



### **Child Circle Safeguarding Children Policy, updated December 2019**

All violence against children involves the abuse of children's rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and various other international, regional and national legal frameworks.

We believe that all children have a right to freedom from violence and abuse. We recognise that the rights and wellbeing of children are paramount and that child abuse never is acceptable.

**CHILD CIRCLE is fully committed to safeguarding all children and to carry out our work in a way that protects them.**

CHILD CIRCLE's work mainly concerns policy, advocacy, exchange and training. Most of the time, it does not involve direct contact with children. However, there may be infrequent contacts, usually with groups of children and young people. When planning new work, programme visits, research or events, we will assess whether it will involve contact with children and take necessary measures to safeguard children.

All persons working on behalf of CHILD CIRCLE are bound by our safeguarding commitment, procedures and code of conduct, regardless of role and/or position.

#### **The Policy requires:**

- That Child Circle recruit staff that are suited to apply strict child safeguarding practices.
- That everyone associated with Child Circle is aware of their obligations and responds appropriately to issues of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury or other harm against children.
- That everyone representing Child Circle take part in creating a safe environment for children who come into contact with the organisation.
- That representatives organising child participation events sign the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

### **This Policy applies to:**

- Child Circle staff, whether national, international, full time, part time or engaged on short-term contracts, e.g. interns, consultants, researchers etc.
- Project partners, representatives from external agencies and volunteers cooperating with Child Circle, when child participation is organised by Child Circle

Child Circle commits to regularly informing any staff members about the child safeguarding policy, including reporting mechanisms and appropriate behaviour.

Breaches in the policy will lead to reporting to the Child Circle director and/or appropriate national authority. It can lead to possible dismissal. For partners/contractors breaches can include termination of relation including contractual & partnership agreement.

### **Principles**

The Child Safeguarding Policy is guided by the principles of:

- *Personal responsibility.* All staff of the Child Circle must demonstrate high standards of behaviour towards children both in their private and professional lives. They must do all that they can to prevent, report and respond to any concerns of the policy.
- *Accountability to children and their communities.* In its work, Child Circle will be accountable to the people we aim to serve.
- *Child participation and non-discrimination.* Children should be empowered to understand their rights and what they can do if there is a problem or a concern.
- *The best interests of any children involved.* When dealing with a Child Safeguarding concern, Child Circle will strive to ensure children's safety, health and well-being.
- *Confidentiality.* All Child Safeguarding concerns/reports/ investigations will be dealt with on a need to know basis and all records will be held securely.
- *Timeliness.* Given the potential for increased or repeated abuse, timely responses are essential on reporting and responding to concerns.
- *Partnership.* Child Circle will work together with other agencies and partners to promote Child Safeguarding within organisations and Child Protection in the community.

### **Definitions**

- *Child* is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years
- *Child Safeguarding* refers to the policy and practice that Child Circle has in place to protect children from harm.

### **Reporting**

If a person who works for, or on behalf of, Child Circle is concerned about the possible abuse of a child, including concerns that relate to the behaviour of a person working for, or on behalf of, Child Circle, it must be reported.

Suspicions are to be reported to the police or relevant local authority without undue delay and to the Designated Safeguarding Officer of Child Circle.

**Designated Safeguarding Officer:** Rebecca O Donnell, [rebecca@childcircle.eu](mailto:rebecca@childcircle.eu), + 32 475 85 7243

In case of ongoing crime or an emergency: Call 112

In other cases: Consult with the Designated Safeguarding Officer

### **WHAT TO DO:**

- Take concerns seriously
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of concerns
- Support the child, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively and co-operate in the process of investigation
- Be guided through all processes by the principle of the best interests of the child
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of the child
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals to ensure the protection of the child
- Report according to the local procedures

### **DON'T:**

- Investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations;
- Assure the child that the information given will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

### **Review**

Child Circle monitors and reviews the safeguarding policy and measures regularly.

**Brussels December 20, 2019**

## Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Staff, partners and other representatives must never:

1. Physically assault or physically abuse children.
2. Engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years regardless of the age of majority/consent or custom locally.
3. Develop relationships with children which could be deemed exploitative or abusive
4. Act in ways that may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse.
5. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate or abusive
6. Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
7. Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
8. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
9. Discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment or favour to particular children to the exclusion of others.
10. Spend excessive time alone with children away from others in a manner which could be interpreted as inappropriate
11. Expose a child to inappropriate images, films and websites including pornography and extreme violence
12. Place themselves in a position where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Staff, partners and other representatives should avoid all behaviour that is abusive of children.

**Brussels, December 20 2019**