



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Purposes

The purposes of child protection policy include creating a safe environment for children, ensuring their well-being and development, preventing child abuse, and responding effectively to any instances of abuse that may occur within your organization's programs and activities.

Aim

The aim of child protection policy is to safeguard the rights and dignity of every child, protect them from all forms of abuse, and promote their welfare, protection, and empowerment.

Objectives

The objectives of your child protection policy may include:

- Establishing guidelines and procedures for preventing child abuse
- Raising awareness among staff, volunteers, interns, visitors and children about child protection
- Providing training on child protection issues and procedures
- Developing mechanisms for reporting and responding to incidents of child abuse
- Ensuring that all activities and interactions involving children are conducted in a safe and respectful manner
- Collaborating with relevant stakeholders to promote child protection and support victims of abuse

Definition of Child

A "juvenile" or "child" means a person who has not completed the eighteenth year of age, as per section 2(k) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 as amended in 2006 and 2015. This is in conformity with the UNCRC, 1989 (Article 1)

Why A Child Protection Policy?

The Tamilnadu Domestic Workers' Welfare Trust believes that each child is born with inherent dignity and right to respect. Safeguarding every young person entrusted to our care, directly or indirectly, is not only our duty and responsibility but also our priority. This Child Protection Policy is our commitment to respect the rights of every child and to contribute to the welfare, protection and empowerment of each child. By spelling out these policy matters, we know we are applying, interpreting and implementing in our interventions and activities, the laws enacted in our country for ensuring protection and promotion of children.

Child Abuse

Any harm caused to a child, intentionally or unintentionally is child abuse. This includes emotional, physical, sexual, or spiritual forms of abuse.

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

Inherent in the various definitions of child abuse are the concepts of trust, abuse of power, the child's inability to consent or make a choice, the age differential between the perpetrator and the child, the cognitive, emotional, psycho-sexual development level of the child and the intent of gratification.

Types of Abuse

Child abuse can be categorized in different types

a) Child to Child Abuse

At times children abuse other children. Allegations or concerns regarding the abuse of a child by another child need to be responded to with particular sensitivity, taking into account the vulnerabilities of the alleged perpetrator, who in this case is also a child. Nevertheless, they have to be dealt with through the child protection procedures, and in accordance with the provisions of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. Working with children who have committed abuse requires an effective approach which ensures the protection of children affected, while at the same time supporting the child in challenging and changing his/her behaviour.

b) Emotional Abuse

Any type of persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person, so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on one's emotional development and well-being, would be emotional abuse. It includes a failure to provide a supportive environment for a child so that they may develop a full and healthy range of emotional abilities. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only

insofar as they meet the needs of another person. This may be expressed verbally or non-verbally or via electronic or written communication or any other form. Emotional abuse includes verbal abuse, mental abuse, and psychological maltreatment. This can include Associates using extreme and/or forms of punishments threatening or terrorizing a child. All forms of abuse invariably result in emotional abuse.

c) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the necessities for its good health and development. Child Neglect is abandonment of a child by the responsible Associate. It is depriving the child of care by not providing appropriate and necessary food, shelter, clothing, medical care and supervision.

Child Neglect is an act of omission or commission leading to the denial of a child's basic needs. Neglect can be physical, educational, emotional, spiritual or psychological. Physical neglect entails denial of food, clothing, appropriate medical care or supervision. It may include abandonment. Educational neglect includes failure to provide appropriate schooling or special educational needs. Psychological neglect includes not providing emotional support and love to a child. (MWCD, Study on Child Abuse: India 2007)

Children living with disabilities or special needs in programs and initiatives are a particularly vulnerable section of our initiatives and require special care and concern to ensure that their disability is not exploited by anyone and that they are able to access all the rights to realise their full potential.

d) Physical Abuse

As defined by the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare, Govt of India, in its study on Child Abuse, physical abuse is "inflicting of physical injury upon a child. This may include slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating or otherwise harming a child in any way physically even when the parent or caretaker may not have intended to hurt the child. It may, even be the result of over disciplining or physical punishment that is inappropriate to the child's age." (MWCD, Study on Child Abuse: India 2007)

e) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse of a child, (according to American Psychological Association) is the dominant position of an adult that allows him or her to force or coerce a child into sexual activity. Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to physical contact; such abuse could include non-contact abuse, such as exposure, voyeurism, and child pornography. The UNICEF has defined Child Sexual Abuse as contacts or interactions between a child and an older or more knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling, or person in authority, a parent or a care-taker) when the child is being used as an object of gratification for the older child or adult's sexual needs. These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, trickery, bribes, threats or pressure. (UNICEF 2003)

f) Verbal Abuse

Any kind of irresponsible use of words that hurt the dignity of children would be considered verbal abuse. It refers to the use of words by an Associate that leave a lasting negative emotional impact in a child or hurts the sensitivity of a child.

Code of Conduct

Expected Behaviour and Actions	Prohibited Behaviour and Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, if any, 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 consent 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 CPP and Child-related laws conducted by the Organization. Ensure you implement the lessons learned from such sessions and workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not use language or behaviour towards Children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, intimidating, offensive, discriminatory or culturally insensitive.• Do not ignore the child or look down upon their ideas or suggestions.• Do not place a Child at risk of harm or abuse and do not harm or abuse any Child physically, emotionally or sexually.• Do not use any form of corporal punishment on Children.• Do not share with or show Children (electronically or in any other form) inappropriate content including pornographic material or material encouraging crime, violence, terrorism, racism, sexism, self-harm, suicide, cruelty and gambling.• Do not develop, induce or support physical or sexual relationships with Children, in any way.• Do not use or encourage the use of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or other intoxicating substances while interacting with Children and from providing such intoxicating substances to Children.• Do not develop any form of relationship or arrangement (financial or otherwise) with Children which could in any way be deemed to be exploitative or abusive. Do not use Child labour in any form.

Foundation of TNDWWT's measures to Prevent Child Abuse

1. On boarding

- a) All staff, intern, volunteers joining TNDWWT will undergo comprehensive child protection policy training. This training will cover topics such as recognizing signs of abuse, appropriate behaviour with children, reporting procedures, and the importance of maintaining confidentiality. The training will be conducted by qualified trainers and will be mandatory for all new recruits.
- b) Enforce Child safety guidelines: TNDWWT will enforce strict child safety guidelines that must be followed by all staff, volunteers, interns, and visitors. These guidelines will include protocols for interacting with children during door-to-door activities, organizing children in groups, conducting training sessions, managing tuition centers, participating in awareness campaigns, and facilitating observation days or events organized by TNDWWT. This will emphasize the importance of respectful and appropriate behavior, maintaining boundaries, and ensuring the physical and emotional safety of children at all times.
- c) Consent for Photography and Videography: Before taking any photographs or videos of children, TNDWWT will ensure that explicit consent is obtained from both the child and their parents or guardians. Consent forms will clearly explain how the media will be used, including whether it will be posted on social media platforms. Parents or guardians will have the right to refuse consent for their child to be photographed or filmed, and their decision will be respected.

2. Redressal mechanism: Assigning responsibility to specific individuals or groups of individuals within the organisation to ensure procedures and arrangements are in place for effective implementation of the policy and redressal of Child abuse complaints. These include the roles and responsibility of:

- a) Child Protection Officer:
 - Responsible for receiving and investigating reports of child abuse.
 - Ensures that appropriate action is taken to address child abuse incidents.
 - Coordinates with relevant stakeholders, including the Child Protection Committee and external authorities.
- b) Child Protection Representative:
 - Acts as a liaison between the CPO and the staff, volunteers, interns, and visitors.
 - Provides support and guidance to individuals involved in child protection issues.
 - Assists in the implementation of child protection policies and procedures.
- c) Child Protection Committee:
 - Oversees the implementation of the organization's child protection policies and procedures.
 - Reviews and evaluates reports of child abuse incidents.
 - Makes recommendations for changes and improvements to the child protection policy.

Reporting: Guidelines for Complaint Redressal Mechanism

1. Reporting Procedure:

- Any person who suspects or witnesses child abuse within the organization should immediately report it to the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO).
- The report can be made verbally or in writing, and the identity of the reporter will be kept confidential.
- The CPO will initiate an investigation into the reported incident promptly and impartially.

2. Investigation Process:

- The CPO will conduct a thorough investigation, which may include interviewing the victim, witnesses, and alleged perpetrator.
- The investigation will be documented, and all relevant information will be recorded.
- The CPO will ensure that the investigation is conducted in a manner that protects the rights and confidentiality of all parties involved.

3. Decision Making:

- Based on the findings of the investigation, the CPO will determine whether the reported incident constitutes child abuse.
- If child abuse is confirmed, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the organization's policies and relevant laws.

4. Action Plan:

- If child abuse is confirmed, the CPO will develop an action plan to address the situation.
- The action plan may include providing support to the victim, taking disciplinary action against the perpetrator, and implementing measures to prevent future incidents.

5. Communication and Follow-up:

- The CPO will communicate the findings of the investigation to the relevant stakeholders, including the victim's parents or guardians.
- The CPO will follow up with the victim and their family to ensure that they are receiving the necessary support and assistance.

6. Documentation and Reporting:

- All incidents of child abuse, along with the investigation findings and actions taken, will be documented and reported to the Child Protection Committee (CPC).
- The CPC will review the reports and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to prevent future incidents of child abuse.

7. Training and Awareness:

- Regular training sessions will be conducted for staff, volunteers, interns, and visitors on child protection policies and procedures.

- Awareness campaigns will be organized to educate the community about child abuse and the importance of child protection.

8. Review and Evaluation:

- The Child Protection Committee will periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of the organization's child protection policies and procedures.
- Changes and improvements will be made as necessary to ensure the ongoing protection of children.

9. Collaboration with Authorities:

- The organization will collaborate with relevant authorities, such as child welfare committees and law enforcement agencies, in cases of child abuse.
- The organization will cooperate fully with any investigations or legal proceedings related to child abuse incidents.

10. Confidentiality:

- All information related to child abuse complaints will be handled with utmost confidentiality.
- Only those individuals directly involved in the investigation and response to the complaint will have access to the information.

Designation	Designation	Name	Contact number	Email ID
<u>Child protection Officer</u>	Ms. Anusha	Project Coordinator	8072597219	NA
<u>Child Protection Representative</u>	Ms. Srimathi	Project Coordinator-CRM	8838719670	NA
<u>Child Protection Committee member</u>	Mrs. Rosy Carolina	Field Animator	9344077610	NA
<u>Child Protection Committee member</u>	Mrs. Valarmathi	Field Animator	9092540343	NA
<u>Child Protection Committee member</u>	Mrs. Pushpa	Field Animator	7092609993	NA
<u>Child Protection Committee member</u>	Mrs. Parimala	Field Animator	9841988746	NA
<u>Child Protection Committee member</u>	Mrs. Chitra	Field Animator	9940359042	NA

ANNEXURE A: DEFINITIONS

In this Child Protection Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms have the meanings set out below:

1. “Child” means a person below the age of eighteen years and the term “Children” shall be construed accordingly.
2. “Child-related laws” means all the applicable Child-related statutes, by-laws, rules, regulations, notifications, circulars, ordinances, protocols, codes, guidelines, standards, policies, directions, judgments, decrees and orders of any government authority in India for the time being and from time to time in force. Such laws include the following:
 - a) The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012;
 - b) The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015;
 - c) The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009;
 - d) The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986;
 - e) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016;
 - f) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989;
 - g) The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976;
 - h) The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006;
 - i) The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956;
 - j) The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994;
 - k) The Information Technology Act, 2000;
 - l) The Constitution of India;
 - m) The Indian Penal Code, 1860; and
 - n) The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.
3. “Complaint” means a person reporting an incident of Child abuse or potential Child abuse in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Child Protection Policy.
4. “CPO” means the Child Protection Officer and the term “CPOs” shall be construed accordingly.
5. “CPR” mean the Child Protection Representative and the term “CPR” shall be construed accordingly
6. “CPC” means the Child Protection Committee and the term “CPCs” shall be construed accordingly.
7. “CPP” means the Child Protection Policy and the term “CPP” shall be constructed accordingly.
8. “Incident” means an incident of Child abuse or potential Child abuse and the term “Incidents” shall be construed accordingly.
9. “TNDWWT” means The Tamilnadu Domestic Workers’ Welfare Trust

10. "Organization" means The Tamilnadu Domestic Workers' Welfare Trust, registered under Trust Act, and Registration No: 346/2005, having its communications address: 607, Vasu Block, Chithra Avenue, Choolaimedu, Chennai – 600094
11. "Organization's workplace" means:
 - a) All the Offices, tuition centres, where the organisation's activities are conducted
 - b) All the local communities where the Organisations representatives visit, organise or conduct activities
 - c) Any other place where the Organization's activities (including, surveys or field visits, trainings, meetings, campaigns, programs) are conducted or which is visited by the Organization's representatives on account of or during the course of their employment, engagement or association with the Organization, as the case may be (including any transportation provided by the Organization for undertaking the journey to and from such place).
12. "POCSO Act" means the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.
13. "Students" means the Children studying in classrooms where TNDWWT has it's intervention and the term "Student" shall be construed accordingly.

ANNEXURE B: FORMAT FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE COMPLAINTS TO THE DCPO

1. Details of the Complainant

- i) Name:
- ii) Phone number:
- iii) Address:
- iv) Email id:
- v) Profession:
- vi) Place of work:
- vii) Nature of the Complainant's association or relationship with the alleged victim:

2. Details of the alleged victim

- i) Name:
- ii) Gender:
- iii) Age:
- iv) School name:
- v) Class:
- vi) Division:
- vii) Address:
- viii) Names of the parents/guardians of the alleged victim:
- ix) Phone numbers of the parents/guardians of the alleged victim:

3. Details of the Incident

- i) Description of the Incident:
- ii) Date of the Incident:
- iii) Time of the Incident:
- iv) Location of the Incident:
- v) Name of the alleged offender:
- vi) Names of the witnesses to the Incident:
- vii) The Complainant's response to the Incident:

4. Signature of the Complainant

- i) Signature:
- ii) Date:
- iii) Place:

This policy was revised and adopted by the **The Tamil Nadu Domestic Workers Welfare Trust** on 15.03.2024

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by:

Signature.....

Name in Capitals.....

The policy has been reviewed by the Management Committee on:

Date : 15.03.2024