

# Child Protection Policy

## INTRODUCTION

The Against Child Abuse's mission is to promote a caring and non-violent environment for the optimal growth and development of our children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that all children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and sexual abuse. Protecting children is everyone's shared responsibility. Schools and organisations engaged in child related work need to develop their internal policies, code of conduct and procedures to ensure that the provision of services takes children's safety and interests as the first priority. Our Child Protection Institute has assisted schools and organisations to set up child protection policy and provided staff training to comply with the implementation of the policy to ensure that children and people who come into contact with them are protected.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The Against Child Abuse will take the following action in the event of suspected maltreatment of children:

- respect the dignity, safety and interests of children
- investigate any suspicious incidents and accusations as quickly as possible
- collaborate with all involved parties, provide transparent and factual reports, and initiate support mechanisms



To respect the rights of the child, staff members and volunteers in contact with children are obliged to:

- understand children within the local context in which they live
- work with children in a spirit of co-operation based on mutual trust and respect
- enhance children's capabilities and develop their potential
- recognize children as individuals in their own right and needs, and value their views



Staff members and volunteers who come into contact with children:

### should always

- avoid situations which isolate children
- recognize potential pitfalls which might lead to child abuse
- promote a culture of openness where issues and concerns can be raised and discussed
- ensure visibility, wherever possible, with children
- ensure consent is obtained from guardians when making images of children (photos, video etc.), that they are respectful, sexually suggestive poses are avoided
- if a room with children is visited at any time, the door should always be left open



### should never

- use any form of physical punishment
- enter any form of sexual relations
- engage in any form of inappropriate physical contact, language and behavior
- organize activities which are abusive
- develop abusive or exploitative relations
- stay overnight in the same room with any child
- invite a child/children to their place of residence alone
- shame, belittle, degrade children or engage in emotional abuse
- discriminate through preferential treatment to a child
- take images of children (photo, video etc.) which are detrimental or explicit and undermine the child's dignity

## PROCEDURES

### Overriding Principles

- In all cases the safety and welfare of the child will always be the priority
- The procedures are built on the principle of minimising the need for the child to have to repeat to multiple parties the information unnecessarily

### Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

- Possible abuse may be disclosed in various ways
- If children indicate that they are being abused, staff members should:



#### Respond

- Stay calm so as not to frighten the child
- Reassure that the child is not to blame and it is right to tell
- Listen to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- Ask open questions to collect facts and accurate information
- Don't promise to keep secret as this is to help stop the abuse
- Safety of the child is paramount

#### Record

- Record the facts strictly and accurately
- Make risk assessment



#### Report

- Don't allow personal emotions to interfere with your judgement on any action to take
- Report the incident to the supervisor immediately
- For cases of suspected child abuse, investigation should be conducted immediately to take protective measures as soon as possible to ensure the safety of children
- If the abuser is suspected to be staff member, it should be ensured that the incident has been properly investigated before deciding on the relevant disciplinary action

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned

Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only in order to:

- protect a child
- facilitate enquiries
- manage disciplinary/complaint aspects
- protect the rights of the alleged perpetrator



The communication network includes the following persons:

- The child and the parents
- The person being complained against
- The person making the allegation
- Social services units/police
- Agency management

All information will be properly stored with limited access to designated persons, on a need to know basis and in line with data protection laws.



## EMPLOYMENT

- Prospective employees seeking child related work are required to undergo a Sexual Conviction Record Check
- All employees are required to undertake relevant child protection training provided by the Agency to ensure their practices in line with code of conduct

Organization-specific Child Protection Policy: we aim to assist organizations to develop policies according to their needs and circumstances