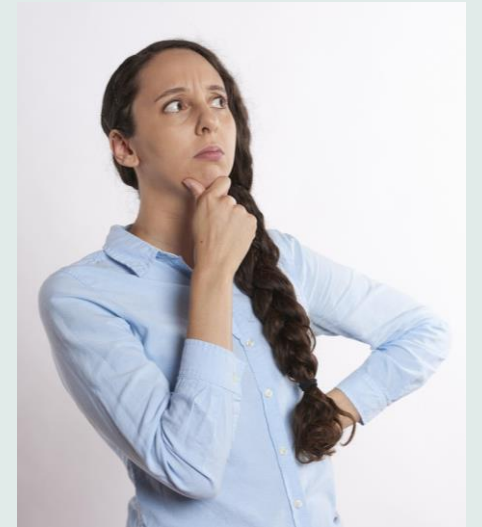


Those were, of course, an exaggeration of the levels of risk that we encounter, but we encounter risks all of the time. Every day we're assessing the risks in our heads – quite often subconsciously. 99% of them don't need formal recording, but there are two consistent principles to consider whatever the nature of risk.



What is the **worst** that could happen?

How **likely** is it to happen?



It is interesting to note that these two questions are often used by therapists when working with someone with chronic anxiety.

Why write it down?



A written risk assessment is about describing the risks you are aware of, who might be affected by them and what measures you can put in place to reduce the level of risk. Its purpose is to show that you have thought about what could go wrong and what steps you are taking to reduce the risks. A matrix of some sort is generally used to make the level of risk a quantifiable figure.

What is the **worst** that could happen?

Worst Case Outcome				
5	4	3	2	1
Fatality	Severe Injury	Lost time Injury	Minor Injury	No Injury

Likelihood				
5	4	3	2	1
Certain	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Remote

How **likely** is it to happen?

Risk Rating (Outcome x Likelihood)		
High	Medium	Low
13-25	5-12	1-4

And finally, we calculate the **level of risk**.



There are many different styles of recording risk assessments, and no specific template is the gold standard.



I have settled on the format that I feel is the best way to consider risks and how to manage them. It provides an easy visual view of the level of risk which is great when you have a lot of things going on.

Persons affected by the activity	Identified Hazards	Control Measures Already in Place	Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action
Personnel and New	Physical Manual	Structure of manual handling	?	1	12	


I can't claim to have invented this format – like a good teacher I learnt to 'magpie' the best bits from those I'd experienced, and have found my 'just right' (thanks Goldilocks)



A blank copy of the template that I use can be downloaded from the Blog section of my website.

A quick Google of free risk assessments will get you a lot of free templates online. Here are a few examples.



 **Risk Assessment Template**
www.tools4dev.org

Probability = How likely is it to happen?
Severity = How bad would results be if it did happen?

#	Risk	Description	Probability	Severity	Actions to Minimise Risk
1	Internal Risks				
1.1	Theft of food supplies intended for vulnerable families by staff	Field staff and drivers working in the field to deliver food supplies to families often work without direct supervision. They may steal the food supplies rather than delivering them to their intended recipients.	Moderate	Major	All families receiving food supplies must thumb print or sign the delivery receipt. Every month the program manager will conduct an audit of 10% of the households, randomly selected, to confirm they received the food supplies.

Company Name	Assessors Signature	Date of Risk Assessment	Persons Affected By This Risk Assessment

To help you carry out an awesome Risk Assessment, we've started one off below. You'll see an example hazard entry (based on an office environment) to demonstrate what's required. Think about how this format could apply to your organisation as you identify the real hazards in your workplace. Once done – copy the table onto a new page for each task/location and complete as necessary!

Task Description	Day-to-Day Office Work			Location	Office 1	Person	[DATE]	
What are the Hazards?	Who could be injured and how?	Likelihood	Severity	What control processes are already in place?	Are any other processes needed to control this risk?	Who needs to take action?	When?	Action Completed
Slips, trips and falls	Employees and visitors could be hurt by falling if they trip over objects or slip on any spillages	2	2 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping the office generally tidy Ensuring all work environments are well lit No trailing cables/leads Keeping walkways clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better housekeeping in kitchen required, e.g. spills Arrange for loose carpet tile in conference room to be repaired/replaced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All employees Supervisors to monitor 	[DATE]	[DATE]



Risk Assessment Template



Company:

Assessor name:

Review date:

Assessment date:

Hazard Identified	Who is at risk and why?	Measures already in place	Further action(s) needed	Person(s) responsible for action(s)	Date action needed by	Date completed



Risk assessment details: Class Trip
 Date: _____
 Staff: _____
 Location: _____

Hazard Observed	Who may be harmed?	Possible Outcome	Risk Rating Before Controls	Control Measures	Risk Rating After Controls	Further Controls Required	Risk Rating After Additional Controls



They all differ slightly from each other, but the consistent factor is that it is always based on what the **worst** is that could happen and how **likely** it is to happen.

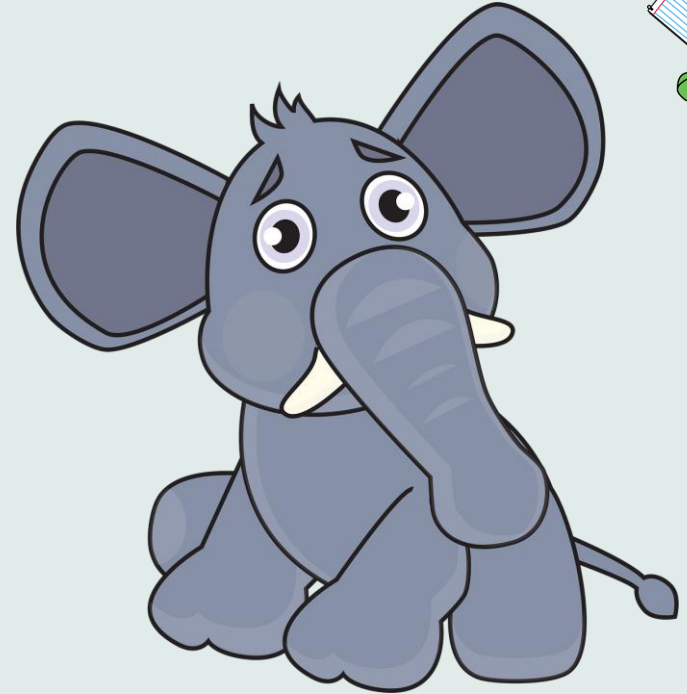
The elephant in the room...



Can't I just use ChatGPT?

Yes, but:

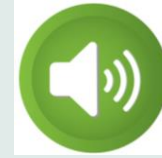
- it's not **specific** to your needs
- **you** personally haven't thought of the risks
- It doesn't **understand** the situation that requires the assessment
- It becomes just another **meaningless** piece of paper
- It **doesn't know** the people involved in the situation
- It **makes stuff up** and invents 'truths'



Who should write a risk assessment?



Anyone **could** write a risk assessment.



**Unmute
yourself**

Depending on the roles of the people involved in your organisation, there may be many people who could write a risk assessment, these include:

**Health & Safety
Officer**

Employer

Welfare Officer

**Charity
Worker**

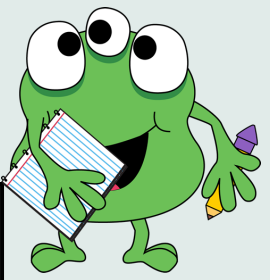
**Business
Owner**

Who **should** do it?

Anyone with the relevant knowledge, experience and skills necessary

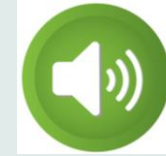


Making a hot drink



What is the **worst** that could happen?

Lost time injury



Unmute yourself

How **likely** is it to happen?

That depends on **who** is using the kettle and **where** it's being made.

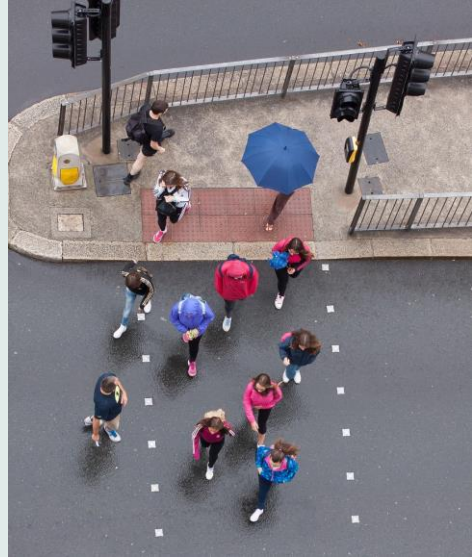
You? A vulnerable person? A child?

Worst Case Outcome					Likelihood					Risk Rating (Outcome x Likelihood)		
5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	High	Medium	Low
Fatality	Severe Injury	Lost time Injury	Minor Injury	No Injury	Certain	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Remote	13-25	5-12	1-4



Does it need to be written down?

Crossing the road



What is the worst that could happen?

Fatality

How likely is it to happen?



Unmute yourself

That depends on **who** is crossing the road

Does it need to be written down?

Worst Case Outcome					Likelihood					Risk Rating (Outcome x Likelihood)		
5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	High	Medium	Low
Fatality	Severe Injury	Lost time Injury	Minor Injury	No Injury	Certain	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Remote	13-25	5-12	1-4



What would make it safer/less risky?

Person centred risk assessments



Sometimes risk assessments need to be made specifically for one person who is considered more at risk than others.

Some examples include:

- Someone who is pregnant.
- Someone who has medical needs with particularly serious outcomes (chronic asthma, diabetes, angina)
- Someone who is returning to work after serious medical issues.



Person centred risk assessments



Do they all require their own written assessments?

No, not everyone or everything needs to have a written record, and not every assessment needs to be recorded in the same format.



A lot of assessing of risks requires you to use your own judgement. That can feel quite scary when you start out, and you can put yourself under lots of pressure to be perfect.

Trust yourself - If you have been asked to write a risk assessment, someone already trusts you and your judgements.



Pregnancy



What is the worst that could happen?

Do their routine tasks involve something which might damage their health or the health of their baby?

How likely is it to happen?

Compare that to the level of risk that covers everyone doing that role.

Does it need to be written down?

100% yes!



You need to be aware of what the risks are to a pregnant woman and how to minimise them. Keeping a detailed record of actions taken.



Pregnancy risk assessment example

- Dance teacher



Persons affected by the activity	Identified Hazards	Control Measures Already in Place	Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action
	Physical – Demonstrating exercises in class/performance teams	Minimise the need to demonstrate by choosing a student to do so instead Use older students as demonstration support for younger students	2	2	4	
 	Physical – Stamina in classes Processes and Conditions - fatigue	Staff are encouraged not to overexert themselves in classes	2	3	6	As pregnancy progresses be prepared to use stools/chairs as a place to rest whilst still being able to lead the lesson. If feeling unable to continue a <u>class</u> make other staff aware as soon as is possible

This was a fairly straightforward assessment. I met with the teacher, we talked about how she was feeling and what challenges she might face until she went off on her maternity leave, and we reviewed it once more as she reached her final trimester.



Pregnancy risk assessment example

- Gymnastics Instructor/Owner



Pregnant and New Mothers	Physical – Manual lifting of gymnastics equipment	<p>Correct use of manual handling techniques to carry equipment.</p> <p>Two people required to move larger pieces of apparatus</p> <p>Very limited handling of equipment</p>	3	4	12	
	<p>➔ Physical – Manual support of students</p>	<p>Safe practices as outlined by ISTD, RAD and British Gymnastics</p> <p>Gradually reduce need to physically support younger students and allow other staff to increase support</p> <p>Stop supporting older students where you are responsible for their weight</p>	3	4	12	Continue to reduce physical support in young classes

This was a little more tricky, as they use proper gymnastics equipment that has to be physically moved each lesson as well as physically supporting gymnasts as they learn *(cont.)*



Pregnancy risk assessment example

- Gymnastics Instructor/Owner part 2



Physical – Demonstrating exercises in class/performance teams	Minimise the need to demonstrate by choosing a student to do so instead Use older students as demonstration support for younger students	2	2	4	Other staff to remind [redacted] to allow others to demonstrate Use older performance team to demonstrate for younger team
Physical – Stamina in classes Processes and Conditions - fatigue	Staff are encouraged not to overexert themselves in classes	2	3	6	As pregnancy progresses be prepared to use stools/chairs as a place to rest whilst still being able to lead the lesson. If feeling unable to continue a <u>class</u> make other staff aware as soon as is possible
Biological – infectious diseases	Staff are made aware of any infectious diseases noted by parents	1	3	4	Contact GP/Midwife if you are in close contact with a child who contracts infectious diseases such as chicken pox, slapped cheek syndrome, measles etc.

This instructor tended to over work herself, so we had to put in extra precautions to support her whilst keeping her and the baby safe. This also included monthly reviews.



Return to work risk assessment (after breast cancer diagnosis)



This teacher felt that she was ready to return to work.

After confirmation of fitness was received from her doctor, I created this risk assessment.

She felt she was capable of more than I was allowing her to do, but as the person responsible for the welfare of staff and students I had the final say.

This was reviewed both informally (via phone call) and in person at the end of the half term.

Identified Hazards	Control Measures Already in Place	Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action required? Yes/no
Physical – pain through active demonstration	As above, team teaching if necessary. Young leader can be used to demonstrate/dance in front of students Supportive underwear, if an activity causes too much pain, <u>minimise</u> demonstration of those movements.	4	3	12	
Physical – fatigue cumulative	Returning to all work situations, fatigue may build up over <u>a number of weeks</u> . ██████ to be honest and let Studio know if she feels she is getting too exhausted after school. This is not about being unfit to teach, this is <u>looking</u> after physical health to prevent burnout.	3	4	12	██████ to ring Friday night if she feels unable to teach that weekend.
Biological – weakened immune system	Cleaning procedures initiated during Covid 19 to be reinstated in ██████ classroom. Room steam cleaned, bars wiped down with antibacterial cleaner Hand sanitizer use encouraged for ██████ and Students.	3	3	9	Parents reminded to keep students who are unwell at home
Emotional Health	Returning to work and fatigue issues may cause emotional exhaustion. ██████ to approach ██████/Vicky Irwin if struggling to cope with demands of teaching. Adjustments can be made to teaching time and structure if necessary	3	3	9	

Full review 7th May (telephone [chat](#)) Full review 27th May



Delighted to say that she's now cancer free and only has minimal adjustments as some risks remain

Return to work risk assessment (after breast cancer diagnosis) -2



What gave me the right to make those judgements and insist on restrictions?

- Knowledge of the person and their work habits
- Knowledge of the activities that were being covered in the assessment
- My position as Welfare officer for both staff and pupils

Identified Hazards	Control Measures Already in Place	Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action required? Yes/no
Physical – pain through active demonstration	As above, team teaching if necessary. Young leader can be used to demonstrate/dance in front of students Supportive underwear, if an activity causes too much pain, <u>minimise</u> demonstration of those movements.	4	3	12	
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Full review 7th May (telephone [chat](#)) Full review 27th May

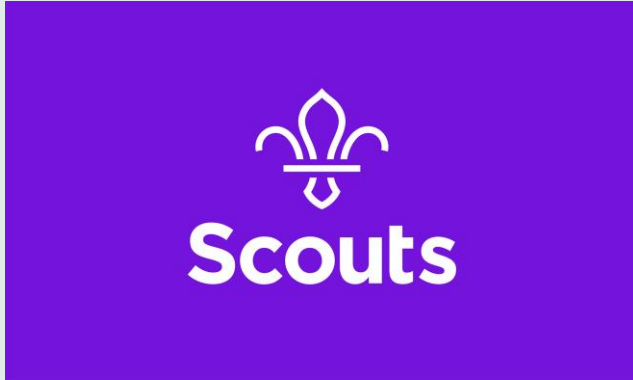


When I don't know something, I research it enough until I do.

Activity risk assessment example



This assessment is designed to cover most general use for a group of Beavers/Cubs/Scouts.



This contains a general statement about anyone with medical conditions, as well as direct reference to the two leaders who both have a chronic health issue.



Persons affected by the activity	Identified Hazards	Control Measures Already in Place	Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action
Adults Beavers Cubs Scouts	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beavers, Cubs and Scouts to be made aware of rules regarding safe moving around the room Adults to ensure that the floor is free from obstacles before sessions A reminder for expected behaviours before active games that require fast movement. Any cables should not trail on the floor without appropriate safety measures taken. Any chairs should be either against the wall or tucked in to avoid being a trip hazard 	[2	[2	[4	[
Adults	Injury from carrying resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice safe lifting protecting the back and using knees to carry weight. Break into smaller packages to lift and make multiple trips 	[2	[2	[4	[

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Beavers Cubs Scouts	Injury caused by misuse of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All activities supervised with an appropriate ratio (2 adults minimum) Reminder for Beavers and Cubs to use resources safely 	[2	[2	[4	[
Adults Beavers Scouts	Medical Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adults aware of anyone with medical conditions which might be present in sessions (e.g. asthma, allergies etc.) Appropriately qualified First Aider at every meeting 	[2	[2	[4	[
Adults Beavers Cubs Scouts	Accidental Injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriately qualified First Aider at every meeting. 	[2	[2	[4	[
DS AS	Worsening of Fibromyalgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individually assess capabilities before each session, delegate smaller tasks to assistants/young leaders 	[3	[3	[6	Other adults to prompt if noticing fatigue or overwhelm

Location risk assessment example



Adults Beavers Cubs	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make everyone aware that there will be lumps, bumps and roots as it is a natural environment Supervision if jumping over or walking on medium sized logs 	[2	[2	[4	
Beavers Cubs	Getting Lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind children to stay in their group or near an adult at all times. adults to be aware of where they are in the woods and how to get to the visitors centre at all times. 	[2	[2	[4	[if a child refuses to stay with their assigned group, child to be returned to the check in point to wait with supervision until the visit is over.
Beavers Cubs	Injury caused by not paying attention to adults or environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When giving instructions make sure that everyone is standing still and is looking at who is speaking Adults/Young Leaders to support the speaker by re-focusing/standing next to anyone who is not paying attention. 	[2	[2	[4	

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This was a trip to Belfairs Woods, and contains risks that would be different to those encountered in a usual group meeting.

Adults Beavers Cubs	Animals either on a lead or free roaming – dogs/horses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults express clear rule not to approach any unfamiliar animals Adults/Young Leaders to draw focus away from the animal and onto the task in hand. 	[2	[2	[4	[Check if anyone is scared of dogs
Adults	Medical Incidents	All adults aware of anyone with medical				





A different kind of written assessment

This assessment is the record of a new child with a disability about to join a preschool gym class.

Things to know about me

- I have Downs Syndrome
- I am a visual learner
- I understand more things than I can say
- I am in nappies
- If I'm crying you can help me stop by distracting or making me laugh
- I am very flexible
- I am a runner, if I can open a door or if it's left open I will go through it

Things I like

- Balancing
- Hanging
- Bouncing
- Running
- Adult attention

Things I don't like

- Loud noises scare me

There is already a generic assessment in place for this class, but this assessment just highlights the important things that the coach needs to know.

She's just had her first session and the coach found this incredibly helpful and the mum felt so supported and confident that she would be cared for.



What a risk assessment is NOT

- Intended to ruin childhood by banning 'fun' activities
- A licence to do extremely high-risk activities without appropriate safety procedures or equipment
- A guarantee that nothing will go wrong
- Complete protection from legal liabilities



A risk assessment is **not** about stopping you from doing anything. It's about a carefully considered assessment of the risks involved and how you can make them less risky.

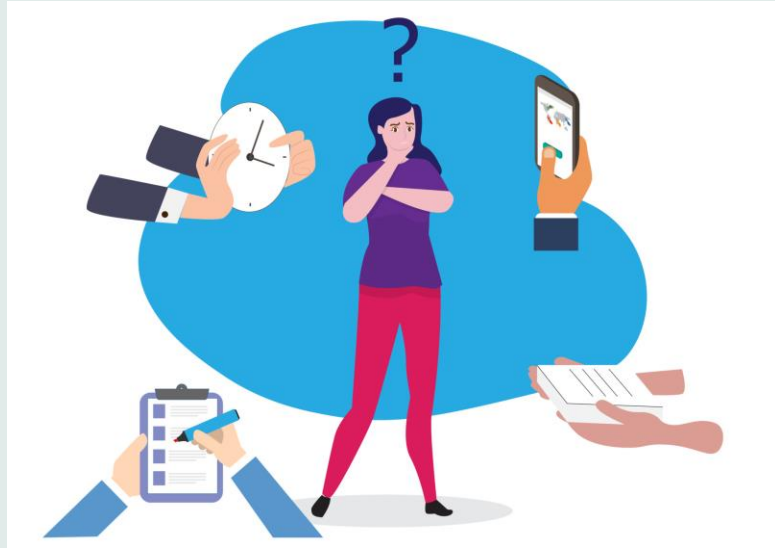
- ✓ You've thought about the risk assessment
- ✓ You've written it down
- ✓ You've shared it with others



Who is responsible for implementing the plans?



You are!



Everyone named in the assessment has some responsibility, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the risk assessor.

Can you be too cautious?



DH and I keep falling out because he says I'm "controlling everything" and "ruining my kids lives" because (in his view) I'm too overprotective of DC. I know I am overprotective but I don't think anything that extreme. I get annoyed because he doesn't try to compromise, just gets angry and tries to



These are things he takes issue with:

Me not wanting DC to run on pavement of a busy main road in London when they were around 2 years old, without someone holding their hand.

Me saying "be careful" the first time he carried our newborn up the stairs.

Me telling him to watch 2 year old DC when he carried them on his shoulders down the road, as they kept leaning backwards.

Me telling him to watch DC on scooter to school as they were getting used to it and were wobbly.

Me asking him to put DC in buggy to cross a very busy road, rather than letting them sit on his shoulders.

Me not wanting to let DC climb up a hill to run ahead to the play park, out of our reach, when there had been multiple reports of attempted abductions in our area in recent weeks. DC was 2 at the time. I did snap at this point, and said "fine, do what you want but if anything happens I'll blame you and I will never speak to you again"



What do you think?



Unmute yourself

Assessments in action – from this summer



Starlight Express

Very impressed by the levels of assessment in action keeping both cast and audience safe. Crew were constantly checking the track, the skaters and that's without the pyrotechnics



Circus Fantasia

The human cannon ball personally checked every support that had been tethered to his landing zone, before signing a waiver to say that he took personal liability for any injury that may return. This was during every single performance.



London Coliseum

I was using my walking stick and I was actively shepherded and redirected towards the step free access both entering and leaving the building



I hope that I have helped make assessing risks a little less scary and more manageable.

I am offering a couple of hours of free support through SAVS for charities to help them with administration, compliance and welfare support.

Please contact Emma and she will be in touch:
ejellett@savs-southend.co.uk



If you have any questions, please message me and I'll get back to you.

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