



Children Asking

APPENDIX III: Code of Conduct

All project partner staff, Children Asking volunteers and third parties involved with Children Asking projects must follow these rules to prevent, stop and report any and all abuse to children in Children Asking projects.

Definition: For the purposes of this policy and report procedure, children are every human being below the age of 18 years, unless under the law applicable to the child, adulthood is attained earlier. In case the local law lacks clarity on the subject or if the age is unreasonably low, the age of adulthood lies at 18.

Do's:

1. Know the code of conduct.
2. Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability or other status.
3. Be aware of children's vulnerability – generally, the children in projects with Children Asking are extra vulnerable or already a victim – to being abused and be aware of your position.
4. Be aware of situations that may present risks (for example being alone with children at therapy session, take film/photo or interview for work purpose/reporting). You may only proceed if the situation is within the boundaries of this policy and after obtaining clearance from management and the child.
5. Plan and organize the work, workplace or visit to manage risks.
6. As far as possible be visible in working with children or visiting children.
7. Participate in achieving a culture of openness to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed.
8. Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.
9. Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns.
10. Empower children - discuss with them their rights -, inform them about what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.
11. Report concerns or incidents of child abuse to the designated persons and authorities (*see report procedure child abuse*).

Do not's:

1. Do not develop physical or sexual relationships with children or one that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
2. Do not act in ways that may be abusive, exploitative, physically or emotionally harmful or act in ways which places a child at risk of this.
3. Do not spend time alone with children away from others including taking a child away from the



Children Asking

project alone or having meetings alone. If privacy is needed, other staff member(s) must be aware and a door must be left open.

4. Do not condone, or participate in, behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
5. Do not behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate (for example fondle, hold, hug, kiss or touch children in a culturally insensitive way) or behave sexually. Do not sleep in the same room or bed as the children.
6. Do not use corporal punishment or otherwise physically assault children.
7. Do not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
8. Do not discriminate against, show unfounded differential treatment to, or favour particular children.
9. Do not let children do domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their education, or which places them at risk of injury.
10. Do not allow a child to be systematically neglected and do not fail to protect a child from any harm that you are aware of.
11. Do not abandon your professional distance by taking on a personal caring role such as by becoming a personal donor or a godfather.

Attention: Although many situations that can cause harm have been covered, above mentioned list will never be an exhaustive list. The paramount principle is to consider the best interest of the child. When in doubt, contact a manager or other responsible staff.

About photographs, video/film, other images and messages :

1. Obtain consent of the child and her/his parents or caretakers before taking any photographs or film etc.
2. Do not make promises to the child in return for images.
3. Take images of children that are dignified and respectful and that do not present them as victims, vulnerable or submissive.
4. Ensure that images could not be interpreted as sexual or condone any other situation of abuse.
5. Protect the safety and privacy of children and their families by not using identifiable images in the media or internet, or using them in any way which reveals their location.
6. The images and messages may only be used with the consent of Children Asking.
7. Journalist, reporters, photographers, filmmakers and other media/marketing professionals must also - besides this code of conduct – follow the Children Asking guidelines for ethical reporting on children.



Children Asking

Report procedure child abuse

If you are concerned about the safety and welfare of a child, please report immediately to your own management or to a volunteer of Children Asking. You can use a Children Asking reporting form available from your employer or www.wingsofsupport.org

Act immediately, because a child may be at risk of serious harm if you don't.

The contact in the organization of Children Asking where concerns or incidents of child abuse must be reported is:

* Board of Directors of Children Asking.

Het tasveld 9

3342 GT Hendrik Ido Ambacht

info@childrenasking.org



Children Asking

APPENDIX IV: Child Protection Policy

Children Asking is an organization that works for children's rights and equitable development. It gives aid to children that are in, or at risk of becoming involved in abusive, exploitative and dangerous situations. Children Asking works through its projects and those of its project partners. In most projects, adults are in direct contact with children.

The standard for children's rights and protection against harm is given by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention demands that the best interest of the child is the principle for any action (article 3). According to the Convention, child abuse can be physical, emotional and sexual and also include neglect, exploitation and harassment.

Children Asking recognizes that child abuse can occur in all societies, in all cultures and organizations. It is pertinent that abuse by anyone is prevented or that it stops as soon as possible. Children Asking has developed a child protection policy with a Code of conduct to serve as minimum standards within its projects, as a measure to promote well-being and safety for the optimal development of children. The Code of conduct gives clarity on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the company of children.

The child protection policy of Children Asking and the Code of conduct Child protection:

- * defines expectations in dealing with issues of child protection – providing guidance to staff and third parties;
- * is a starting point for an open approach to promoting the well-being of children within the projects of Children Asking partners;
- * is based on concepts from the Child Rights Convention (1989): taking the best interest of the child as the basis for all behaviour, promoting development of the child and preventing harm;
- * is part of the labour contract: not acting in accordance with it is reason for dismissal.
- * forms part of the donor agreement and adherence is a prerequisite for financial support.

Children Asking considers child abuse unacceptable (zero tolerance) in all circumstances and is committed to ensure that in all its activities and those of its partners, all necessary steps are taken to protect the rights of children and to ensure their well-being. The code of conduct and the principles underlying it, are to be respected by all Children Asking volunteers, all project partner staff and those visiting projects for whatever reasons, including volunteer work, rendering any type of service or advice, reporting or journalism, and other representatives.

The child protection policy takes into account local concepts of normal adult-child interaction, culture, religion and local law except in cases where these are deemed to be contrary to the best interest of the child.

Children Asking and this child protection policy aims to raise awareness of child abuse: to prevent, denounce and react to child abuse through: effective recruitment procedures, training staff on child protection matters and by developing an open and informed culture within the organization.



Children Asking

Wings of Support cannot accept responsibility of abuse of a child participating in a program of a project partner, other than informing and helping the management of the project partner to prevent and deal with child abuse.

1. Child abuse

The universal categories of child abuse (see The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child article 19) are defined as follows and act as a reference for local environments;

* *Sexual abuse*

Actual or threatened sexual exploitation of a child including all forms of sexual activity such as rape, incest and pornography.

* *Physical injury*

Actual or likely physical injury to any child or a failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

* *Neglect*

The failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger including cold or starvation, failure to carry out important aspects of care resulting in the impairment of the child's health or development.



Children Asking

* *Emotional abuse*

Persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves emotional ill-treatment.

* *Exploitation*

Using a child for economic purposes, or performing work that may be hazardous or that interferes with the child's development. This includes educational programs that are focused on production rather than the acquisition of skills, asking children to perform excessive chores and tasks, asking children under the minimum labour age to perform paid labour, and keeping a child out of an educational facility to perform other tasks.

2. How we ensure child protection in our work

Children Asking aims to create a protective environment for children in all areas of its work by raising awareness, empowering children, training staff in the prevention of child abuse and recognizing the signs of child abuse and reporting and dealing with child abuse.

A. Awareness raising and preventing.

Children Asking will ensure that all volunteers, project partners and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and child exploitation, the risks to children and the role and responsibility of volunteers, project partners and others in the prevention of child abuse. To this effect volunteers and project partners will be required to know the child protection policy and Code of conduct and adhere to it.

Children Asking stimulates an open discussion about child protection concerns; contacts for questions or concerns are appointed in the organization. We will also ask our local partners to sign our Code of Conduct for Child Protection or use their own as long as it respects the standards laid down in this child protection policy. Recruitment and selection procedures for staff or volunteers will include questions and checks on suitability for working with children, the applicant's criminal record (national laws allowing) and checking job history and references.

Staff and project partners are encouraged to share any concerns they have concerning child safety and development with responsible management.

B. Reporting, protection and responding.

Children Asking will ensure that staff, project partners and others know what step to take when concerns arise regarding the safety of a child. There are different reporting levels:

a) At the level of Children Asking

For projects implemented by Children Asking herself (so-called own projects) the reporting procedure of Children Asking should be followed as presented in the 'Children Asking reporting concerns framework'.

Volunteers of Children Asking and the management of the project partner should respect the following reporting principles:

- * Always take any concern raised seriously.
- * Take steps to ensure the protection of the child who is the subject of the concern.
- * Support children, staff or others who raise the concern.



Children Asking

* Act appropriately and effectively. Communicate that staff and others should not start an investigation or question anyone after an allegation or concern has been raised. This is the job of the management or the local authorities. You should just record the facts and report these to the management.

* Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of the child.

* Reports and information are treated with confidentiality.

b) At the level of the project partners

When child abuse occurs in a project implemented through a project partner Children Asking, the reporting procedures of the project partner should be followed. The management of the project partner should always inform Children Asking about the child abuse and the steps that the management of the project partner has taken to deal with it.

If for some reason, reporting to the management of the project partner is not possible, concerns can also directly be reported to Children Asking (see procedure A).



Children Asking

3. Role of Board of Children Asking

The board of Children Asking in the Netherlands and our partners in the region are responsible for the implementation of the policy in the organization and good practice. All individuals, whatever their status and role, who come into contact with children must be fully informed about this policy and its accompanying procedures. Records of training of staff should be filed and compiled for subsequent monitoring purposes and used to partly determine the effectiveness of policy implementation during evaluation.

Where concerns of child abuse arise, Children Asking and the management of the project partners take a leading role in protecting the child, ensuring correct reporting and the correct course of action. In all cases the 'best interest of the child' is paramount.

Staff should be informed that in the event of behaviour incompatible with the Child Protection Policy of Children Asking, the organization would take measures against them. These measures can be administrative (for example a press release) and/or legal.

If a project partner refuses a child protection policy, the contract with that project partner should be terminated. For new project partners, accepting and following a child protection policy is necessary to obtain a contract with Children Asking. The organization also reserves the right of termination the labour contract or other contracts.

São Paulo 8 juli 2013