

**DEVELOPMENT
CONSORTIUM**

Driving the change that matters

Child Safeguarding

POLICY TRAINING MANUAL



DEVCONS.ORG



Child Safeguarding Policy



DC is committed to promoting and safeguarding the rights of children including their right to be protected from harmful influences, abuse, and exploitation, and ensuring a safe, happy, serene, and protected environment for every child to grow and develop to realize their full potential. It also ensures the protection of children within the organization by checking everyone's behavior and actions.

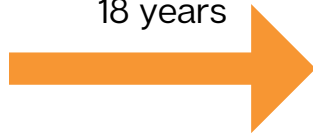
[Child Safeguarding](#)



DEFINITION



under
18 years



**Protection of Children from
Sexual Offences Act, 2012.**

Child - A Child is defined as anyone under 18 years of age as per the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.

Safeguarding - Safeguarding is protecting children from harm, abuse, exploitation, or neglect. It relates to measures taken to promote the well-being of children. It is also about preventing/reducing the risk of harm from abuse or exploitation by supporting people and raising awareness to make informed decisions.

Child Abuse - Child abuse is defined as all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child's health, development or dignity. Child abuse may be a deliberate act or it may be failing to act to prevent harm. Child abuse consists of anything that individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, which harms a child or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

▶ Child Abuse



LEGAL STATUTES

Given below are the legal statutes in India for the protection of child rights:

- 1  The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 (CLPRA)
- 2  The Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection) of Children Act, 2015
- 3  The Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005
- 4  The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- 5  The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
- 6  The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012
- 7  The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013, 2018

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE



PHYSICAL ABUSE

The actual or potential physical harm from interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust.



SEXUAL ABUSE

Child 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. Therefore, any kind of sexual activity with any child, whether with or without the consent of the child, will be considered as an abuse.



NEGLECT AND NEGLIGENT TREATMENT

It 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 caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.



EMOTIONAL ABUSE

It includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure so that the child can reach their full potential in the context of the society in which the child lives. There may also be acts toward the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development. Acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.



EXPLOITATION

Child exploitation is the act of using a minor child for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage.

▶ Types of Child Abuse



DC'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone who works with and engages with DC has a responsibility to ensure that children are protected. DC's CEO has the overall responsibility for safeguarding children at DC, DC's project leads and managers are responsible for leading the approach.

The following responsibilities are mandatory for all those who fall within the scope of the policy:



Never abuse and/or exploit a child or act/behave in any way that places a child at risk of harm.



Respond to a child who may have been abused or exploited in accordance with applicable local office procedures.



Cooperate fully, impartially, and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and allegations.



Contribute to an environment where children are respected and encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights.



Always treat children in a manner that is respectful of their rights. For example; asking permission/consent to take images/pictures for official use.



Any stories or images of children generated as a result of visits or interactions with children should be based on their best interest whilst respecting their integrity and dignity and avoiding exposing them to or placing them at risk of harm.



Never share your personal contact details (this includes email, phone numbers, social media contacts, address, webcam, skype, etc.) with, nor ask for or accept such details from any child.



Never make any unsupervised direct contact or direct/indirect contact (such contact may include but is not limited to visits and any form of communication via social media, emails, letters, etc.) that is intended to establish personal relationships with any child.



Be aware that where concerns exist about the conduct of a team member in relation to child protection and/or where there has been a breach of the Child Protection Policy, this will be investigated under this policy either: by consideration of referral to statutory authorities for criminal investigation as per the law of India; and/or by DC in accordance with disciplinary procedures. This may result in strict disciplinary action against the team member who breaches DC's Child Safeguarding Policy.



Be aware that if a legitimate concern, without any malafide intention about suspected child abuse, is raised, which proves to be unfounded on the investigation, no action will be taken against the person reporting the abuse. However, appropriate sanctions will be applied in cases of false and malicious accusations of child abuse.



Let people give their own accounts as much as possible rather than others speaking on their behalf; highlight the ability of people to take responsibility and action for themselves.



Ensure accurate and balanced portrayal of children, with emphasis on dignity and as much reference as possible to their social, cultural, and economic environment.



Never use degrading, victimizing, or shaming language and images; make inaccurate generalizations; or discrimination of any kind; take pictures out of context (try to provide informative captions).

Responsibilities

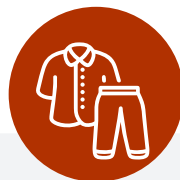


HOW TO CAPTURE PHOTOS AND MEDIA OF CHILDREN SAFELY- PURPOSE

Before using images of children in DC's internal or external media materials one must:



Acquire signed permission of the legal guardian and responsible school authority (if in school) to use images for DC's publicity/fundraising/awareness and keep a record of the informed consent.



Ensure that the children are appropriately clothed in images and not clicked in inappropriate poses.



Ensure that the material to be put on a website or in communications does not have any personal and physical information to identify the location of a child that could put them at risk.

DC'S FRAMEWORK

DC tries to meet its commitment to protecting children from harm, abuse, and neglect through:



REPORTING AND RESPONSE

In case of violation of this policy the following steps need to be taken:



1. Reporting: Reporting the incident to Line Manager with a copy (cc) to **legal@devcons.org** and **grievance@devcons.org**.

Reporting should focus on:

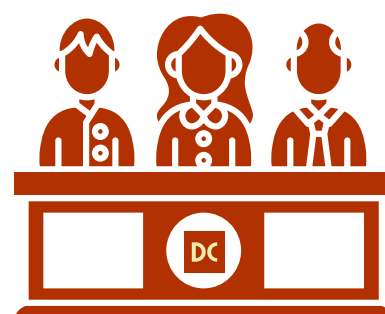
- Evidence that the Child Safeguarding Policy has been violated with relevant dates and details.
- Potential/actual risk to the child/children affected.

2. Investigation: In line with the disciplinary policy specifically the investigators must interview the person making the allegation and any additional witnesses.

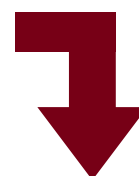
3. Consequences: If allegations are substantiated by the investigators, consequences and/or steps for improvement will be determined by the Grievance Committee.

4. Response: DC shall ensure that the child is removed from any imminent danger immediately by preventing contact with the person involved. DC will ensure that the child is not further questioned or interrogated, without any valid justification and reason, and if such interrogation is done, it shall be done taking complete care of the child's mental health and comfort.

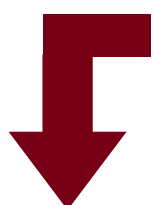
DC will within three days of receiving the complaint:



Conduct a risk assessment of the reported concerns and inform the relevant authorities as appropriate who will ensure that the child is provided care and protection.



Put together all the evidence submitted.



Prepare and communicate an appropriate response e.g. disciplinary process or urgent action if the consequences of breach of Code are severe.

DC may refer to the following external redressal mechanisms as appropriate if required:



Child Welfare Committee (CWC)



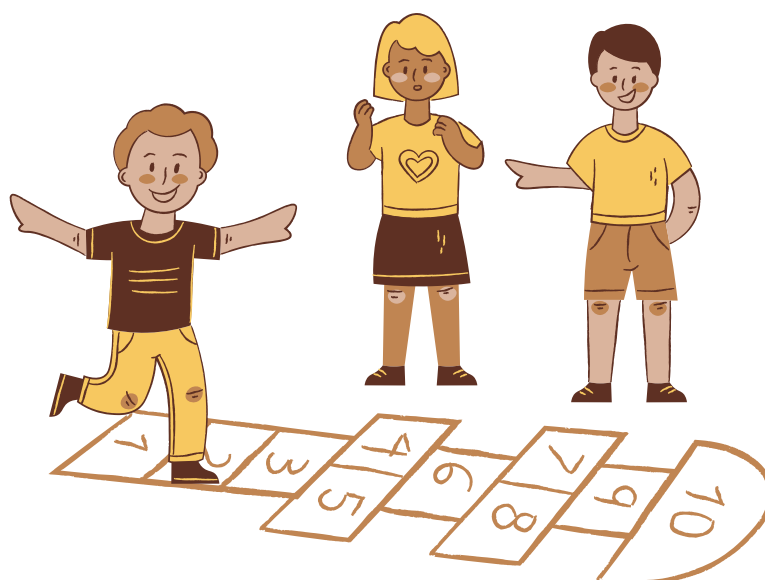
Juvenile Justice Board



Child Helpline (1098).



The Department of Women and Child Development, Delhi.





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Education • Health • Gender
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