

Synodical Board of Social Services The Church of North India



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CNI Bhavan
16, Pandit Pant Marg
New Delhi- 110001
Phone: +91-11-2371 8168/ 2126
Email: cnisbss@cnisbss.org



CNI SBSS

Contents	Page No
Preamble	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Scope & Purpose	3
3. Definition & Terms	3 - 4
4. Principles	4
5. Implementation	5 - 7
5.1. Risk Assessment and Mitigation	5
5.2. Clear Job description	5
5.3. Behaviour Protocols/Code of Conduct	5 - 6
5.4. Safe Program Design	6
5.5. Communication – use of images and children information	6 - 7
6. Management responsibilities	7
7. Reporting/responding to concern	7 - 8
8. Monitoring and review	8
9. Forms	8 - 10
i. Complaint Reporting Form	8 - 9
ii. Incident Investigation Reporting Form	10 - 11
10. Undertaking	12 – 13
Appendix	14

Preamble

In accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.....

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance, Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community, Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.....,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, “the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”, Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) ; and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration, Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child, Recognizing the importance of international cooperation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries. ¹

CNI SBSS adheres to the Preamble as proclaimed in the, The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child

¹ The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, *Preamble*, 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

Synodical Board of Social Services is the development and justice board of the Church of North India. We work with marginalized communities focusing primarily on Dalits, Adivasi, Women & Children, through Dioceses and their congregations. CNI SBSS facilitates holistic development of the marginalized communities, contributing to the mission of Church of North India and towards country's growth. As an organization we follow the principle of *Do NO Harm*, where we work towards effective implementation of our program activities and to minimize the harm that may be caused inadvertently as a result of our organizational activities. CNI SBSS takes responsibility in ensuring child safety, and to make sure that everyone associated with CNI SBSS (Staff, board members, consultants, volunteers, contractors, interns, volunteers, observers and others) do not expose children to any form of abuse or harm.

2. SCOPE & PURPOSE

CNI SBSS believes that all children have the right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. Everyone associated with CNI SBSS and others representing or visiting the SBSS projects are responsible for maintaining a professional role with children, which means establishing and maintaining clear professional boundaries that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of the professional relationship. This Child Safeguarding policy outlines the behaviour of everyone associated with CNI SBSS with regards to working with or in the proximity of children.

The following standards apply to everyone associated with CNI SBSS:

3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

- i. **Child or Minor:** a person under the age of 18 (as defined by the Convention of the Rights of the Child).
- ii. **Child safeguarding:** the set of procedures and process that CNI SBSS employs to ensure that it is child safe. This includes ensuring that:
 - Everyone associated with CNI SBSS behaves appropriately towards children and never abuses the position of trust that comes with their employment.
 - All staff is aware of and responds appropriately to issues of child abuse and the sexual exploitation of children.
 - CNI SBSS creates a child-safe environment in all activities by always assessing and reducing potential risks to children.
 - All staff is driven by the duty of care to children.
- iii. **Child abuse:** All forms of physical, sexual or mental violence, injury or exploitation including sexual favours and child pornography, intentionally and

unintentionally, resulting in potential harm to child's survival, development, dignity.

- iv. **Sexual abuse:** the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin 2003/13, 9 October 2003; Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse).
- v. **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
- vi. **Complainant:** the person making the complaint, including the alleged survivor of the misconduct or another person who becomes aware of possible misconduct.
- vii. **Corruption:** abuse of trust, power or position for improper gain.
- viii. **Discrimination:** exclusion of, treatment of, or action against an individual based on social status, race, ethnicity, caste, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, political affiliation or disability.
- ix. **Informed consent:** permission given with reasonable knowledge of the risks involved potential consequences and available alternatives.
- x. **Protection:** ensuring that individual basic human rights, welfare and physical security are recognized, safeguarded and protected in accordance with international standards.

4. PRINCIPLES

CNI SBSS acknowledges that "all persons are created in the image of God"...therefore we work in ways that respect dignity, uniqueness and the intrinsic worth and human rights of every woman, man, girl and boy. Believing in this commitment we have a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and respect children's right to participate and engage with them in a meaningful way so that they are able to reach their full potential.

We adhere to the key international and regional standards such as: International Standards for Keeping Children Safe and the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child:

- All children have equal rights to protection from harm.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
- Organizations have a duty of care to children with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.
- If organizations work with partners they have a responsibility to help partners meet the minimum requirements on protection.

- All actions on child protection are taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Protection of children from abuse and protection the rights of children will be addressed through the following steps:

5.1 Risk Assessment and Mitigation

CNI SBSS ensures that a child protection risk assessment and mitigation is ensured through monitoring of the project at field level. We work for child development and protection through working with DBSS and stakeholders and ensure that the children's voices are heard and are incorporated in the projects and are related to children's interest.

5.2 Clear Job Description:

Develop clear job description, while hiring staff, consultant, interns, volunteers, contractors and others. While designing the job description, analyse the role and think about the issues of child safeguarding and risk in that job:

- What contact with children will the job involve?
- Will the employee have unsupervised access to children, or hold a position of trust?
- What other sort of contact may the person have with children (e.g. via email, phone, letter, and internet)?

5.3 Behaviour Protocols/Code of Conduct

This Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct outlines the behaviour that CNI SBSS expects from everyone associated with CNI SBSS, with regards to working with or in the proximity of children. The following protocol is to be followed at all times:

I will:

- Treat all children with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, sexual identity language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- Create a safe environment for children where they can reach their full.
- Respect the different ethnicity, religion, gender of children
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers and enhance and promote the participation of children in the decisions that affect them
- Ensure that another adult is always present while working in the close proximity of children

- vi. Report immediately any concerns of child abuse or policy non-compliance in accordance with SBSS reporting procedures
- vii. Comply with all relevant national legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour

I will not:

- i. Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child
- ii. Hit or physically assault children or Use physical punishment on children
- iii. Take children home or in closed room, especially where they will be alone with you
- iv. Invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- v. Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This includes the buying of or profiting from sexual services as well as exchange of assistance that is due to right holders for sexual favours.
- vi. Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the relevant persons, including SBSS Child Safeguarding focal point.
- vii. Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children or show pornographic pictures or videos to children.

5.4 Safe Program Design

All projects and programs of CNI SBSS must be designed to minimize the risk of harm to the children they come into contact with or impact upon directly or indirectly by taking sufficient account of child safety, whatever the focus of the work maybe.

5.5 Communications – use of images and children’s information

CNI SBSS ensures to adhere to the following rules when photographing or filming child/children for work purposes:

- Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
- Obtain consent from the child and a parent/guardian of the child. As part of this the staff must explain how and where the photograph or film will be used. The staff must follow SBSS guidance on obtaining consent for taking photos of groups of children
- Will ensure photographs or films present children in a dignified and respectful manner, not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive

- Will ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts
- Will ensure while publishing electronically the images do not reveal identifying information about a child
- Ensure all photographers are screened for their suitability
- Ensure that no post images or details of children associated with SBSS work on personal social media sites

6. Management responsibilities

The management of every DBSS and SBSS has a responsibility to ensure that all staff is aware of this child safeguarding policy, that they understand what it means in concrete behavioral terms and how it applies to their program context.

The Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct is read and signed by all associated with CNI SBSS and also included in staff orientation package and all new comers are oriented about this policy.

The CNI SBSS board will approve this Child Safeguarding Policy and will ensure that all the staff adheres to its principles and if anybody breaches the Code of Conduct (in relation to children) he/she will be dealt according to the policy.

7. Reporting procedure to respond to child abuse: CNI SBSS has the following provision for reporting cases of child abuse:

- In the event of any violation or substantial suspicion of breach of the policy by anyone associated with CNI SBSS the offence must be reported immediately to the reporting Supervisor where the incident has occurred and the Supervisor will inform about the incident to the Senior Management of CNI SBSS. In cases when the Supervisor is involved, the complainant can directly write to the Senior Management directly.
- The incident should be reported in the Complaint Reporting Form.
- Ensure that during any investigation, the safety of the child remains paramount, keeping in mind the best interests of the child at all times.
- Information about the incident needs to be kept confidential and discussed only when it is for the safety of the child with the concerned Supervisor/ Senior Management.
- When a complaint is received, an enquiry shall be made by the Senior Management using the Incident Investigation Reporting Form.
- After validating the facts as per the organizational policies, if found that the code of conduct has been breached, related disciplinary measures will be taken and bring the matter to closure within 3 months.

When the allegations and findings are grave CNI SBSS will be compelled to involve the statutory body and authorities.

8. Monitoring and review

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed. The policy should be reviewed every 3 years.

9. Forms

i. Complaint Reporting Form

(To be filled by complainant / either with or without the complainant)

1. Your Details

Name:

Employer's Name:

Designation:

Capacity in which child is known to you:

2. About the Child

Name:

Age/DOB

Gender:

Address:

3. Whom does the child live with (e.g. parents/relatives/hostel/ caretaker):
Any other Information:

4. Details of the Incident:

i. How did you come to know about the incidence? KEEP FACTUAL.

(Details of what happened, including time, dates, names of others involved, behavior or physical signs observed, details of possible abuser) Please do continue on a separate sheet if required.

ii. Details of any conversation with the child or informant:
(Write down exactly what the child said and what you said (or another informant said. Remember; do not lead the child – record actual details). Please do continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

iii. Have you contacted anyone already about this concern: (e.g. Parents, Care Taker, Supervisor, Co-worker, Senior management, other agencies...?) If YES then please provide a detail such as: time, date of reporting and person to whom report was made.

iv. Any action you may have taken so far:

Undertaking:

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information provided above is correct, and that I will be available to answer any further questions on this matter.

Signed:

Date:

Note: Please fill out as much information as possible and submit it to the Supervisor/ Senior Management Immediately. Please remember that all information contained in this report must be kept confidential and must not be revealed to anyone except the person you reported to.

ii. Incident Investigation Reporting Form

(To be filled by a member of the Senior Management)

Private & Confidential

1- Referral details: (Detail of person reporting concern)

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Occupation:

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family:

Time:

Date:

Place:

2- Child's details:

Name:

Age:

Date of birth:

Gender:

Religion:

Address:

Household structure:

School Name:

Class:

Class Teacher:

Any disability:

3- Alleged perpetrator's details:

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Address:

Relationship to Child:

Occupation:

Any other information:

4- Details of concern(s), allegations(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view, child's view if known: (including child's words if possible). Please attach separate sheets if required

5- What action has been taken internally to support the children and to minimize the risk of reoccurrence of such incidence? E.g. current safety of child, internal action of organization.

6- Which external agencies (if any) have been informed?

7- What action has been taken by external agencies (if any) to date?

Reported by: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____

UNDERTAKING

Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

I have read and understood and I am in agreement with the content of this document. I affirm that I accept the consequences of any violation of any of the above provisions under this Child Safeguarding Policy. I shall adhere to the guidelines and assure that I will serve the organization with integrity and utmost commitment to uphold the dignity, freedom and protection of every child.

I will:

- viii. Treat all children with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, sexual identity language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- ix. Create a safe environment for children where they can reach their full.
- x. Respect the different ethnicity, religion, gender of children
- xi. Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers and enhance and promote the participation of children in the decisions that affect them
- xii. Ensure that another adult is always present while working in the close proximity of children
- xiii. Report immediately any concerns of child abuse or policy non-compliance in accordance with SBSS reporting procedures
- xiv. Comply with all relevant national legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour

I will not:

- viii. Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child
- ix. Hit or physically assault children or Use physical punishment on children
- x. Take children home or in closed room, especially where they will be alone with you
- xi. Invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- xii. Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This includes the buying of or profiting from sexual services as well as exchange of assistance that is due to right holders for sexual favours.
- xiii. Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the relevant persons, including SBSS Child Safeguarding focal point.

- xiv. Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children or show pornographic pictures or videos to children.

Use of Children’s Images

When photographing or filming a child/children for work purposes,

I must:

- i. Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
- ii. Obtain consent from the child and a parent/guardian of the child. As part of this the staff must explain how and where the photograph or film will be used. The staff must follow SBSS guidance on obtaining consent for taking photos of groups of children
- iii. Will ensure photographs or films present children in a dignified and respectful manner, not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
- iv. Will ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts
- v. Will ensure while publishing electronically the images do not reveal identifying information about a child
- vi. Ensure all photographers are screened for their suitability
- vii. Ensure that no post images or details of children associated with SBSS work on personal social media sites

I have read the CNI SBSS Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct. I am aware that CNI SBSS expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct above. I also understand that disciplinary measures and/or legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Name: _____
Position: _____
SBSS/ DBSS: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Place: _____

APPENDIX

1. The process of developing the CSP started after the TOT Child Safeguarding Policy for Asia- Pacific and Middle East- North Africa regions which was organized by ACT Alliance with support of Australian Aid and ALWS on 13th -16th June, 2017 held at Bangkok
2. Sources referred for preparing the CSP of CNI SBSS ; Child safeguarding guidance document of ACT Alliance, May 2015, Act Alliance Child Safeguarding Policy, May 2015.

