

DOCTORS FOR YOU- CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Child Protection is all about protecting children from or against any perceived or real threat danger or risk to their life, their person hood and Childhood. It is about reducing their vulnerability to any kind of harm and ensuring their safety if they are in harmful situations

Keeping the above in mind, DFY commits to protect all the children that it comes in contact with during the various projects it supports, from exploitation, neglect, sexual and physical abuse and therefore has formulated a Child Protection Policy which is intended to keep children safe from possible abuse and exploitation or help them come out of it if they are already facing it.

Definitions

- A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.
- Child abuse is a general term covering all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual assault, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity
- Sexual Abuse - Sexual abuse refers to actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- Neglect - Neglect refers to any act of omission or failure to provide, whether deliberate or otherwise, that compromises the health, security and development of a child.
- Child Labour – Child Labour is defined and regulated as per the Government of India Guidelines.

Scope

Everyone working with children has a basic duty of attention toward them. DFY as an organization and all those working with DFY must recognize the risks to the children they come across with and assume responsibility for keeping them safe. In order to protect the children, all the DFY staff and partners must at all times conduct itself with the highest levels of professionalism and integrity and always act in the best interest of the child. It will be the organization' responsibility that all the staff members and partners will be made aware of this child protection policy.

The DFY Child Protection Policy applies to all the children associated with Staff Members and all the children WE come in contact with through the various programs conducted by or taken part in by us.

Implementation guidelines

- Awareness program - Organize regular awareness program on Child Rights to Staff Members, Volunteers, community leaders, field volunteers
- Special training to Project Staff involved in children related activities on child protection
- Program intervention – Conducting special programs in the community helping children come out with the abuse if they either physical, mental or sexual if any
- Making women/ mothers of the communities aware, in order to make them and their spouse responsible for wellbeing of children and prevention of exploitation, abuse.
- Training children, staff and volunteers on how to identify and prevent child abuse.
- Giving children the opportunity to participate in programs that educate them on their rights, personal-safety techniques and steps they can take in case of a problem.

- Encouraging and supporting children, staff and community members to report cases of abuse.

Expected Conduct – DFY employees

- Treat every Child with empathy and respect, regardless of his/her race, colour, gender, sexuality, language, religion, religious belief, heritage, political/other opinion, national/ethnic/social origin or property/disability/birth/other status.
- Listen to Children and respect their views.
- Ensure that physical contact with a Child is respectful, culturally appropriate and essential to the purpose of your interaction with the Child.
- Establish an atmosphere that fosters the development of Children through your actions and words.
- Always take permission from Children before taking their photos or videos.
- Keep all personal information about Children or their parents/guardians confidential and secure and ensure that such information is dispensed to only those individuals who are legitimately entitled to it.
- Attend all the applicable training sessions and workshops on the Child Protection Policy conducted by the Organization. Ensure you implement the lessons learned from such sessions and workshops.

Compliance Measures

- Capacity building of staff members working with children in projects, to effectively deal with and promote rights of children and to help protect from any kind of exploitations and abuse.
- All personnel –staff, volunteers, interns, consultants, visitors or anyone else connected with DFY will not spend time alone with a child, nor touch the child inappropriately or make child feel insecure.
- Children must not only be heard but also encouraged to voice their concerns and problems. All staff, volunteers and whoever come into contact with children must ensure it. However, it must be watched and suitably guided that their interactions are friendly and decent.

Complaints/ Allegations handling

- The Child Protection Committee will comprise of the following members
 - Head-HR (Presiding Officer)
 - Employee at the level of Program Manager (Member)
 - Board Member of DFY (Member)
- Any complaint regarding incident of misbehavior with child (abuse) in any program implemented in the community shall be reported to the Child Protection Committee constituted under –which will, first of all, facilitate medical care to the victim, if need be; subsequently carry out a thorough investigation or if need be, take help from local police for appropriate legal process and actions.
- Members and Staff involved in the program and of the child protection committee of DFY shall extend moral support to parents and the victim (child)
- Counselling and therapy to be provided to the children affected by the abuse as they, get psychologically upset which is very traumatic, leaves deep scar on mind. Often faced with

conflicting emotions- confusion, fear, anger, shame, depression- result into lack of confidence, low self-esteem. Such upheaval may have serious repercussions later in life.

Policy issues

- DFY will be networking and collaborating with likeminded individuals and institutions for sharing knowledge and experiences (best practices); and support advocacy campaigns on child protection, development and promote children's participation.
- It is committed to keep information about children confidential. Child abuse incidents to be kept as confidential and handled with care and concern. Ensure Information about any such incident is shared with people only if it is deemed necessary by Child Protection monitoring group and ensure names and identities are not disclosed outside or to the media.

POCSO ACT –An Overview

An Overview of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 To deal with child sexual abuse cases, the Government has brought in a special law, namely, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. The Act has come into force with effect from 14th November, 2012 along with the Rules framed thereunder. The POCSO Act, 2012 is a comprehensive law to provide for the protection of children from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, while safeguarding the interests of the child at every stage of the judicial process by incorporating child-friendly mechanisms for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and speedy trial of offences through designated Special Courts.

1. Child Protection & POCSO –DFY guiding Principles

- All children have a right to safe environment
- All children have equal rights to respect, dignity, protection, and freedom from all forms of abuse and exploitation
- Violation of rights of children is never acceptable.
- All children have a right to express their opinion and take their own decisions in matters pertaining to their life
- All children have a right to privacy and confidentiality

2. Objectives - DFY intends to follow the below to incorporate the POCSO Act in their policies

- To promote and practice the highest standards of child safety policies internally and across partner organizations
- To assess and address areas of child risk and vulnerabilities within DFY Foundation spaces
- To ensure a well-defined implementation strategy and timely redressal mechanisms upholding the best interest of the child in all child protection violations
- To develop and build awareness about child protection among all stakeholders of DFY

3. Scope

The Child Protection Policy applies to all working for and/or associated with DFY including:

- All staff, trustees, consultants, coaches, interns and volunteers at all levels working with DFY and partner organizations
- All associates of DFY including vendors, suppliers, funding agencies and donors
- All visitors to DFY including donors, media, researchers, etc., who may come in contact with the children

4. Operational Definitions

- Child - Any person below the age of 18 years. Staff/Consultant/Coach - Any person receiving financial remuneration (salary, fees, honorarium, etc.) for rendering his/her services to OSCAR Foundation.
- Volunteer - Any person, who of their accord, joins DFY to extend help without any remuneration whatsoever.
- Child Abuse/Maltreatment - It refers to physical, emotional, and sexual maltreatment, neglect and exploitation which results in actual or potential harm to the child's physical and emotional development and well-being. The following are categorized under child abuse:
 1. Physical abuse - When someone knowingly uses force to harm a child's body. It includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.
 2. Bullying - It is a deliberately repeated physical, verbal and/or social behavior by an individual or group of persons causing physical and/or psychological harm to the child.
 3. Sexual abuse - Sexual abuse as defined under Sections 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012.
 4. Emotional abuse - It occurs when the caregiver acts or fails to act in certain ways which causes mental trauma, behavioral problems and psychological distress to the child. It includes taunting, isolation, rejection or name calling.
 5. Neglect - Failure/negligence to fulfill the duty of care which results in harm, injury, or impairment of the child.
 6. Exploitation - Using a child's labour or other activities for the benefit of other

5. Implementation Guidelines:

DFY shall Endeavour to fulfill the following guidelines towards implementation of the Child Protection Policy.

5.1 Children

- Treat all children with respect and dignity
- Commit to inclusion of all children without any form of discrimination
- Design and implement all activities with the 'best interest of the child'
- Protect all children from all forms of intentional and unintentional harm and abuse
- Give every child the opportunity to express their views and to be heard
- Assess situations identifying areas of potential child risks and vulnerabilities before undertaking an activity
- Ensure all children are aware about the clauses laid down in the Child Protection Policy

5.2 New Recruitments

- Thorough scrutiny and background check of candidates before selection for recruitment
- All new recruits to sign and abide by the Code of Conduct on Child Protection and Child Protection Self-Disclosure Agreement
- All persons selected to undergo an induction program on orientation of child protection • All persons to be given a copy of the Child Protection Policy

5.3 Staff in Service

- Develop checklist to monthly review staff behavior and attitude towards children
- Any case of abuse reported against staff of DFY to be investigated by the Child Protection and Grievance Redressal Committee set up under the Whistleblower's Policy
- Any person convicted of offence against children to be terminated from service by DFY with immediate effect

5.4 Sponsors, Donors and/or Visitors

- Basic verification and background check of the sponsor/donor/visitor to be undertaken
- No sponsor/donor/visitor to be permitted to meet any child individually and/or in private
- DFY staff and parent/guardian to be present during any meeting between the child and the sponsor/donor/visitor
- Written consent for meeting with sponsor/donor/visitor to be taken from the parent/guardian • The child to have prior information about the meeting with the sponsor/donor/visitor
- Any case of child abuses by sponsor/donor/visitor suspected and/or reported to be investigated by the Child Protection and Grievance Redressal Committee set up under the Whistleblower's Policy

6.Communication and Media Material

- Consent from DFY and parents/guardian of the child participant to be taken by any individual and/or organization whoever wants to make any written, audio and/or visual recording/documentation within the spaces of the organization
- The child participant to have prior information about any written, audio and/or visual recording/documentation to be made by any individual and/or organization
- Any written, audio and/or visual recording/documentation done within the spaces of the organization without the prior information of DFY to be confiscated and/or deleted permanently
- No written, audio and/or visual recording/documentation to be uploaded on any social media platforms, including social networking sites, blogging and micro blogging sites and messaging and chatting forums, without prior consent from DFY

6.1 Staff Training and Workshops

- Annual training programmes to be organized by DFY for its staff members enabling them to have a better understanding in dealing with issues of child protection
- Annual workshop on Child Protection Policy to be organized for all staff of DFY to re-visit, discuss and recommend suggestions.

7.0 Whistleblower Policy

Whistleblower policy mention the trust follows the guidelines in its whistleblower policy which is a separate policy in itself". Concerned individuals are required to adhere by the policy in case of any breaches

8.0 Complaints/Allegations •

All suspected cases of violation of child protection reported to be investigated by the Child Protection and Grievance Redressal Committee

- Any child and/or informer to consult and/or file a complaint/grievance to any member of the Child Protection and Grievance Redressal Committee of DFY within 7 working days of the occurrence of the incident
- Depending on the severity of the offence, appropriate formal disciplinary action to be taken • Any allegation pertaining to any form of child sexual violence and/or assault by any staff/trustee/sponsor/donor/visitor/intern and/or volunteer to be dealt in accordance to the provisions laid down in the POCSO Act, 2012
- In case any violator is booked under the POCSO Act, 2012, his/her services to be terminated with immediate effect

9.0 Review

Review and update the Child Protection Policy once every three years. 9.1 Composition of Child Protection and Grievance Redressal Committee

- The Committee to comprise of: -
 - Chairperson (Founder – DFY)
 - Member (HR Director)
 - Member (Program Manager)
 - At Least two female members to be part of all Committee proceedings