



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
INTERNATIONAL

Child Protection Policy

SOS Children's villages International





Child Safeguarding is everybody's business.

SOS Children's village must ensure that **children and young people in our programme are safe**. Our child protection policy is our **'internal law'** which guides our child safeguarding work within the organisation



*This policy document
is binding for all member associations of
SOS Children's Villages International*



Major Highlights about CP

- The Child Protection Policy was endorsed in May 2008.
- It focuses on four key areas: raising awareness, prevention, reporting and responding.
- In accordance with the Policy, SOS Children's Villages has **zero tolerance** to any form of abuse or harm to children.
- It is the responsibility of the organization and all its co-workers and associates to ensure that *children and young people supported by SOS programmes are safe and protected.*



- The SOS Children's Villages **roots, vision, mission and values**
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**)
- **Experience and inputs of stakeholders** from various SOS Children's Villages associations including children who are important stakeholders.
- The **standards on child protection** as defined by the Keeping Children Safe Coalition



WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

- Definitions of the four main categories of abuse
- **1: PHYSICAL ABUSE** is the **actual or potential physical harm caused by an action or lack of action**, which is reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. Physical abuse may involve hitting, spanking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning and suffocating.
- **2. SEXUAL ABUSE** is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who, by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power; **the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person**. Child sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **3. NEGLECT AND NEGLIGENT TREATMENT** is the **inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver** to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretaker which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm.
- **4. EMOTIONAL ABUSE** is the **persistent emotional ill treatment** of a child that adversely affects his or her self-perception and development.



5. Violation of Privacy

- The protection of a child's privacy refers to private data of the child as well as pictures, texts, films, etc. about children which are produced for publicity purposes.
- Any information about a child's history, medical condition and family background has to be stored carefully in the SOS Children's Villages. These data are to be handled confidentially and with discretion.



- Historical abuse in this policy refers to abuse which an adult reports as having suffered as a child or young person while in contact with SOS Children's Villages. It is often the case that an individual does not report abuse until many years after the event.
- Any such allegations are raised as a child protection concern through the child protection procedures. All SOS Children's Villages associations are prepared to handle historical allegations of abuse transparently and responsibly according to their defined crisis management procedures.



- Allegations or concerns regarding the abuse of a child by another child need to be responded to with particular sensitivity; nevertheless, they have to be dealt with through the child protection procedures.
- All work with young people who have committed abuse requires an effective approach which ensures the protection of people affected, while at the same time supporting the young person in challenging and changing his/her behaviour. Any such approach requires:



Any such approach requires:

- the recognition that a **child who has abused another child differs significantly from adults** who have committed similar offences, as the child is not fully aware of why he or she has committed abuse and what the consequences are.
- keeping in mind that the **best interest of the child** is the primary consideration in all decisions made - for both the victim and the abuser.



What we stands for

- SOS children's village is **committed to creating and maintaining a caring and protective environment** which promotes its core values and **prevents and addresses child abuse and exploitation** be it within or outside of the organisation.
- We **condemn all forms of child abuse and exploitation** and always **respond to any case** of proven, alleged or attempted abuse.
- **Efforts ensure that mechanism are in place** to raise awareness, aid prevention, encourage reporting.



Prevention

Awareness

Reporting

Responding



GOALS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. **Preventing cases of child abuse** and reducing the number of incidences.
2. **Making children aware of their rights** and their active role in child protection.
3. **Informing children**, co-workers, board members, family and community members, volunteers and partners
4. **Encouraging co-workers** directly involved with children to apply the skills needed to contribute to each child's development and protection.
5. **Ensuring that all co-workers have the working conditions** needed to contribute to each child's development and protection.
6. **Fostering open and honest discussions** on child abuse in national meetings and workshops in all programmes and facilities amongst all stakeholders.
7. **Putting in place fair, secure and transparent reporting channels** in all types of programmes that guarantee the right of stakeholders (children, parents, staff) to be heard.
8. **forming an active network of protection** so that all children and adults in our organisation are safe and protected. Within and across all member associations, co-workers strive together for the protection of children.



What you should know

- All SOS co workers, associates and partner are **obliged to report** any child safeguarding **incident or concern without delay** to a child protection focal person or relevant senior co worker.
- Consider **any safety risk for children**, witnesses or reporters. If there are reasons to believe that children or witnesses may be harmed. If the incident is reported at programme level, then report it at next level up, eg. National office or regional office.
- Remember your **role is not to investigate a CS incident**. When you report an incident include all your notes of any information you think might be useful in following up an incident. When u report an incident, include all your notes or any other additional documents, recording or photograph you have received.
- Every reported case is **registered and assessed**; based on the assessment results further steps are taken.



Features/Implication of CPP for Organisation

Awareness

**breaking the
silence and
taboo**

Developing and
maintaining an open and
responsive culture in SOS

Awareness raising for
child protection in the
communities we work
with and strengthen
positive parenting skills

Children and adults have
regular opportunities to
discuss child protection

Everyone in SOS
understands child
abuse and its
implications

Prevention

**creating and maintaining a
safe environment**

Highest standards of selection
and recruitment procedures

Adequate trainings for co-
workers and commitment to
the SOS code of conduct

Empowerment of children to be
active agents for their own and
their peers protection

Adequate working conditions to
enable co-workers to keeping
children safe

Reporting

**taking all concerns
seriously**

Child protection
teams in every
programme and
on national level

Safe and fair
reporting channels
are available and
accessible for
children

Importance of
confidentiality to
protect children
from further harm

Those who report
a concern are safe
and protected

Responding

**for the best interest of the
children involved**

All reported cases
are documented
and written records
stored safely

Counselling and support for
healing measures for all
affected persons

There is always a response
according to the nature and
gravity of the offence

Clear leadership in internal
investigation, reporting to
welfare authorities and/or
police, handling media
attention



You have rights – and
this includes the right
to say 'No'.

We listen to you and
take you seriously.

Violence is not
allowed.



You are a
stakeholder,
too.

We listen to
you and take
you
seriously

Support your
brothers and
sisters –
make them
aware of
their rights



Love and affection is essential for building long-lasting and stable relationships in an SOS family – embracing or hugging a child is no abuse!

You get support in **positive parenting**

You are not alone
concerning child-to-child abuse.



- **You are role models** and are listened to. *You have support in developing positive and participatory discipline processes.*
- **Listen to children:** *pay attention to possible signs of abuse; take your responsibility and be there for them when they need your support!*



You play an important role in making sure all stakeholders are involved and the child's view is respected.

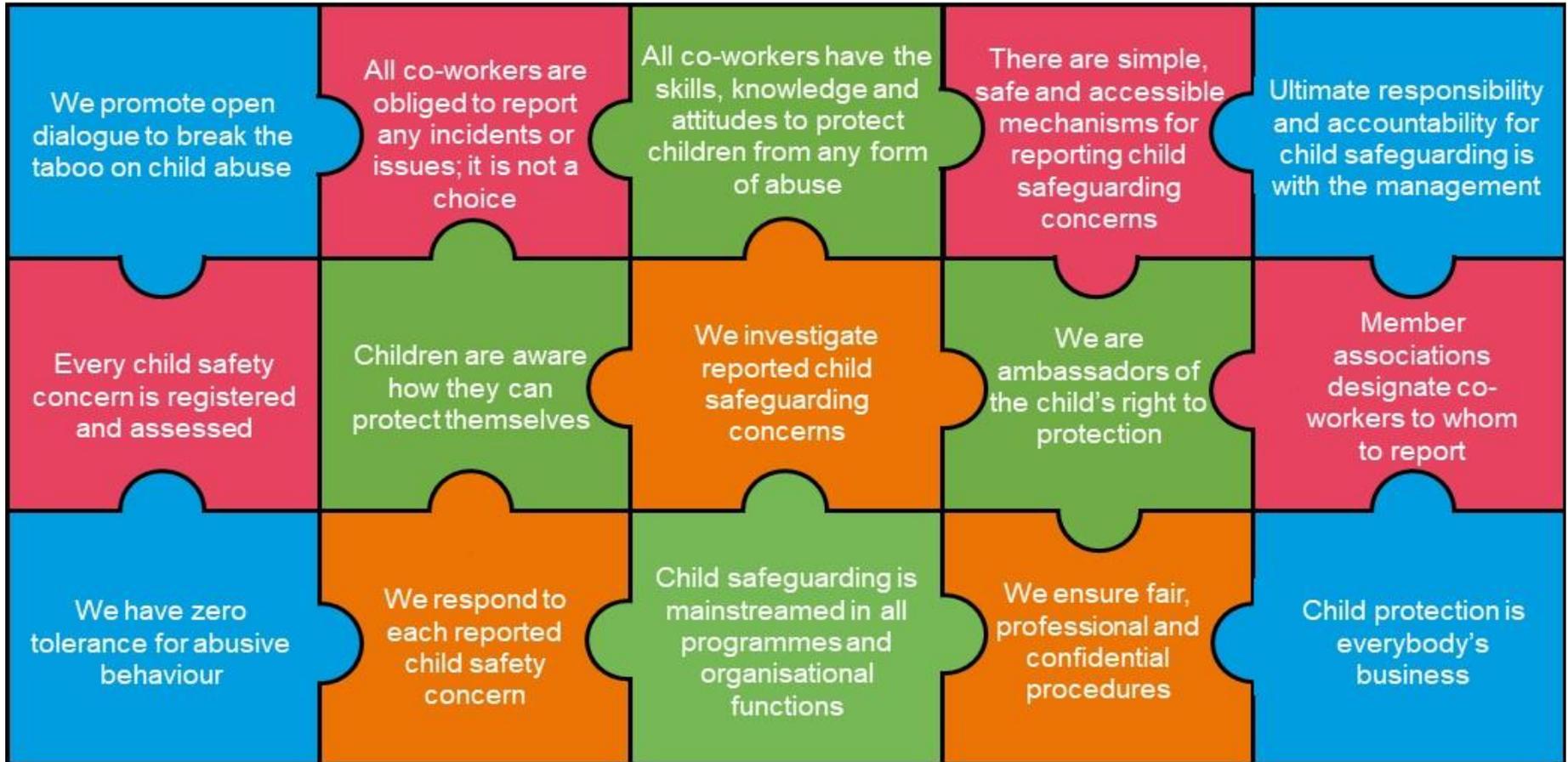
You have the right to favour a child's well-being over information or fundraising needs.



Key Child Safeguarding Messages



We create a safe environment for children in all our programmes



Awareness



Prevention



Reporting



Responding



Child friendly ways of creating awareness regarding Child abuse and our policy



I am aware of
good touches
and bad
touches.



I am aware that if anyone
tries to take me
somewhere or
follows me, I
should get away
quickly and
shout "this
person is not my
father, mother,
or guardian" or
"this person is
trying to take me
away".



When someone is
abusive towards a
friend of mine or
another little girl or
boy, I should tell my
parents or a trusted
adult.



I can say no,
if someone tries
to touch me, or
treats me in a
way that makes
me feel scared,
uncomfortable
or confused.



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A photograph of a handmade card with the words "Thank you!" written in black cursive. The card is made of light-colored paper and has a hole on the left side with a piece of twine or string. It is placed on a wooden surface, surrounded by dried leaves and twigs. The entire image has a blue color cast.

Thank
you!