

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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NADÁCIA PRE  SLOVENSKA

CHILDREN OF SLOVAKIA FOUNDATION

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Background

Child abuse is a global phenomenon. It occurs in all countries and in all societies. It involves the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and adolescents. It is almost always preventable. Children and adolescents can be potentially subjected to exploitation, abuse, violence and neglect in families, communities, institutions, organisations, private places, public places, by various

circumstances, by variety of people, including delegates, support staff, volunteers etc.). In order to address and protect children and adolescents from potential abuse and exploitation during their involvement with Children of Slovakia Foundation this Child protection policy has been developed.

1. Introduction

Children of Slovakia Foundation (CSF) is a grant-making, educational and advocacy foundation promoting long-term and comprehensive solutions towards Slovak society in the area of the needs and rights of children and young people. Since 1995, CSF provides:

- a) long-term assistance to and empowerment of (life skills development, internet security, active citizenship, employment; participation) all groups of children and young people, including those from vulnerable groups, up to 30 year of age in Slovakia,
- b) empowerment of adults in offering respectful and supportive approach to children and young people (parents, teachers, NGOs representatives, active individuals, civil servants, media, etc.),
- c) support (financial, capacity building, research, networking, advocacy, etc.) to organisations and institutions (NGOs, schools, foster homes, government, hospitals, etc.) working with children and young people in the area of innovative methods, services, policies and approaches addressing the needs of children and young people.

The relevance of all activities is based on both own and external systematic monitoring of the current trends in society and the new emerging needs of the target groups. CSF is a reliable partner for communities, municipalities, the private sector, national and local governments, domestic and foreign donors, interconnecting them all with the civil society. CSF is active on both national and international levels.

The CSF's advocacy activities reaches various levels and are based on working in cooperation with:

- a) municipalities on creating children and young people friendly communities (with the direct involvement of children and young people)
- b) NGOs and other public service providers to ensure quality work with children and young people
- c) general public and decision makers to whom the impact of working with children and young people and the need for its greater recognition and support are presented

- d) the judicial system representatives and service providers to ensure child friendly justice and legal proceedings respecting the rights of the child

Child protection policy of Children of Slovakia Foundation is based on Child protection policy designed by Eurochild and Keeping Children Safe Coalition.

CSF's work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe that child protection is crucial to ensuring that children under the age of 18 have the rights, information and space in which they can express their views and communicate effectively with other children and adults. Children can only become empowered agents of change to improve their lives and that of their families and communities if they are safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind, be it physical, sexual, emotional or neglect.

1.1 CSF's core child protection principles and values

This Child protection policy deals with the protection of children and adolescents as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UN CRC should be taken holistically, providing a comprehensive framework for the protection, provision and participation of all children. All children and adolescents involved in the activities, programmes implemented and/or supported by CSF, have the right:

- to have their health, safety and well-being, and their best interests considered as top priority
- to have their development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential
- to be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity
- to be listened to and to have their views given careful consideration
- to be encouraged and helped to participate in decisions which affect them, including child protection decisions

Non-negotiable duty

CSF believes that NGOs working for children's rights have an absolute duty to protect children and young people from abuse, mistreatment and exploitation from within organisations intended for their benefit. This duty is imperative and non-negotiable. Without adequate standards and mechanisms for protection in place, an organisation is not only failing in its primary duty of care, but may also be negligently or recklessly fostering an environment of abuse.

Open environment

CSF believes that without proper and explicit procedures in place, NGOs are extremely vulnerable to false allegations of child abuse. Furthermore, organisations with weak communication structures run the risk of being infiltrated by persons, such as paedophiles, who seek to abuse children without being brought into the open.

CSF therefore strives to:

- a) Create an environment where issues of child protection are discussed openly and are understood between children and adults;
- b) Promote open lines of communication both internally and externally (with its partners) to improve awareness and implementation of child protection policies and practices;
- c) Create a framework to deal openly, consistently and fairly with allegations concerning both direct and indirect abuse.

Implementation and accountability

This Child Protection Policy is developed to ensure the highest standards of professional behaviour and personal practice to ensure no harm occurs in any situation to children and adolescents during their involvement in CSF activities, projects and programmes. It therefore includes measures regarding recruitment procedures, review of management structures, creation of space for children to speak out, staff training, and development of transparent protocols. The Child Protection Policy is supported by clear guidelines on how it needs to be implemented by organisations participating and supporting children in CSF activities, projects and programmes.

Special procedures and checklists are part of the Child Protection Policy, including reporting procedures and actions following behaviour, which is not in compliance with the child protection standards.

These principles underpin all of the following standards set out in this document.

1.2 Definitions

Child

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Child Protection

Child protection is a broad term to describe philosophies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies to CSFs duty to make sure that its staff, operations and programmes do no harm children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the activities and programmes in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Direct contact with children

Being in the physical presence of a child/children in the context of CSF's work, whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long-term. This could involve various activities of formal, non-formal and informal education nature, leisure time activities with children etc. as well as attending meetings and conferences at which children are present or working with child and youth volunteers.

Indirect contact with children

- a) Having access to information on children in the context of CSF's work, such as children's names, locations (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies.
- b) Providing funding for organisations that work 'directly' with children. Although indirectly, this nonetheless has an impact on children, and therefore confers upon the donor organisation responsibility of child protection issues.

Policy

A statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that the organisation is taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously.

1.3 What is child abuse and exploitation?

According to the World Health Organisation, "child abuse" or "maltreatment" constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power'.

Our understanding of child abuse and exploitation includes, but it is not limited to:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as 'fictitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy'.

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed in children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse of children can also be defined as contacts or interactions between a child and an older or more knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling or person in a position of authority, such as a parent or caretaker) when the child is being used as an object of gratification for an older child's or adult's sexual needs. These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, trickery, bribes, threats or pressure. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children comprises sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons. The child is treated as sexual object and as a commercial object. The commercial sexual exploitation of children constitutes a form of coercion and violence against children, and

amounts to forced labour and a contemporary form of slavery.

Child pornography means any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes. This can include photographs, negatives, slides, magazines, books, drawings, movies, videotapes and computer disks or files. Generally speaking there are two categories of pornography: soft-core which is not sexually explicit but involves naked and seductive images of children and hard core which relates to images of children engaged in sexual activity and use of children in the production of pornography is sexual exploitation.

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's physical or cognitive development.

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

Commercial exploitation means exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of cruelty. Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are also abusive and can harm a child, physically and emotionally.

2. The need for a child protection policy

All organisations and professionals working or in contact with children are obliged to ensure their operations are 'child safe' and therefore need to have a Child protection policy.

CSF needs a child protection policy because:

Organisation staff are protected: All children have a right to freedom from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation, based on the UNCRC. It is therefore the responsibility of CSF to ensure that all its activities, policies, projects and programmes are 'child safe'. This means that staff do not represent a risk to children and that programmes, policies and practices can be designed and developed in ways that promote the protection of children.

Children are protected: Some children are in particular vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and ill-treatment at the hands of carers, project workers, and those with access to their personal information. Many children growing up

in vulnerable circumstances have already experienced ruptured relationships of trust or abuse of an adult-child relationship in the form of physical, psychological or sexual abuse.

The organisation and its reputation is protected: Organisations working with vulnerable children have been, are and will continue to be vulnerable to abuse until the issues are brought into the open. Organisations without protection policies, guidelines and systems are more vulnerable to false or malicious accusations of abuse. Without a proper child protection policy and child protection standards in place, allegations of abuse, whether founded or unfounded, can destroy an organisation's reputation. This will have serious implications for fundraising as well as damaging the reputation of the children's rights NGO sector as a whole.

3. The scope of a child protection policy

CSF's child protection policy applies to:

- a) All staff, Board members, interns and volunteers
- b) All those acting on behalf of CSF, such consultants or trainers
- c) All those adults accompanying children to events and activities organised by CSF
- d) All those who participate in CSF events and meetings involving children, including journalists, sponsors, donors, policy makers, etc.

All the individuals cited above will be expected to read CSF's Child Protection Policy and sign a commitment to adhere to its principles and procedures.

3.1 Awareness

For effective implementation of the Child protection policy, it needs to be understood accurately by all those that the policy applies to. CSF will ensure that all its staff, interns, volunteers, consultants, etc. are informed about this policy and act in accordance with all its provisions, and do no harm children who may come into the contact within or outside their work.

The Child protection policy will be sent to all responsible adults after they have joined CSF. CSF will ensure that a copy of the Policy will be send to all organisations that will organize meetings on behalf of CSF or will travel with children to events organized by CSF. These organisations will be asked to brief their staff working and traveling with the children to CSF events about this Policy, as well as to inform parents, carers and children on their right to be

protected and the reporting mechanisms available.

3.2 CSF's child protection policy with respect to external partners

CSF's Child Protection Policy should apply to all organisations and to external partners when they cooperate with children or children participate in their projects.

If the organisation does not have elaborated child protection policy, they will be asked to sign up to CSF's child protection policy and demonstrate their commitment to develop their own child protection policies and procedures, which reflect the local context and legal framework.

In the event of persistent poor or one extreme practice or abuse within a particular organisation, CSF may decide to terminate cooperation with this organisation.

3.3 Risk Assessments and Safe Programme Design

CSF is committed to designing and delivering programmes that are safe for children. Risk assessments are therefore conducted when designing our projects and activities and safety strategies developed accordingly.

Risk mitigation strategies will be developed, which minimize the risks to children and will be incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes, operations and activities which involve or have impact upon children.

4. CSF's Child Protection Policy

This Policy is developed to ensure the highest standards of professional behavior and personal practice to ensure no harm occurs in any situation to children during their involvement in any activities or projects.

4.1 Staff and Personnel

As a condition for working with CSF, all staff; Board members; interns and volunteers and all those acting on behalf of CSF, such as consultants or trainers are required to undergo the following:

- a) Both acceptance and commitment to our Child protection policy and Code of conduct for working with children by signing a commitment to adhere to the Child protection policy principles and procedures.

The recruitment and appointment process will include:

- Staff, volunteers, interns and consultants are recruited to clear job or role descriptions that include a statement on the position or role's responsibilities to meet the requirements of CSF's child protection policy.
- All recruitment interviews should include a discussion on child safeguarding and protection, the candidate's understanding of this and CSF's commitment.
- Adherence to CSF's Child Protection Policy is a part of CSF employment contracts and service agreements.

- b) Signing a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including spent convictions. CSF job application forms include a question asking for consent to gain information on a person's past convictions/pending disciplinary proceedings.

4.2 Training and Education

Education and training are essential to implement the Child protection policy. This includes:

- a) At the beginning of the induction period (within 3 weeks of taking up the position) of staff/volunteers/interns they will receive an introduction to CSF's Child protection policy and procedures from the Child protection focal person. This will include training on behavior guidelines for those in direct contact with children, and guidance on the acceptable and unacceptable sharing of information on children. Training will also allow staff to be able to identify sources of support for children and their families.
- b) Child safeguarding training will be given to all staff, volunteers and interns, appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

4.3 Behaviour protocols

Any staff, employee, volunteer, intern, management board member, consultant or adviser who has direct contact with children in his/her work will be fully informed of CSF's Code of conduct.

4.4 Management

A Child protection focal person (CPF) will be appointed who will be responsible for:

- Promoting awareness and implementation of the Child protection policy throughout the organisation.
- Monitoring implementation of the Policy and reporting on developments at Team meetings and to the Board.
- The development of child protection training resources are required.
- Maintaining knowledge of best practices and statutory requirements.
- Acting as a source of support and information for staff on safeguarding issues.

The name and contact details of the CPF will clearly be displayed in the CSF office and new staff will be made aware of the role.

The disclosure of personal information about children, including legal cases, will be limited to those employees, interns, volunteers, who need to know. The Management Board will have the overall responsibility to oversee and ensure the Policy's implementation.

Specific procedures and checklists are part of the Child Protection Policy and are referred to in chapters 6 and 7, which are dealing with the implementation strategy for the Child protection policy, including reporting procedures and monitoring and evaluation processes. Safeguarding will be included within the development of projects by CSF.

5. Code of Conduct

CSF is committed to protecting children from abuse and exploitation. It will take all necessary actions to prevent and/or respond to children in such situations. CSF will respond to all reports of actual or alleged abused based on its Child protection policy, irrespective of the nature of the referral, who the allegations are about or who the referrer is or where she/he is from.

This Code of Conduct includes guidance on ethical and proper standards of behavior of adults towards children, and also of children towards other children. It has been developed with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration and should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense. CSF aims for everyone, children and adults, to participate in a safe way in CSF's work and activities.

DO:

- Be aware what constitutes child abuse and exploitation (included in the Child protection policy) and understand its provisions.

- Know signs of abuse and reporting any suspicious observations immediately to the Child protection focal person.
- Ensure that you know who the Child protection focal person at CSF is.
- Respect lines of authority and reporting procedures.
- Respect the basic rights of others by facing fairly, honestly, and tactfully, and by treating people with dignity and respect.
- Treat all children equally; be inclusive and involve all children without discrimination.
- Work actively to ensure the highest levels of respect towards each other.
- Maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct both personally and in others.
- Protect the health, safety and well-being of yourself and others.

- Be aware of high-risk peer situations (e.g. unsupervised mixing of older and younger children and possibilities of discrimination against minors).
- Be aware of potential for peer abuse (e.g. bullying of children).
- Be concerned about the way in which your language, actions, and relationships with children could be perceived.
- Develop special measures/supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children from peer and adult abuse.
- Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.
- Encourage and respect children's voices and views.
- Limit access to and/or not expose children to any inappropriate electronic material.
- At all times respect the confidentiality of children's personal information.
- Obtain written consent from the child and parent/carer when photographing, filming or requesting personal information for activities (see section 7).
- Do not discriminate, shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children. This includes anything that may be considered emotional abuse (e.g. use language that will mentally or emotionally abuse a child or tell a story/show pictures that will mentally or emotionally abuse a child).
- Do not hit or otherwise physically assault participants.
- Do not act in any way that may be abusive or place others at risk of abuse.
- Do not condone violations of this code by others – staff, interns, consultants, etc. Do not be alone with a child in any circumstances that might be questioned by others.
- Do not allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.
- Do not kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way (e.g. do not initiate physical contact, such as holding hands, unless initiated by the child).
- Do not suggest inappropriate behavior or relations of any kind or encourage any crushes by a child.
- Do not take photos, film or request personal information if not required for CSF's activities.
- Do not use inappropriately contact details (including social media accounts) from children out of CSF's programmes.

DON'T:

- Engage in any form of sexual activity with children.
- Avoid any action or behavior that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive. For example, never behave in an inappropriate or sexually provocative manner.
- Never have a child stay overnight in the adult's room or sleep in the same bed (unless prior consent is provided by both the child and his/her parent/guardian).
- Do not perform activities for children that they can do themselves, including dressing, bathing and grooming.

Report any suspicious observations or alleged abuse as well as any circumstances or situations, which may be subject to misinterpretation to the Child protection focal person.

Sections 6.1 and 6.2 describe the consequences for breaching the code of conduct or the child protection policy.

6. Implementation

6.1 Implementation strategy: Reporting Procedures

All staff, volunteers and interns should be alert to signs that may suggest a child is in need of help (see annex 1) .

Deciding whether to report can be a very difficult responsibility. The reporting procedure is made widely available to ensure that everyone is clear what steps to take regarding the safety of children and other witnesses.

All witnessed, suspected or alleged violations of CSF's

Child protection policy will be immediately reported to the Child protection focal person (CPF) – using the safeguarding reporting form (Annex 2). The guiding principle here is that the safety of the child is always the most important consideration. These records will be stored securely with access limited to the CPF or the Executive director a report must be made to the nominated Board member.

The first stage is to decide whether the concerns are internal to the organisation or relate to an external situation.

When a child protection/safeguarding concern is brought

to your attention – ACT:

Act on your concerns. If in doubt, speak out.

Child-centred. The protection of children is the most important consideration.

Time counts. Ensure timely, effective, confidential and appropriate responses to child safeguarding issues.

If the concern is internal – regarding the behavior of staff, volunteers, interns you have to consider whether you need to report to the local/national authorities. If not, the internal safeguarding procedure needs to be applied. If yes, you have to report to the designated authorities and follow-up on action taken by the authorities and decide on further response, record case and action taken.

If the concern is external - meaning that there is concern regarding abuse outside the organisation, the same procedure as for internal concerns is applied.

The CPF will act on the concerns or allegations in a confidential manner in accordance with the standardized process developed by Eurochild in the best interests of the child, irrespective of the nature of the referral, who the allegations are about or who the referrer is or where she/he is from. The CPF will take appropriate action to protect the child/children in question from further harm and during and following an incident or allegation. An assessment of the specific kind of support and assistance that is needed by the child(ren) affected by the incident will be immediately offered. This may also involve arranging a medical assessment. The relevant contact details for child protection services, local services department, policy,

emergency medial help and help lines will also be readily available and easily accessible (see Annex 4 with key contacts information). The CPF will be responsible to contact the child's family (or guardian) and inform them about the incident and assistance provided. A safeguarding report (Annex 2) must be compiled to document details of the incident. The "best interests of the child" must be considered throughout the process.

At meetings and activities where children are directly involved, children will be informed about CSF's safeguarding policy, code of conduct, the existence of the Child protection focal person and complaints mechanism in a child-friendly manner.

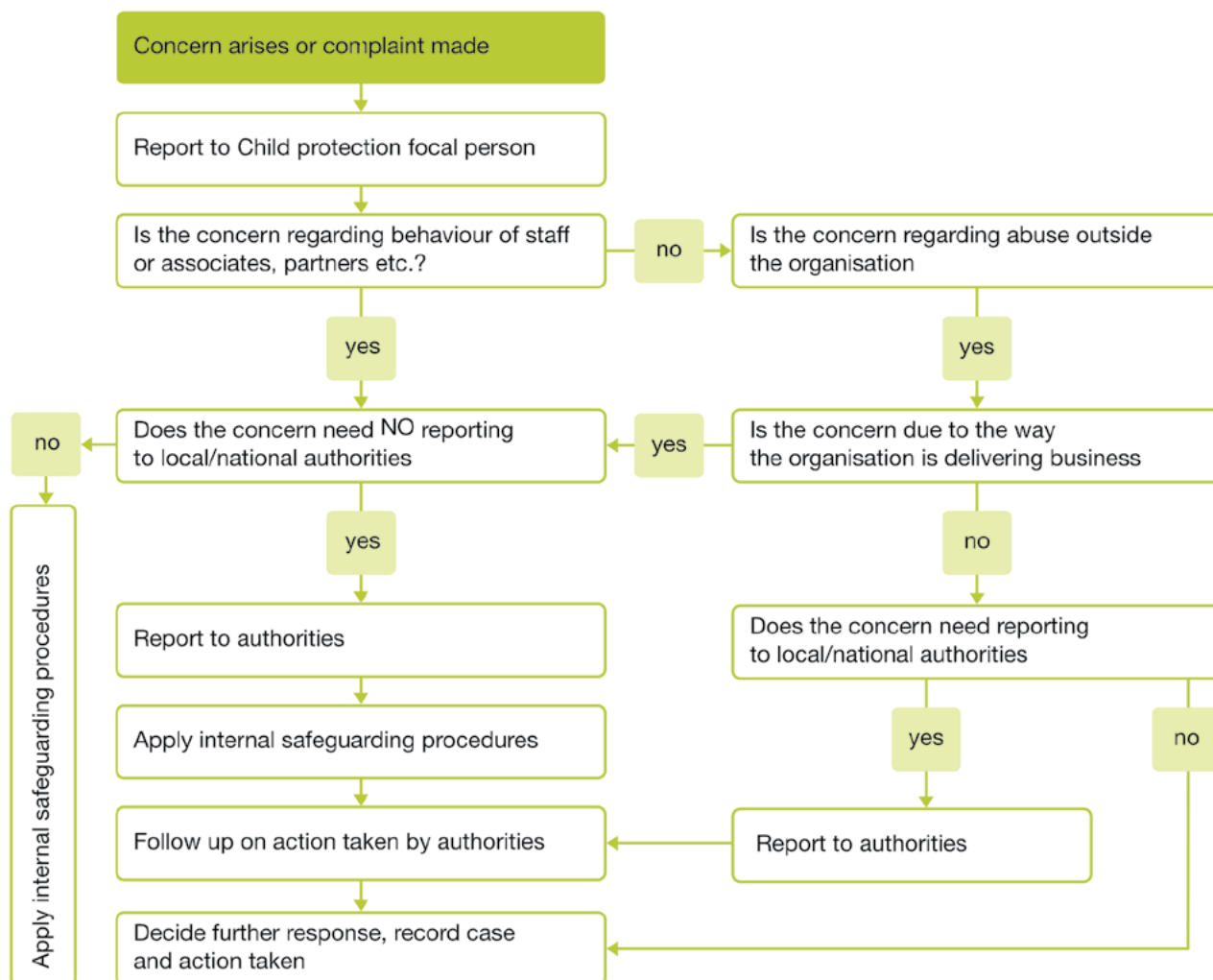
6.2 Implementation strategy: The internal safeguarding procedure

CSF will immediately suspend any employee, volunteer, intern, board member, consultant, adviser who is alleged to have violated the Child Protection Policy, pending the outcome of the investigation. CSF reserves the right to take any disciplinary action against any of the above who have been proven guilty in an investigation, which may include reporting the incident to the police.

The investigation completed by the Executive director will be submitted to the Nominated Board member who will come to a decision about action to be taken. Decisions from any investigation will be confirmed in writing to the individual concerned.

Acts of a criminal nature will be referred to the police.

6.3 Infographic: Reporting procedure



7. Communication and Media Guidelines

This chapter of the Child protection policy sets out the principles for CSF employs when communicating externally about our work and the work of our partners. It contains general principles for ensuring children are kept safe at all times, as well as specific guidelines which must be followed by CSF staff as well as photographers, film crews and journalists visiting CSF events and activities. Different countries may have specific laws, protocols or cultural norms, which should be understood and adhered to as appropriate. All child protection measures in the Child protection policy are equally applicable in media and communication activities by CSF, including the use of social media.

In order to make sure that all children are protected in all situations it is important to obtain written consent of the parent/carer or legal guardian of children that clearly states if they agree that photos or statements of children

can be publicly used or not. (Annex 3 includes a specific media consent form).

7.1. Principles

The rights and dignity of the child must be respected at all times and the best interests of the child maintained as the paramount concern of our communications. CSF will never use discriminatory or degrading language. This section is providing guidelines on the use of images, films and stories of children for media and communication purposes to ensure data protection and to protect children themselves. Abusers have sometimes targeted children whose pictures they have seen in media and communication material.

In CSF communications about children, the following prin-

principles will apply:

Dignity: The child's dignity must be preserved at all times. Languages must not degrade, victimize or shame the child. In images, children should always be dressed appropriately and should never be depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative.

Accuracy: The portrayal of children must not be manipulated or sensationalized in any way. Images and stories should provide a balanced depiction of the child's life and circumstances, balancing negatives with empowering images or showing the progress that children are making. Communications should avoid making generalisations, which do not accurately reflect the nature of the situation and pictures should not be taken and used out of context.

Privacy: Any information that could be used to identify a child or put them at risk will not be used. CSF will ensure that:

- a) Only use first names of children: be careful not to reveal details about the place where they live, their school and other information that could lead to their place of residence. If needed for child safeguarding, the names of children will be changed.
- b) Information about a child/children's life and photographs of children (including information stored on the computer) will be kept in secure files. Access to these should be limited to those that need to use them during the course of their work.
- c) The recorded images should focus on an activity and, where possible, feature groups of children rather than individuals.

CSF is committed to represent a broad range of children – boys and girls, of various ages, abilities and ethnic groups in its publications, videos. CSF will ensure diversity of children to be presented in its communication material, reflecting the countries in which CSF works.

Complaints procedure: Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images should be reported and recorded like any other child protection concern (see chapter 6).

7.2 Informed Consent

Informed consent must always be sought before taking any photos, videos, or requesting personal information about children's lives that may then be used in CSF materials. Informed consent means that children are told how CSF may use the information or image/film and that they are under no obligation to agree to its use. They should also be re-assured that locations and other identifying information that might to the location of residence of children will be changed. They will need to be asked whether they give consent that their first name is shared with the information or image/film.

Consent must be obtained by completing and signing the media consent form (included in the consent forms in Annex 3). Consent is also required from the child's parent/carer or guardian, who must countersign the form or, where this is not possible, from the organisation working

with them. The organisations working with the children should lead on asking for consent of children and families, as they may feel more comfortable to refuse consent when asked by someone they already know and trust.

The media consent forms and other consent forms will be kept on the child's file by CSF.

Obtaining prior written consent, does not mean that there is no requirement to obtain verbal consent at the time of taking photographs/video/interviews.

7.3 Interviewing Children

Interviewing children requires skills and certain basic principles should be followed to ensure their dignity and their rights are respected.

Informed consent: In relation to interviews, informed consent includes explaining what subjects are likely to be covered in the interview and clarifying the child's right to withdraw their consent at any point. The interviewer should review the child's understanding of consent at the start of the interview.

Provision of support: There should be someone else present during the interview, who the child is familiar with. Wherever possible, the child should be given a choice regarding who supports him/her during the interview.

Respecting the right to say No: Be clear before you start the interview that the child only has to talk if they are comfortable doing so, and they can stop and withdraw their consent at any point.

Gender: Consider the different needs of boys and girls and whether they would be more comfortable to talk to a man or a woman. Gender must be considered when deciding what topics may be discussed.

Respecting the right to information: If you are going to take notes, or record the interview in another way, you must explain this to the child and verbally ask their permission to do so.

7.4 Visits by Photographers, Films Crews, Journalists and Others

Special care must be taken when organizing visits for external photographers, filming crews, journalists or visitors within the scope of CSF projects, activities and publications:

- a) Journalists, photographers/film crews must be fully briefed about CSF's child protection policy before they meet the children, who will be interviewed, photographed or filmed. They sign their commitment to adhere to this policy.
- b) Make sure that photographers and filmmakers are not allowed to spend time with or have access to children without supervision. They have to be accompanied by CSF staff at all times.
- c) Children, parents and guardians must be informed

about how the film, photograph or story will be used and consent for this obtained.

- d) Copies of images, film and story should be sent to the organisation to be passed on to the children.
- e) In order to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the children, CSF must be notified as to how the photographer or film maker intends to use the

images or stories. CSF reserves the right to refuse use if it is felt that, in doing so we are not acting in accordance with our child protection policy and our media and communication principles.

- f) If an image or any material is to be used by another organisation, it must be credited to CSF/Photographer's Name © with an appropriate caption.

8. Accountability: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Child Protection Policy

The aim of monitoring and evaluating the Child Protection Policy is to learn from practical case experiences, which will contribute to inform policy reviews and changes to the Child Protection Policy.

CSF will regularly monitor the implementation of its Child protection policy and procedures. Progress, performance and lessons learned are reported by the Child protection focal person to the Board annually. Monitoring and evaluation will be done by checking whether the standards from the Child protection policy are implemented and whether safeguards are working. This will be done by carrying out a survey among CSF staff, interns and volunteers on how

the standards from the Child protection policy are being met, how effective they are and what needs to be improved.

Next to the overall monitoring and evaluation of the Child protection policy, reactive monitoring will take place, after incidences have occurred, which will contribute to a learning process for CSF and if necessary changes to the Child protection policy or reporting procedures.

Every three years an internal review of the policy will be carried out and its results will be approved by the Management Board.

Bratislava, 12 February 2018



Ondrej Gallo, director

Annex 1: Statement of Commitment to CSF Child protection policy

I, , have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child protection policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing and promoting the child protection policies, procedures and practices contained within this document while working or associated with CSF.

I further understand that adherence to CSF's Child Protection Policy will involve the following:

- undergoing a check for criminal convictions related to working with children;
- signing a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent';
- declaring any previous investigations or allegations made against me with respect to child protection issues;
- providing two character references.

..... (Name)

..... (Job title/role)

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

Character References

Please provide the name, address and contact details of two character references you have known for no less than 2 years, excluding family members:

Referee Name:

Address:

Contact Number:

E-mail:

Referee Name:

Address:

Contact Number:

E-mail:

Declaration of Criminal Convictions

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

YES NO

If yes, please provide details of all criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent', and declare any previous investigations or allegations made against you. These will be kept confidential by the designated Child protection focal person at CSF, who will assess whether they pose any risk or are not in conformity with CSF's Child Protection Policy.

Annex 2: Recognising Signs of Abuse

Recognising indications of potential abuse is complex and there is no simple checklist, which allows easy recognition. There are potential warning signs that you can be alert to but they should be assessed with care. It should not be automatically assumed that abuse is occurring. Equally, however, it is important not to dismiss your concerns or ignore any signs of abuse – these should be discussed with the CPF as soon as possible to help decide the most appropriate course of action.

Possible signs of physical abuse:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Unwillingness to participate in physical activities that may involve undressing, e.g. sports
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

Possible signs of neglect:

- Frequent hunger
- Taking scraps of food from bins or plates, or stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness

- Inappropriate clothing, e.g. summer clothes in winter
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or alcohol abuse

Possible signs of emotional abuse:

- Physical, cognitive or emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to situations
- Extreme passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Age inappropriate sexualised behaviour or highly sexualised language
- Bed wetting or soiling
- Anal or genital soreness
- Sleep problems
- Fear of being with adults

- Promiscuity
- Extreme risk taking in adolescents

Possible signs of concern regarding adult behaviour:

- A person in whose presence the behavior of a child significantly changes such as becoming withdrawn, fearful, distressed or agitated
- Asking a child to lie or keep secrets
- Breaches of the organisation's Code of conduct/Behaviour protocols
- Initiating private contact with a child, in person or by e-mail or phone

Annex 3: Safeguarding Report Form

If you have knowledge that a child might be at risk of harm, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child protection concerns must be reported (orally or in writing) directly to the Child protection focal person at CSF preferably within the same working day) – depending on the urgency, you may wish to complete this form before contacting the CPF or you may wish to complete the report afterwards.

Also use this form to report an accident or incident. An accident is an unplanned event that results in an injury or could have resulted in an injury or results in damage to equipment or property or harm to the environment. An incident is an unpleasant or unusual event.

The report should be written and signed only by you to guarantee confidentiality. It should be sent only to the CPF, who will hold it in a safe and secure place and treat it with the strictest confidentiality.

1. About you

Your name:

Your job title:

Organisation you work for:

Nature of your contact with the child:

Contact details: Tel:

E-mail:

2. About the child

Child's name:

Child's gender:

Child's age:

Child's address:

Child's parents/guardians:

Has any treatment been given to the child?

Treatment given by

Taken to hospital: YES NO

If yes, which hospital and how taken

3. About your concern; Details of incident

Was the incident:

- Observed by you
- Suspected
- Disclosed by someone else

If the concern was shared by someone else, please state who and their relationship to the child:

.....
What happened? Give cause (how and why) if known - If you include personal observations please make a distinction between what is a fact and what is opinion or hearsay (e.g. child's emotional state, visible injuries, etc.):

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Did the child/young person or another source say anything to you [if relevant] and how did you respond to him or her: [Do not lead the child. Record actual details]

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date of the alleged incident:

.....

Time of the alleged incident:

.....

Location of the alleged incident:

.....

Name of the alleged perpetrator (if applicable):

.....

Were there any other children/people involved in the alleged incident?

.....

Are any other children at risk of harm?

.....

Action taken by you:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signature: Date:

For completion by the Child Protection Focal person:

Incident/Accident investigated: YES NO

Written investigation report necessary: YES NO

In order to determine the cause of the incident or accident, it may be appropriate to interview parties who were involved. Witness detail, statements, etc. can be added here:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Annex 4: Consent Forms

Personal information and information in cases of emergency

Your name and age:

Your address:

Your phone number:

Your mobile number (if available):

Your email address:

Are you happy to take part in (e.g. meeting/event/etc)?

Please tick Yes or No: YES NO

We want to make sure you feel welcome and comfortable to take part

Do you have any allergies we should know about? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:
Do you have any additional support needs you'd like us to know about (physical or learning disability, mental health issues, low confidence, difficulties with communication, things you find it hard to talk about)? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:
Is there anything extra we can do to make sure that you can come along and participate fully? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:
Are you taking any medication we should know about? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:
Do you have any dietary requirements? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:
If you practice a religion, please tell us if there's anything connected to taking part in the event that we should know about	Details:

In the event of emergency

Contact persons in case of EMERGENCY. It is very important you fill in this section fully

<p>Name 1:</p> <p>Relationship to you:</p> <p>Phone number:</p> <p>Mobile:</p>	<p>Name 2:</p> <p>Relationship to you:.....</p> <p>Phone number:</p> <p>Mobile:</p>
<p>In the event of emergency, do you agree that you can receive hospital or dental treatment, including an anaesthetic?</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Details:</p>
<p>My Consent:</p> <p>Location (where you live):</p>	<p>Signature:</p> <p>Today's date:</p>
<p>Parent/Legal Guardian Consent (if under 18)</p> <p>This child/young person under 18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is allowed to participate in (event) • is allowed to take part in media activities at (event) • has been informed about the (event) goals, the voluntary nature of participation and anonymity in an age-appropriate way • has been informed that they can refuse to participate at any time with no consequences • is allowed to receive appropriate medical attention from a registered practitioner if at any time my child requires urgent medical attention, 	
<p>Full name:</p> <p>Location:</p> <p>Signature:</p>	<p>Relationship to child/young person:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Date:</p>

Media consent form

We want to make sure you feel comfortable to take part in media activities

Children of Slovakia Foundation and its Communications Team are actively promoting

..... (e.g. activities/events/etc). We publish photos

and or statements of participants. In this way we inform the public and decision makers about

..... (event)

Is it okay for you participate in visual documentation during the CSF.....

(event)? If you say it is ok, we might share photos, film, audio, writing or art on our website or social media; in our reports or leaflets; at our events; and/or in the promotion work we do to people who help to support children and adolescents.

Please tick Yes or No:

- Is it ok for us to capture your voice in film, photos, audio, writing and/or art and to share this content in the ways listed above?

Please tick Yes or No: YES NO

- Is it ok if we tell people your first name when we share this content? (you can still take part in (event) even if you don't want us to tell people your name).

Please tick Yes or No: YES you can share my first name NO you cannot share my first name

- Is it ok for you to talk to the press during (event) (including photos, television/video/camera coverage)? All media interviews will be conducted in consultation with and in the presence of your accompanying adult and a CSF staff member. You have a right not to respond to any questions that you do not want to answer.

Please tick Yes or No: YES NO

Signature:

Place:

Date:

Annex 5: Key contacts information

Nadácia pre deti Slovenska / Children of Slovakia Foundation
Heydukova 3
Bratislava
811 08
Slovakia
www.nds.sk
nds@nds.sk
+421 2 5263 6471

Child protection focal person

Peter Lenčo, peter.lenco@nds.sk, 0948 702 667

Director

Ondrej Gallo, ondrej.gallo@nds.sk, 0915 755 749

Appointed Board member

Peter Guráň, peter.guran@nds.sk

Phone Child help line: 116 111 (for free, anonymous, nonstop)

Internet on-line counselling IPčko: www.ipecko.sk (for free, anonymous, nonstop)

National coordination center for dealing with violence against children

Childhood without violence - www.detstvobeznasilia.gov.sk

Website for finding different types of aid by region:

- Institutions for the social protection of children
- Centers for mothers with children
- Crisis centers for children
- Counseling - diagnostics - therapy

Rescue and fire service, police: 112

Rescue service: 150, 112

Police: 158, 112

Fire Department: 155, 112

Mountain rescue service: 18 300