Mid Tipp Hillwalkers

*Participation of Children in Club Activities*

*Policy, ratified at AGM, 05 October 2022*

* Our members are all adults and only adults can become members of the club.
* Anyone under the age of 18 is a child. Any children participating in club activities are included as guests.
* Any children included must be accompanied and supervised by a parent/guardian who is a club member. A consent form must also be signed by a parent/legal guardian.
* Our Club is affiliated with Mountaineering Ireland. We have adopted the Mountaineering Ireland Safeguarding Policy as part of our constitution in so far as it is relevant to our club activities.

**Walks/Activities where children may be welcomed**

1. The Holly Walk
2. 4 family friendly walks/activities, similar to the Holly Walk, which may be arranged during the summer months.

**Other Walks/Activities**

Teenagers over the age of 15 may be allowed on other suitable walks. They must be accompanied and supervised by a parent/guardian who is a club member. A consent form must also be signed by a parent/legal guardian.

Any member wishing to bring their child on a walk must seek prior approval from the club secretary.

Any child simply turning up at the walk meeting place without prior approval will be refused permission to participate.

When a member requests permission from the secretary to bring a child on a walk, the secretary will allow or disallow following consultation with the walk leader. The reasons will not be disclosed. Where a child is not permitted on the walk, the parent will simply be told, “This walk is not suitable for children.”

**Children can participate in permitted walks/activities only under certain conditions:**

1. A child must always be accompanied by their parent/guardian who assumes full responsibility for him/her during the walk/activity.
2. Parents/guardians must be members of the club.
3. Parents/guardians must have completed a consent form for each walk.

**Role of the walk leader in relation to children**

1. No leader is expected to allow children to participate in walks/activities where they are leading, if they do not wish to do so for any reason.
2. The parent/guardian is fully responsible for the child at all times, and agrees to this in the written consent form.
3. As children on walks are always accompanied by parents/guardians, leaders do not require Garda vetting.
4. Leaders will inform the secretary privately if they are happy to allow children to participate.

**Disclaimer**

Similar to all adventure sports, hill walking is a sport with risks. It can be dangerous, and participation may result in personal injury or death.

Mid-Tipp Hillwalkers does not provide professional mountain leadership.

Leadership and guidance given by members is in the tradition whereby a novice will learn from more experienced members. Leaders are not technical experts but amateurs with some experience they are prepared to share.

Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and are responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Anyone participating in group events should recognise that any advice given is on this basis and that the onus of responsibility remains with the individual.

Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

**Parents/guardians need to be aware of and accept that these risks exist for children also.**

***Where children are included in club activities, we encourage an open environment where children feel free to speak out about their concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to in a respectful way and their concerns taken seriously.***

***This is a key pillar in The Mountaineering Ireland Safeguarding policy.***

Our Child Safeguarding Officer is: Maeve Sookram

Our Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection matters is: Maeve Sookram