



CHILD RIGHTS CENTRE

DOBRAČINA 29/3A, 11000 BELGRADE, SERBIA

TEL: (+381 11) 33-44-170, 32-86-690; FAX: 33-44-170; E-MAIL: OFFICE@CPD.ORG.RS; WEBSITE: [HTTP://CPD.ORG.RS/](http://CPD.ORG.RS/)

Child Safeguarding Policy with Code of Conduct

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INTRODUCTION

The Child Rights Centre (CRC) is an association of citizens established in 1997 with the aim of implementing children's rights in Serbia in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The main course of action of the CRC is aimed at creating favourable social and legislative framework for the full achievement of children's rights in Serbia by focusing on introduction and implementation of laws, policies and practices that enable the improvement of child welfare, protection of child rights and full participation of children in the society.

VISION

The vision of the CRC is that all children enjoy their rights to their full capacity, with an efficient support of the whole society. In order to realise its vision, the CRC strives to be recognised by its users, partners and the public as an organisation of value-oriented and competent professionals committed to children's wellbeing.

In its everyday work, the CRC aims to set the highest standards of work and results, both for itself and for the social protagonists responsible for the implementation of children's rights in Serbia. The CRC therefore continues to see itself as a team oriented towards a continual development and professional enhancement of its staff and co-workers.

MISSION

The mission of the CRC is to contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child through promotion of children's wellbeing, protection of their rights, improvement of child participation in the society, conducting research and providing training and education programmes to professionals, practitioners, children and their carers on children's rights.

The CRC implements its mission primarily in the Republic of Serbia, but also promotes children's rights in the Balkan region and establishes links with similar organisations and institutions in Europe and the world.

AIM AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Children in Serbia are entitled to enjoy the full range of human rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), the European Social Charter, and other international human rights standards.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires States parties to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of violence, in accordance with Article 19. Its Article 3 provides that all actions on child safeguarding shall be taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount. The ECHR, the European Social Charter and other

relevant international treaties guarantee children's right to protection from harm, violence, exploitation and abuse. The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) introduce measures to ensure that children are protected against sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and violence.

The aim of the Child Safeguarding Policy is to:

- include safeguards when implementing its activities for or involving children to promote full respect of their rights and pursuit of their best interests;
- prevent and minimise the risk of harm that may be caused to children as a result of actions or neglect by staff, experts and third parties employed, appointed or contracted by the CRC;
- ensure good practice when using the media, including social media.

The Child Safeguarding Policy applies directly to all staff of the CRC, whether permanent, temporary, interns and volunteers who shall, by appropriate means, make experts and contracted third parties who perform tasks under projects, programmes, interventions and other activities of the CRC that include children and have or may have an impact on the rights of the child, aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy. Contracts with third parties concerning activities that include children, child participation and have an impact on the rights of the child are only concluded with parties that agree to abide by the Child Safeguarding Policy.

The Code of Conduct is an integral part of the Child Safeguarding Policy, which includes reporting procedures and actions following behaviour which is not in compliance with the child protection standards.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this child safeguarding policy, the following definitions apply.

Child:

Based on Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child means any person below the age of eighteen years.

Child safeguarding:

Child safeguarding means to take appropriate measures to ensure that staff, experts, contracted third parties, projects, programmes, interventions and activities do no harm to children and promote their best interests. This means that children are not exposed to the risk of harm and abuse and that any concerns the CRC has about children's safety are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Child safeguarding includes both preventive actions to minimise the risks of harm occurring, and responsive actions to ensure that incidents which may happen are appropriately handled.

Child abuse:

For the purposes of this policy, child abuse consists of anything which individuals, organisations or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development. Child abuse can be physical, sexual and/or emotional in nature.

Physical abuse is characterised as actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It can involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning.

Emotional abuse can be characterised as persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts can include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber-bullying), threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing and other non-physical forms of hostile and rejecting treatment.

Neglect and negligent treatment, depending on the context, resources and circumstances, may also be considered as child abuse, if it is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development.

Child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation:

According to the Lanzarote Convention, sexual abuse of a child is when an adult engages in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities. It also includes engaging in sexual activities with a child, whatever his or her age, where: - use is made of coercion, force or threats; or - abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child, including within the family; or - abuse is made of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child, notably because of a mental or physical disability or a situation of dependence.

Child sexual exploitation includes offences regarding child prostitution, child pornography, participation of a child in pornographic performances, corruption of children (causing a child to witness sexual abuse or sexual activities, even without having to participate) and solicitation of children for sexual purposes through information and communication technologies.

Aiding or abetting the commission of any of the aforementioned offences as well as attempts to commit said offences are included in this definition.

Staff of the CRC:

For the purposes of this policy, staff of the CRC refers to all staff, full time, part time, permanent and temporary, international and national, contracted in accordance with relevant legislation of the Republic of Serbia as well as interns and volunteers, who work with the CRC.

Experts:

Experts are considered as consultants, activists, board and assembly members, trustees.

Contracted third parties:

By contracted third party is understood any organisation or institution, public or non-public, commercial or non-profitable, or any person with whom the CRC may enter into a contract, unless it is formally agreed that the organisation or institution may enforce their own safeguarding or protection policy.

KEY PRINCIPLES

In its work the CRC respects the following general principles:

1) Non-discrimination

The rights of the child apply to all children without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other status.

2) Best interests of the child

In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

3) Right to life and development

Children have an inherent right to life and to protection from violence and suicide. Development should be interpreted in its broadest sense, embracing the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development.

4) The right to be heard

Involvement of children in decision-making at individual, family, organisational and policy level in society is key to realising their rights. Children should be empowered to understand and enjoy their rights. The CRC aims to create space where children feel free and willing to speak about abuse and rights violation and which empowers them to become actors in their own protection without further discrimination or shame. The CRC aims to empower children by making them aware of their rights and creating a safe environment in which they can exercise their rights.

5) Do no harm

In line with International Child Safeguarding Standards, the „do no harm“ principle refers to minimising any harm that may be caused inadvertently as a result of activities of the CRC.

6) Transparency and accountability

Transparency and accountability are essential to ensure that poor practice can be addressed appropriately, potentially abusive behaviour challenged and best practice promoted.

7) Personal responsibility

All representatives of the CRC must demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour towards children both in their private and professional lives. They have a responsibility to understand and promote the policy. They must do all that they can to prevent, report and respond appropriately to any concerns or potential breaches of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

8) Universality

The Child Safeguarding Policy includes mandatory requirements that apply to everyone in all aspects of the CRC's work regardless of how and where they work including during the response to humanitarian emergencies.

9) Openness

The CRC aims to create an environment in relation to child safeguarding issues where any issue or concern can be openly raised and discussed.

10) Confidentiality

All child safeguarding concerns/reports/ investigations will be dealt with on a 'need to know' basis and all records will be held securely. Likewise communication will be confidential and secure.

11) Timeliness

Given the potential for increased or repeated abuse, timely responses are essential and the accompanying procedures establish mandatory time limits on reporting and responding to concerns.

12) Uniformity

This policy applies both during, after and in between working hours.

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

The CRC will conduct awareness and prevention measures in order to ensure the child safeguarding and protection of the rights of children. These measures will be consisted of the following steps:

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MITIGATION

The CRC will perform a risk assessment of all its projects, programmes, interventions and other activities, including also those involving contact with children through use of information technologies, to make sure that any child safeguarding risks are identified and adequate controls developed. These aspects should be included in the Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks for such activities.

Risk mitigation strategies minimising the risk to children will be developed and incorporated in the design, implementation and evaluation of all its projects, programmes, interventions and other activities that involve or impact upon children.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

The CRC will ensure that it applies the highest standards in recruitment processes and vetting policies. Staff and experts will be recruited based on clear and transparent job or role descriptions that include a statement on the job's or role's responsibilities to meet the requirements of the CRC's Child Safeguarding Policy.

All staff and experts must pass criminal record checks. If police/court checks are impossible, other checks are put into practice and noted. Checking evidence of identity and the authenticity of qualifications, requesting self-declarations about previous convictions, and a minimum requirement of at least two references, are carried out in all cases.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All CRC staff and experts must act in accordance with this policy in both their professional and personal lives. All staff and experts must acknowledge and sign the Code of Conduct which is an integral part of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The CRC delivers a mandatory Child Safeguarding Training to all staff and experts to help them understand why it is necessary to safeguard and protect children and to be fully aware of the procedure for reporting concerns.

Staff will receive a mandatory induction Child Safeguarding Training at the time of their engagement with the CRC. Experts will be briefed on child safeguarding and their responsibilities under the Child Safeguarding Policy upon engagement with the CRC. Staff and experts with particular responsibilities relating to child safeguarding will be provided with an in-depth training within 6 months of their engagement.

Staff, experts and contracted third parties should be supported to continuously develop child safeguarding skills, knowledge and experience appropriate to their role throughout their engagement.

Children and their carers will be informed about the CRC's commitment to child safeguarding and what to do if they have concerns about a child.

All staff, experts, children and their carers are aware of the designated Child Safeguarding Focal Point who is responsible for receiving reports of concerns and advising on assessing and mitigating risk in line with the CRC's policy and procedures.

USING IMAGES AND STORIES ABOUT CHILDREN

When developing and using photos or videos featuring children involved in the activities of the CRC, the following principles should be respected:

INFORMED CONSENT: Permission should always be sought from the children themselves before taking images. The CRC should acquire informed consent of the child, the child's carer, and/or the institution responsible for the child, before using any photo or video for publicity, fundraising, awareness raising, reporting or any other purpose. The purpose should be made clear to the consent giver. The CRC has a Consent Form developed.

PRIVACY: Personal and physical information that could be used to identify the location of a child within a country and cause them to be put at risk should not be used in any form of communication for general or public purposes. Geotagging of images should be disabled when taking photographs.

SECURITY: Information about children's lives and images of children (including information stored on a computer) should be kept in secure files. Access to these should be limited to those who need to use them during the course of their work.

PORTRAYAL: Images of children should portray the children in a dignified and respectful way. The image should not shame or embarrass a child and should be presented in context.

DISTRIBUTION

The Child Safeguarding Policy needs to be understood accurately by all those that the policy applies to for its effective implementation. The CRC will ensure that all its staff, experts and contracted third parties are informed about this policy and act in accordance with its provisions and do no harm to children.

Distribution must be supported so as to ensure that the Child Safeguarding Policy is understood.

BUILDING CHILD SAFEGUARDING

The Child Safeguarding Policy must be incorporated into all systems, standard operating procedures and processes that have any bearing on the safeguarding of children so that an environment is established where the rights of children are respected and where child abuse and sexual exploitation of children is not tolerated.

The Child Safeguarding Policy should be reflected in all management arrangements that define or determine how staff and experts carry out their work, including job descriptions, internal procedures, performance management systems and disciplinary procedures. Failure to adhere to child safeguarding aspects of any such arrangements should be recognised as a serious disciplinary breach.

Children and their carers must be made aware of the systems that exist to raise a concern or a complaint. As key stakeholders they must be aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy and of what they can expect in terms of the behaviour of staff, experts and contracted third parties towards them.

Child friendly materials should be used to communicate these messages.

PARTNERS

All agreements between the CRC and partner organisations must include agreement on a Child Safeguarding Policy.

Partner organisations must adopt this Child Safeguarding Policy or have developed their own policy of a similar standard and approach. Agreements with partners must clearly outline agreed procedures for reporting and investigating concerns involving breaches of the policy.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Guidance is in place which governs the appropriate use of information and communication technologies such as the internet, websites, social networking sites, digital photography to ensure that children are not put at risk. This guidance covers both the use of these technologies by our staff and representatives as well as children who utilise the technologies on our behalf or in response to a request by our organisation.

CONDUCT TOWARDS CHILDREN

The staff of the CRC should ensure that all individuals involved in activities with children sign a commitment to adhere to the principles and procedures outlined in this policy. In particular, all individuals participating in CRC activities involving children should take note of the following guidelines for conduct.

Individuals participating in activities involving or concerning children **should:**

- Comply with all relevant national laws concerning the protection of children;
- Have full regard to the principles outlined in this policy;
- Inform children of their rights in a way they can understand, including by identifying the person, authority or service where to seek advice/complain in case of problem;
- Be careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children;
- Their behaviour should demonstrate respect for children and their rights;
- Ensure that all physical contact with children is appropriate in the given context;
- Use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behaviour;
- Where possible and practical, follow the 'two-adult' rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities that involve children, and are visible and present at all times;
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns;
- Take appropriate action as required where they become aware or suspect that a child has experienced or is experiencing abuse;
- Comply with child protection related investigations (internal and external) and take steps to make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of the investigation.

Individuals participating in activities involving or concerning children **should not:**

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- Engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with the child regardless of the age of majority/consent or custom locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be abusive in any way or may place a child at risk of abuse;

- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised unless exceptional circumstances apply and previous permission has been obtained from a their line manager;
- Sleep in the same bed as a child with whom they are working;
- Sleep in the same room as a child with whom they are working unless exceptional circumstances apply and previous permission has been obtained from a their line manager;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do themselves;
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- Discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment or favour to particular children to the exclusion of others;
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others;
- Place themselves in a position where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct;
- Stigmatise children (e.g. based on gender, race, ability, class, or any other factor);
- Ignore a situation where a child is experiencing or is at risk of harm;
- Violate children's other rights (e.g. right to privacy, to information and to participate in decisions concerning them).

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Staff, experts and contracted third parties should at all times avoid actions or behaviour which may allow behaviour to be misrepresented, constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

It is important for all staff, experts and contracted third parties in contact with children to:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these;
- Plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks;
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children;
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed;
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unaddressed;
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns;
- Empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem;
- Maintain high personal and professional standards;
- Respect the rights of children and treat them fairly, honestly and with dignity and respect;
- Encourage participatory practice with children which develops their own safeguarding capacity.

CHILD PARTICIPATION

The project management methodology at the CRC follows a human rights approach of which child participation is one of the guiding principles. For child participation to be meaningful, the specific needs of children should be taken into account and accommodated for to the extent possible throughout the project's life cycle and its distinct phases of initiating, planning, implementing, closing and evaluating a project.

For projects coordinated and implemented by the CRC which actively involve children, the principle of "do no harm" applies throughout the project cycle. Special attention should be paid to the particularly vulnerable groups of children (e.g. children with disabilities, children living in poverty, children in care, Roma children, children on the move or otherwise affected by migration, and children from minorities).

Initiating a project

Meaningful participation starts at developing of the project concept. As part of the stakeholder identification, the possibility of child participation and the form in which it would be conducted is considered during the initiation phase of a project. When inviting children to participate in a project, they are provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely and to have their views given due weight. They are informed on how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact. Children should never be forced into expressing views against their wishes and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any moment.

From the perspective of child safeguarding, potential risk situations during the initiating phase include the needs assessment stage, as it usually involves consultations with project stakeholders, including children. Needs assessment for projects and programmes of the CRC are conducted by the CRC staff.

Planning a project

The stakeholder engagement plan should include a section on child participation which outlines how the participation will benefit the project goals. The children's interest and investment in the project should be considered based on their potential or actual vulnerability. The methods of engagement and stage of involvement of children throughout the project should be precised.

Participation should be inclusive and encourage opportunities for marginalised children to be involved. Programmes should also ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities.

Potential risk situations during the planning phase are linked to communication with children. Risk assessment with regard to child safeguarding must be included in the planning phase of any project involving children.

Implementing a project

Environments and working methods should be adapted to children's evolving capacities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately informed, prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute to the project implementation.

Potential risk situations during the implementing phase include direct interaction with children when they are participating in the project activities.

Involving experts and third parties

Projects may include activities where specific tasks are performed by experts and third parties. Due to specific risks involved in the contracting of experts and third parties the CRC staff should adopt preventive measures to minimise any risk including detailed terms of reference that clearly define the obligations with regard to safeguarding of children in the performance of the contract and obtaining criminal record.

Closing a project

The experiences with child participation should be part of the documentation of lessons learned during the project. Reporting should include information on the results of the child participation and how it impacted on the outcomes of the project.

Children should get feedback and be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Wherever appropriate, children should be given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities.

Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation should be undertaken, where possible, with children themselves.

Potential risk areas include communication and direct interaction with children.

Evaluating a project

The evaluation report should contain information on how the child participation was conducted and its impact on the outcomes of the project. The lessons learned should include child safeguarding as a factor of the evaluation.

REPORTING

All individuals covered by this policy should be informed about the steps to take and whom to contact when concerns arise regarding the child safeguarding.

All children involved in activities should be informed about the Child Safeguarding Policy in a child-friendly manner.

IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ENSURE SAFETY

Immediate action to ensure safety may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children.

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 194) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 192) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection Order.

Reporting child safeguard concerns

A child safeguarding report should be made in the following instances:

- a potential case of abuse is observed or suspected;
- a substantiated allegation of abuse is being made;
- a child discloses abuse;
- a breach of the Code of Conduct is reported or observed.

All CRC staff, experts and contracted third parties are obliged to report any suspected or actual child safeguard concern within 24 hours, unless it is impossible or impracticable to do so or other exceptional circumstances exist.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE CHILD

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with carers about any concerns. However, a person who suspects the child safeguard concern must not discuss the concern with carers in the following circumstances:

- where sexual abuse is suspected;
- where organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected;
- where contacting carers would place a child, her/himself or others at immediate risk.

A child may seek out to share information about child safeguard concerns, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when the CRC representative is present. In these situations s/he must:

- Listen carefully to the child. DO NOT directly question the child.
- Give the child time and attention.
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information s/he have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's own words where possible.
- Explain that s/he cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.
- Explain that s/he will need to get help to keep the child safe.
- Do NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- Reassure the child that:
 - you are glad they have told you;
 - they have not done anything wrong;
 - what you are going to do next.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING THE REPORT

- Accurate record of concern(s) made at the time should be kept.
- Concerns should be sent in written form to the centre for social welfare following the report (within 48 hours). The record of the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision should be made.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any report will be treated seriously and with confidentiality. The priority will always be the safety and best interests of the child.

Identifying information about children will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only. Any staff that raises concern of malpractice will be protected as far as possible from victimisation or any other detrimental treatment if they come forward with serious concerns, provided that concerns are raised in good faith.

Deliberate false allegations are a serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated. The subject of the complaint (alleged perpetrator) and all witnesses must cooperate fully and openly with internal and statutory investigations and hearings. Their confidentiality will be protected and information which could identify them will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

"Child Safeguarding Focal Points" i.e. designated staff members to receive child safeguarding concerns/complaints should be appointed by the director of the CRC.

Staff nominated to key positions must have their roles & responsibilities for child safeguarding clearly identified. This must include roles and responsibilities of staff in raising child safeguarding concerns/complaints, child safeguarding focal point for receiving child safeguarding concerns/complaints and managers for responding to and managing these issues. Such positions should receive appropriate guidance training and support.

All staff, experts and contracted third party representatives must be aware of the contact details of the focal point for receiving child safeguarding concerns/complaints.

The standard reporting form should be used for reporting concerns. Action must be instigated by the persons identified in line with the procedures.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE IN RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

In responding to allegations of child safeguard concern, the CRC staff should be guided by the procedures. These outline a clear set of principles that focus on the best interests of the child as well as issues of protection and safety, physical and psychological health and welfare and respect for the right to confidentiality, equality and access to justice.

All CRC staff, other representatives and partner will act appropriately and effectively in the process of instigating any investigation or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation, and will be guided by the principle of acting in the 'best interests of the child' in any such process.

Staff will be required to cooperate in any investigation and to maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality. Failure to do so will be considered a serious disciplinary matter.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

All CRC staff must be aware of their roles and responsibilities in responding to, investigating and referring allegations of abuse and sexual exploitation to national authorities as outlined in procedures.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO RESPOND TO, MANAGE, AND LEARN FROM INCIDENTS

The CRC must establish a management system capable of managing an incident supporting and assisting any victims and capturing lessons as a result of the occurrence, reporting, investigation or other management of any incident under the Child Safeguarding Policy so that lessons are learnt and practice improved.

Lessons learnt in the general implementation of this policy as well as from individual incidents should be used to influence policy and develop best practice.

All CRC staff must be aware that any concern or allegation of abuse or exploitation of children made against them will be investigated by consideration of referral to statutory authorities for criminal investigation and prosecution under the law of the country in which they work where the allegation is a possible breach of the law.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Child safeguarding is incorporated into the CRC Rules of Procedures and annual reporting processes. Senior management will regularly review the risk register and organisation reports to ensure that child safeguarding measures are in place and effective.

The Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed regularly or when it is shown necessary that additional issues need to be identified and addressed through this policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct applies to:

1. Director of the CRC;
2. Staff of the CRC;

3. Professional associates and consultants of the CRC;
4. Members of the governing structures of the CRC (Board, Supervisory Board, Assembly);
5. Persons hired under any other employment/service contract;
6. Volunteers.

Child Safeguarding Policy with Code of Conduct is an integral part of all contracts that the CRC concludes with the above mentioned personnel as well as of any new member accession document. All members of the governing structures of the CRC are required to sign the Code of conduct. All above mentioned hired personnel are obliged to comply with the Code of Conduct.

INTRODUCTION

All individuals working with the CRC endorse the concept of human rights and rights of the child in particular and respect those rights in all situations, decisions and actions.

The work of the CRC's is based on deeply rooted values and principles. It is essential that our commitment to the rights of the child and humanitarian principles is supported and demonstrated by all members of personnel. If any of us fails to act in a way that is consistent with our values and principles, we fail to achieve our goal as the organisation.

Our ability to achieve our goals, often in complex and insecure environments, is linked to our reputation. This reputation relies heavily on everyone who works with us, by upholding and promoting high standards of conduct. Working with the CRC is linked to accepting a special responsibility for safeguarding human rights in general and rights of the child in particular.

If you are a manager, you will have special responsibilities to set a good example and to create working environment that supports other personnel to uphold these standards and help you manage behaviour that breaks the Code of Conduct.

With this common rights perspective we strive for exemplary behaviour and the realisation of effective and reliable work for the rights of the child. We consider of outmost importance to ensure that all resources are used in an appropriate and effective way, be it personal or economic resources, and that they are used for the means they are designated for.

In order to make this Code of Conduct come alive within the CRC, we must not only apply it individually but be ready to bring to the attention of relevant management of the CRC any potential incident, abuse or concern that we witness or are made aware of.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. I will respect others:

I will respect the basic rights of all people, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, caste, language, HIV status or any other aspect of identity. I will act fairly, honestly and tactfully to treat people with dignity and respect.

I will not:

- take part in any form of discrimination, harassment, or abuse (physical, sexual or verbal), intimidation or exploitation, or in any other way infringe the rights of others.

2. I will actively work to safeguard children:

- by carrying out my special responsibilities for children to whom the CRC has a duty of care and creating a safe environment, in order to prevent their physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect.

I will not:

- Act in any way that breaches the CRC's policies and procedures or in any way places children at risk of harm.

- Withhold information about any current criminal convictions, charges or civil proceedings in relation to child's neglect or abuse, either at the time of joining the CRC or during the time of my employment when I represent the CRC in any capacity.

3. I will maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct:

– By striving for high standards in my work, taking responsibility for my actions and not abusing my position of power as the CRC's representative. I will not behave in a way that undermines my ability to do my job or is likely to bring the CRC into disrepute.

I will not:

- Enter into sexual relationship with an individual younger than 18, abuse or exploit the child in any other way.

- Exchange money, good and services for sexual services.

- Drink alcohol or use any other substances in a way that affect my work ability or reputation of the organisation.

- Be in possession of illegal goods or substances.

- Seek or respect any personal payments or services from others, particularly beneficiaries, in exchange for our help, support, goods or services of any kind.

- Accept a bribe or significant presents (apart from small symbols of gratitude) from the government, beneficiaries, donors, suppliers or anybody else offered as a result of my employment.

- Enter into any kind of professional relation, on behalf of the CRC, with the family, friends or other individuals/legal entities, for supplying goods or services for the CRC, without permission.

- Use computers or other equipment of the organisation with the aim to watch, download, make or distribute of inappropriate material, such as pornography.

4. I will seek to protect the safety and wellbeing of myself and others

– By being aware of and complying with internal CRC security and safety policies and practices and reporting any issues of concern to the legal representatives.

I will not:

- Behave in a way that causes unnecessary risk to myself or others.

5. I will protect the CRC's assets and resources

– By handling our financial and other resources carefully, I will ensure the CRC's resources are not misused and are protected them from theft, fraud and other damage.

I will not:

– Disclose to others any private and confidential information relating to the CRC (or for which the CRC is responsible) unless legally required to do so.

CONDUCT TOWARDS CHILDREN

The staff of the CRC should ensure that all individuals involved in activities with children sign a commitment to adhere to the principles and procedures outlined in this policy. In particular, all individuals participating in CRC activities involving children should take note of the following guidelines for conduct.

Individuals participating in activities involving or concerning children **should:**

- Comply with all relevant national laws concerning the protection of children;
- Have full regard to the principles outlined in this policy;
- Inform children of their rights in a way they can understand, including by identifying the person, authority or service where to seek advice/complain in case of problem;
- Be careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children;
- Their behaviour should demonstrate respect for children and their rights;
- Ensure that all physical contact with children is appropriate in the given context;
- Use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behaviour;
- Where possible and practical, follow the 'two-adult' rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities that involve children, and are visible and present at all times;
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns;
- Take appropriate action as required where they become aware or suspect that a child has experienced or is experiencing abuse;
- Comply with child protection related investigations (internal and external) and take steps to make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of the investigation.

Individuals participating in activities involving or concerning children **should not:**

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- Engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with the child regardless of the age of majority/consent or custom locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be abusive in any way or may place a child at risk of abuse;
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised unless exceptional circumstances apply and previous permission has been obtained from a their line manager;
- Sleep in the same bed as a child with whom they are working;
- Sleep in the same room as a child with whom they are working unless exceptional circumstances apply and previous permission has been obtained from a their line manager;

- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do themselves;
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- Discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment or favour to particular children to the exclusion of others;
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others;
- Place themselves in a position where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct;
- Stigmatise children (e.g. based on gender, race, ability, class, or any other factor);
- Ignore a situation where a child is experiencing or is at risk of harm;
- Violate children's other rights (e.g. right to privacy, to information and to participate in decisions concerning them).

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Staff, experts and contracted third parties should at all times avoid actions or behaviour which may allow behaviour to be misrepresented, constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

It is important for all staff, experts and contracted third parties in contact with children to:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these;
- Plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks;
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children;
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed;
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unaddressed;
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns;
- Empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem;
- Maintain high personal and professional standards;
- Respect the rights of children and treat them fairly, honestly and with dignity and respect;
- Encourage participatory practice with children which develops their own safeguarding capacity.

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I confirm that I have read, understood and shall abide by the Code of Conduct principles for the entire period I am working or am associated with, and/or represent the CRC. I understand that violation of any of the above rules of the Code of conduct can result, depending on the degree of severity, in immediate disciplinary action or immediate cancellation of the contract. The CRC Director is allowed to cancel the contract with immediate effect in case that there is substantial doubt that the Code of conduct has been breached.

Job title

Name

Date

Signature

CHILD SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

These Child Safeguarding Procedures are set out exactly what staff must do or how to respond if they suspect child abuse or sexual exploitation has occurred or is occurring.

The CRC is committed to becoming a child safe organisation. All of our representatives hold a serious and fundamental responsibility for ensuring the safety and welfare of children they are in contact with or informed about, either within or an office, or in the field and inside or outside office hours.

Child abuse is widespread in society. Those who work or volunteer for the CRC are in the fortunate position of being able to act in protecting a child when they have a concern. Our Child Safeguarding policies and guidance, and organisational commitment all work towards ensuring that every staff member is able to take the swift, appropriate action that is expected of them.

Any person engaged by the Child Rights Center is obliged to report any knowledge or suspicion that a child with whom has contact during the activity for the Center experienced violence, abuse or neglect.

Child Safeguarding Focal Point (CS Focal Point): member of staff designated as the person who will receive and handle allegations, concerns and complaints in relation to this policy.

1. In case of knowledge of violence or suspicion that violence occurs during the implementation of the CRC activities, the employee should immediately inform the person in charge of the procedures for protection against violence to CS Focal Point, directly in the premises of the CRC during working hours, by telephone +381 11 3286700, or via email cpdzastitadece@cpd.org.rs and to wait for directions for further action.
2. In the occasions that the situation is to be considered within team, CS Focal Point informs **Protection Against Violence Team**, arranging urgent meeting of the team, where should be decided on further action.
3. The employee is informed about the decision of the Protection against Violence Team with clear guidelines for further actions.
4. If the person in charge of the procedures for protection against violence or the Protection against Violence Team decides that it is necessary to report the violence, it is necessary to inform the director of the CRC.
5. In each case of reporting violence, it is necessary to keep records by filling out the form of steps taken to protect against violence (**Form for reporting incidental cases** - see Annex I).
6. If there is a suspicion of violence by a person in charge of the procedures for protection against violence or a member of the Protection Against Violence Team, a suspected person should immediately inform the director of the CRC and wait for instructions on further treatment.
7. If there is a suspicion of violence by the Director of the CRC, a person suspecting violence should promptly notify the CRC's Board and wait for instructions on further action.

CONFIDENTIAL

PLEASE TYPE YOUR REPORT AND COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

Child Rights Centre Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Location:

Child's name:

Case no:

Report received:

Time:

Date:

Place:

Person raising the concern's details:

Name:

Address:

Contact telephone no:

Occupation:

Relationship to child

Child's details:

Name:

Age:

Date of birth:

Gender:

Address:

Household structure:

School:

Class:

Any Disability:

Recent changes in child's behaviour?

Any other information:

Details of concern: what, who, where, when (*including child's words if possible*):

Alleged Perpetrator's details (if known):

Name:

Address:

Age:

Date of birth:

Employment details:

Nature of job:

Is Child Rights Centre or partner agency the alleged perpetrator's employer? Yes/No

Is there any other connection to Child Rights Centre?

Relationship, if any, to child:

Current location of alleged perpetrator:

Current safety of child including location:

Has emergency medical attention been required?

Provided by:

Who else knows? Include contact details.

Family members or other individuals:

Actions taken to date e.g. Referral to police, children's services, social welfare, other. Give contact details and date and time of action.

Report taken by:

Name:

Position and Location:

Date:

Signature (on hard copy):

This section is to be completed by Child Safeguarding Focal Point following receipt of report:

Decision made by CS Focal Point for immediate action (Please specify who is to do what and when, and give names and contact details of people to be contacted.)

Referral to police (if not, why not?) yes/no

Referral to Local Authority for child protection /welfare yes/no

Other action required to ensure child not at further risk from alleged perpetrator:

Referral for medical treatment/ to meet health needs yes/no

Date and time of telephone/personal report to CS Focal Point:

Name of reporter to CRC Director and date report passed on:

Signature of CS Focal Point arranging above action:

Date: