BSI Consumer & Public Interest Network

Vacancy for Consumer Coordinator for Children’s Interests group

*Are you a parent, or a consumer expert with a particular interest in safeguarding children? Do you know what the consumer and public interest issues are for this area? And what do we mean by ‘children’ exactly? The very young up to teenagers? What do we do about the needs of a toddler differing greatly from those of a teen? Children aren’t a homogenous group and, even within one age band, accessibility and other needs will vary dramatically. If we do attempt to cater for all children, will we make it difficult for other consumers, for example, the elderly and disabled?*

Children’s issues relate to all products and services used by children, or with which they come into contact, not just those that are designed specifically for children. Here are some examples of things within the home that can cause problems for children:

* Sharp and hot surfaces (cookers, irons, kettles)
* Strangling hazards (window cords and blinds, cords on clothing)
* Toppling or trapping hazards (washing machines and driers, flatscreen TVs)
* Falling, tripping and slipping hazards (highchairs, barriers, stair guards, balconies, windows)
* Access to toxic or poisonous items and medical goods (lead in toys and some paints, jewellery and cosmetics, blister packs)
* Access to inappropriate content on TV and computers, as well as the security and privacy issues

Outside the home, there is also plenty to consider: playgrounds, fairgrounds and bouncy castles, child seats in cars, adventurous activities, swimming pools… The list goes on and on, but consumers can at least be reassured that there are standards addressing the safety issues in all of the items just listed. If you have experience of working in any area connected to Children’s Interests, you’ll already know about the many standards that take their needs into account. There is still much more to do: for example, what about instructions for products and services – do they meet the needs of all the different kinds of children who are likely to use them?

*If these sorts of challenges are right up your street, you’ll enjoy working for us.*

This is about joining a group of creative people who want to get things right and make things easier and safer for all consumers. Through the [standards development process,](http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/About-standards/) we represent ordinary consumers. Our current priorities are:

* **Inclusivity –** Older people, Disabled people and Children’s Interests
* **Security, Privacy & Identity –** includes online safety
* **Sustainability –** includes environment, energy (product efficiency)and social responsibility
* **Wellbeing –** includesbehavioural risk and product safety
* **Services standardization –** includes financial services, health and social care services

The volunteers and experts in our [BSI Consumer & Public Interest Network (CPIN) are grouped according to those priorities and we are currently looking for someone to coordinate the activities of our Children’s Interests group.](http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/How-to-get-involved/Become-a-consumer-representative/)

The CPI Network (approximately 70 people in total) consists of three main groups – our Consumer Coordinators, Reps and background experts are all volunteers who are based in the UK, but outside of BSI:

* the CPISAC, a strategy group of individuals, who are senior staff at relevant organizations (e.g. [Citizens Advice](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/), [Chartered Institute of Trading Standards](http://www.tradingstandards.uk/), [Which?](http://www.which.co.uk/));
* Coordinators for each of the topic areas (currently nine);
* Consumer Reps (who sit on committees and report back) and background experts.

UK consumers, as well as our European and international colleagues at [ANEC](http://www.anec.org/anec.asp) and [COPOLCO](http://www.iso.org/sites/ConsumersStandards/en/Copolco.htm), are involved in hundreds of standards projects, by means of consumer representation on the relevant standards committees. We also have links to the various individual experts and organizations working in the field of child protection, like the [Child Accident Prevention Trust](http://www.capt.org.uk/), [RoSPA](http://www.rospa.com/), the [NSPCC](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/), the [National Children’s Bureau](http://www.ncb.org.uk/) and the ANEC Child Safety WG.

Each of our Consumer Coordinators has up-to-date background and specific knowledge relating to their area and good external contacts. They also have good people skills, advising and liaising regularly with the BSI consumer and other relevant staff, the Reps, and external experts. The Network is managed at BSI by staff who specialize in consumer and public interest engagement in standards. The Chair of the CPI Network is Christine Heemskerk, a product safety consultant, who is a former Chair of the UK Trading Standards Institute and Trading Standards Officer, and whose valuable experience therefore gives her specialist knowledge of the product safety area.

The Consumer Coordinator role attracts a small honorarium (presently £3,500 p.a.) and, of course, your travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses are paid, when you go to meetings for us in the UK and abroad. The time commitment is approximately 30 days p.a. (including c.12 days total of meetings).

*Like the sound of it?*

Please email us if you would like to apply: **consumer@bsigroup.com**

For more information about us, see:[**www.bsigroup.com/Consumers**](http://www.bsigroup.com/Consumers)

*Look out for our consumer leaflet s related to Children’s Interests on the BSI website: ‘*[*Playing safe’*](http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/How-we-can-help-you/Consumers/Toy-Safety/) *and ‘*[*Child resistant packaging’*](http://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/about-bsi/uk-national-standards-body/how-standards-help-consumers/http:/www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/about-bsi/uk-national-standards-body/how-standards-help-consumers/)*.*