

THE SEDOO INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Definitions
3. Importance of having child protection policy in place
4. Types of child abuse
5. Procedures for employing/engaging project staff
6. Code of Conduct
7. Declaration
8. Policy Update/Review

1. INTRODUCTION

There's no better time to raise awareness about how adults can keep kids safe from sexual abuse. At SECHILD! We take a positive and hopeful approach. It is for this that we are requesting our employees through this policy to create a safe environment for children and the vulnerable people served by the project. The policy suggests some practical ways the organization can protect children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. Children: According to the UN – Convention on the Rights of the child, Child “Means every human being below the age of eighteen years.

2.2. Vulnerable adults: are defined as people over the age of 18 years who because of psychological disability, age, illness, physical or learning disability, are unable to care or protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

2.3. Child abuse or mal – treatment constitutes all forms of physical and for emotional ill – treatment, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in context of a relationship or responsibility, trust or power.” (World Health Organization, 1999).

2.4. **Child Protection:** All actions taken to protect children, both without disabilities, including vulnerable adults, from physical, sexual, neglect, emotional and institutional abuse.

3. The importance of the policy is to:

- a. Protect children and other vulnerable persons against abuse.
- b. Protect, partner organizations and their staff from accusations,
- c. Public embarrassment and court cases now or in future.
- d. Protect, the project and staff against damaging public disclosure of cases of child abuse.

- e. Raise awareness and to sensitize all major stakeholders within the project and staff structure.

4. Types of Child Abuse

4.1 Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is any deliberate physical injury inflicted on a child. It also includes failure to prevent a child from physical injuries or suffering. Examples of physical abuse are severe beating, throwing to the ground, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or inappropriately giving of drugs to children for any reason. A common practice these days is the torture of children so that they confess to be witches. This is physical abuse of children.

4.2 Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse of a child means forcing or enticing the child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not, the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve having actual sex with a child. In other instances, it involves touching a child in inappropriate places, showing to a child films or photographs of naked people, having a child to watch sexual activities either in a film or real life. Child rape, child prostitution and child marriages are other common forms of sexual abuse of children.

4.3 Neglect: Child neglect is a form of child abuse. A child is said to be neglected when there is persistent failure to meet the child's physical and/or psychological needs. This may include failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect a child from harm or danger, failure to ensure access to medical care or treatment and failure to respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

4.4 Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse involves persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child. Emotional abuse occurs when it is conveyed to children that they are worthless or unloved, unwanted, or inadequate. Causing children to feel that they are in some grave danger also constitutes emotional abuse. For instance, it is common to hear people tell children, "I will kill you if you do that" or "I will break your head", "bastard" etc. These abusive, threatening or violent words have negative effects on the emotional development of children. False accusations particularly of witchcraft or other culturally derived stereotypes of children have great potential to damage the mind of the child. Other: forms of abuse include teasing of children with

disabilities by teachers and other children or any adult. Children lose value, self-respect and develop feeling of worthlessness.

4.5 Institutional abuse: Abuse of children and vulnerable persons can happen in private or government owned institutions where services are being provided. The institutions can be hospitals, day care centers, schools, rehabilitation /vocational training centers, orphanages, etc. In a broader sense, institutional abuse covers such aspects as poor care standards, lack of positive response to the needs of the children, incompetent and inadequate staffing. Other forms of abuse include harsh treatment of children within the institution, or refusing medication, or medical attention.

5. Procedures on employing / engaging project staff

All staff including volunteers working in projects will, by the nature of their duties, have contact with children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, at the time of employment, all prospective staff will:

- Have personal and work references checked carefully to exclude alleged or proven criminal behaviors' before being offered employment. All volunteers would also be subjected to such security screening.
- Receive a personal copy of the code of conduct.
- Will sign a copy of the code of conduct to say they have read it.
- Will be informed in writing of any changes to the code of conduct.

6. Code of Conduct

All project staff (old and new) will sign this code of conduct as contained in the policy and will keep personal copies. Following strictly the code of conduct will allow project staff working with children and vulnerable adults to avoid situations that might lead to abuse or allegation of abuse.

6.1 I WILL

- i. Contribute to create and/or uphold an environment where children are listened to and respected as individuals and which is safe, positive and encouraging to them to achieve their maximum potentials.
- ii. Never abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well-being of any child, or any other vulnerable person.
- iii. Never engage in any abusive or exploitative relationship - sexual, physical, and emotional - with children or other vulnerable persons. Especially I will never engage in sexual activities with any child or other vulnerable person.
- iv. Never request any service or favour that could be considered abusive or exploitative from children or other vulnerable persons, in return for protection or assistance.
- v. Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favoritism in the workplace or being on duty.

6.2 I DO

- ✓ Follow The Sedoo Initiative policy to protect children and vulnerable persons, the Code of Conduct and Reporting Protocol, regarding the safety and well-being of these persons.
- ✓ Conduct myself in a manner consistent with my position as a positive role model to children and other vulnerable persons.
- ✓ Treat all children and other vulnerable persons with respect and take notice of their reactions to my tone of voice and manner.
- ✓ Use the Two Adult Rule: I take care that another adult is present or within reach when conducting one-to-one coaching, therapy, instruction, medical/rehabilitation procedures etc. if an adult is having an individual conversation with a child or a vulnerable person, I take care that another adult is within visual contact. Where individual counseling or treatment is appropriate, I will inform another adult/supervisor in advance where and when this will happen.

6.3 I DO NOT

- Have a child or any vulnerable person to whom I am not related, stay overnight at my home, without supervision.
- Sleep in the same bed or room as a child or any vulnerable person to whom I am not related.
- Hold, fondle, kiss, cuddle or touch children or other vulnerable persons in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive way
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Make Sexual suggestive comments or actions to a child or any vulnerable person, even as a joke.
- Spend excessive time alone with a child or any vulnerable person (see 'Two Adult Rule' above),
- Assist a child or any vulnerable person in tasks that he or she can do unaided (such as taking them to the toilet, bathing or changing clothes).
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children or other vulnerable persons. All disciplinary measures are non-violent.
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children or other vulnerable persons to the exclusion of others.

THE SEDOO INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (SECHILD) CHILD PROTECTION UNDERTALKING FORM

I _____ having read the child Protection Agreement policy of SECHILD and understood the contents,

I have agreed to abide by the terms and conditions stated therein

Signature:

Date:

Witness:

Date:

I declare that I have received and read a copy of this policy, and that I will abide by the Code of Conduct set out in Section 6.0

Name of Employee:-----

Signature of staff:-----

Address_____

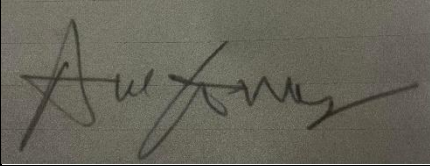
Date:-----

Please return this to Human Resources Department

The Child Protection policy should be reviewed and updated annually

Version	Date	Author	Summary
1.0	June 5 th 2022	The Sedoo Initiative for Children with Special Needs-SECHILD	There's no better time to raise awareness about how adults can keep kids safe from sexual abuse most especially those with disabilities. At SECHILD! We take a positive and hopeful approach. It is for this that we are requesting our employees through this policy to create a safe environment for children and the vulnerable people served by the project. The policy suggests some practical ways SECHILD can protect children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.

Document Approval

Version	Date	Approved by SECHILD Board of Trustees
1.0	June 5 th 2022	The Sedoo Initiative for Children with Special Needs-SECHILD
		
		Barr. Aver Gavar-Chairperson

