

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The policy is a statement of intent of NEEV Education Foundation that demonstrates a commitment to protect children with/ for it works, from abuse and harm. NEEV Education Foundation adopts the Child Protection Policy in order to comply with Article 19 of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding protection of children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual harassment. The Constitution of India recognizes children as equal right holders and grants highest priority for their protection and well-being.

The current policy draws upon the safeguards provided under the Constitutions of India, various child-centric legislation, international treaties as well as other existing policies for the protection and well-being of children.

NEEV POSITION ON CHILD PROTECTION

NEEV Education Foundation strongly believes that all children deserve a happy childhood and the opportunity to lead to a dignified life safe from violence, exploitation, neglect, deprivation and discrimination. NEEV Education Foundation is of the opinion that every place in the world should be child friendly and children should have a right to live in a safe and happy environment. Therefore, we convey our sincere commitment to safeguard the children that we come in contact with, from abuse and harm.

RESPONSIBILITIES

This particular policy is applicable to all the employees, volunteers, consultants, agency, manager, partners of the organisation and visitors. Everyone connected to the organisation and visiting the organisation are obliged to follow this policy and maintain the proper decorum and environment that prevents exploitation and abuse. If there is any breach of policy, it will be treated as disciplinary matter and strict action will be taken using the appropriate procedure as soon as possible.

KEY PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

NEEV Education Foundation believes in certain principles for prevention of child abuse in its work atmosphere:

- Zero tolerance of child abuse and exploitation
- Child abuse is preventable
- Child Abuse involves the abuse of children's rights
- Children should enjoy their rights freely without any abuse or exploitation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to provide clarity to ALL on how they should engage with children, young people and vulnerable adults when working for, on behalf of, or in partnership with NEEV. It is also to help us make sure that employees, volunteers and other representatives are protected.

As an organization working for and with children, we are attentive that the members of the organisation may come in contact, both directly and indirectly, with children. There is a possibility of attempts to cause harm to children by organisation members. Therefore, we have a commitment to protect children with/ for whom we work.

NEEV Education Foundation recognises its has an obligation to put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures to ensure as far as possible, the safety and the protection of the children, young people and vulnerable adults.

DEFINITIONS

- **CHILD:** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines a child as everyone under 18 years of age. NEEV regards a child as anyone under the age of 18 years, irrespective of the age of majority in the country in which the child lives or in their home country.
- **CHILD ABUSE:** Child Abuse as a violation of basic human rights of a child, constituting all forms of physical, emotional ill treatment, sexual harm, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual harm or potential harm to the child health directly or indirectly.
- **CATEGORIES OF ABUSE:** Child abuse can be categorized as Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect.
- **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** It includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE:** It is an inappropriate act or behaviour with child. It includes forcing, enticing or coercing child or any individual to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for eg. Rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include acts which non-contacts activities, such as involving a child or any individual in looking at or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to act in an inappropriate sexual way or grooming a child in preparation of abuse (including via internet). It can be carried by an adult or other child.
- **EMTIONAL ABUSE:** It is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on 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, though it may occur alone.

- **NEGLECT:** It is the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of his/her health or development. Neglect can be physical, educational, or emotional. Physical neglect can include not providing adequate food or clothing, appropriate medical care, supervision, or proper weather protection (heat or cold). It may include abandonment. Educational neglect includes failure to provide appropriate schooling or special educational needs, allowing excessive truancies. Psychological neglect includes the lack of any emotional support and love, never attending to the child, substance abuse including allowing the child to participate in drug and alcohol use.
- **MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION:** Members of the Organisation include management members, staff, volunteers and interns. It also covers consultants and visitors.

IMPLEMENTATION

Child Protection Policy Management:

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NEEV shall be responsible for the management of the policy. All the information and evidences relating to concerns of abuse should be submitted to the CEO. He/ She shall keep this information securely and confidentially. Presently, Mr/Mrs –Name of CEO—is the Chief Executive Officer of NEEV who is responsible for management of this policy.

OUR ACTIONS

NEEV Education Foundation undertakes the following actions for implementation of this Policy:

- It is binding on all members of NEEV to sign up to and abide by the attached code of conduct.
- All members of NEEV shall have access to a copy of the child protection policy.
- Induction procedure will include a briefing on child protection issues.
- Every workplace of the organization will display contact details of the person in charge of management of Child Protection Policy for reporting possible child abuse.
- Disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated against the concerned members of NEEV in case of their indulgence in child abuse cases after due enquiry into such cases.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of every member of NEEV to identify and report concerns about abuse, or suspected abuse, and to take part in, as required, the process of investigation. All NEEV members have a responsibility to pass on any concerns immediately to the Chief Executive Officer who is in charge of management of Child Protection Policy.

Application of this Policy:

This policy applies to all the members of NEEV, which include management members, staff, volunteers, interns. It also includes consultants and visitors.

Responsibility NEEV staff:

It is the responsibility of NEEV staff to ensure that concerns are reported and that issues raised are listened to and handled appropriately by the Chief Executive Officer who is in charge of management of this Policy. It is neither the responsibility of the staff to establish all the necessary details from the child, nor to establish the truth.

Reporting and Investigation about Child Protection Concerns:

Any child protection concerns regarding a NEEV member should be communicated to the Chief Executive Officer of NEEV who shall cause an investigation into the matter.

Disciplinary action shall be taken against the concern member if found guilty. Where the matter is of non-compounding in nature, it will be intimated to the police. While adjudicating the concern, NEEV ensures that the best interest of the child is always the overriding concern.

Confidentiality:

NEEV shall maintain full confidentiality about child protection concerns and its investigation. However, appropriate information will be given to those who have a Right and a need to know.

Recording and Information:

A written record should be undertaken as soon as is reasonably possible and must be dated and signed. All records relating to the protection issue must be kept safely and securely by the Chief Executive Officer. All records must contain detailed information that can be accurately used in case conferences and court proceedings. If possible, it is often particularly helpful to have noted the timing and location of particular events. When written records are being made, the language used by the individual raising concerns must not be altered or amended.

Removing Difficulty:

Difficulty arises in giving effect to this Policy should be reported to the Executive Body of NEEV for removing the difficulties. The Executive Body will review this policy yearly for necessary amendments.