



Arci Solidarietà onlus

Child protection policy

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Introduction

Arci Solidarietà Onlus promotes children's Rights, safety, and growth, as defined by the **UN Convention on the rights of the child and national laws**.

The Organization's workers, executives, volunteers, and collaborators, as well as the Partners and their staff must have highest behavioural standards with children. Such standards, described below as “Child protection policy”, must be applied **both in private and in professional life**.

The Child Protection Policy is implemented for all initiatives. All activities, directly or indirectly impacting on children's life, do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse. This policy is integrated throughout the entire Project Cycle Management, from the creation to impact evaluation, and in existing processes and systems. Any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

The same standards are respected for communication and social media contents shared and created by the organization.

The protection and promotion of children rights represent for Arci Solidarietà onlus the starting point to build a real inclusive society.

The Child Protection Policy is structured as follows:

- [1] Background and definitions
- [2] Policy
- [3] People
- [4] Procedures
- [5] Responsibilities and accountability

[1]

Background and definitions

The importance of safeguarding children

Background

Child abuse is a global phenomenon and occur in all countries and societies. It involves the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children. Children can be potentially harmed in



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families, communities, institutions, organisations, private places, public places by various circumstances and variety of people, including delegates, support staff, and ancillary personnel people. The Child Protection Policy is aimed at addressing and protecting children from potential abuse and exploitation during their involvement with Arci Solidarietà onlus.

Definitions

Child: this definition includes children and adolescents up to 18 years old.

Abuse: a deliberate act of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to cause harm to a child's safety and/or dignity. Some examples are physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse. The abuse can be committed both by adults and peers (e.g.: bullying).

Physical abuse: actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning, and burning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities, and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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.

Exploitation: use of the children for someone else's advantage, gratification, or profit. It includes sexual and commercial exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation: a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual. Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional, or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.



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Commercial exploitation: exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

Violence: even if we can include all form of exploitation, abuse, and neglect in the definition of "violence", we can identify 3 types of violence: self-directed, interpersonal, and collective violence; violence can be committed both by adults and peers.

Neglect and negligent treatment: allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral, and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter, and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy because of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.

[2]

Policy

Our commitments towards children

All projects, processes and programmes are designed to do no harm to the children they encounter or impact upon directly or indirectly by taking sufficient account of child safety, whatever the focus of the work. The projects ensure taking account of the environment, context and impact (intended or unintended) on the children and communities it is engaged with. Therefore, Arci Solidarietà onlus is committed to:

- Integrate child safeguarding measures with existing processes and systems: strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, programme cycle management, performance management, procurement, partner agreements and management systems.
- Respect the standards of the child protection policy in all phases of Project Cycle Management including project planning, budgeting, project implementation, monitoring, impact evaluation.
- Establishing and implementing clear procedures for the respect of the policy.
- Involve partners, including donors, local NGOs, government, contractors, and suppliers, in a shared commitment to keep children safe that is appropriate to that partnership.

The Child protection policy is applied for any communication activities and contents, both online and offline, to minimise the risk of inappropriate use of information, stories and visual images (photographs, video or social media) of children. Therefore, Arci Solidarietà is committed to:

- Do not show images of children in states of undress.
- Remove whenever possible details attached to images and included in stories not to allow that child to be traced to his or her home or community.



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- Ensure the photographer/journalist/translator employed has been properly vetted and reference checked.
- Collect permission by children and their parents/carers to take their image and use their information.

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People

A collective and individual commitment

Arci Solidarietà onlus is an association of men and women working in schools and in other settings involving children, both directly and indirectly. Therefore, Arci Solidarietà onlus is committed to:

- Make our workers, executives, volunteers, collaborators, and Partners aware about the risks of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Communicate child safeguarding standards at the earliest opportunity in recruitment adverts, interviews.
- Make sure that our workers, executives, volunteers, collaborators, and Partners know when it is necessary to report a possible situation of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.
- Organise training sessions on the child protection policy.
- Inform both children and parents about our Child protection policy and about the behavioural standards that we must have.
- Always listen at children.
- Create an environment to encourage children to feel safe and confident to speak.
- Protect and defend children's victims of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.
- Develop partnerships with families and communities that are appropriate to support your work on safeguarding children rights.
- Provide access and advice to staff with designated responsibilities for child safeguarding where concerns or incidents arise to identify sources of support for children and their families.
- Ensure regular supervisions among multidisciplinary staff members to allow space for mutual reflection and monitoring on the respect of the child protection policy.

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Procedures

Procedures and implementation criteria

To ensure the respect of the Child Protection Policy, Arci Solidarietà onlus implements the following procedures:

- The Executive Board nominates a referent charged with apply this Policy.
- The referent provides the report tools to all the workers, coordinators, volunteers etc. involved in the projects of the Organization.



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- Any suspect of violation of this Policy must be reported to the local project coordinators and to the referent¹.
- Any employee, volunteer or Partner of Arci Solidarietà Onlus must agree this Policy at the time of hiring/collaboration.
- Any violation of this Policy must be reported using the Child protection procedures. Violations committed by employees, volunteers, coordinators etc. can be sanctioned up to the termination of employment, according to local Laws and Codes.

The following implementation criteria are applied:

Awareness and information: we guarantee the highest information about this Policy and its principles to all our workers, volunteers, executives, coordinators and Partners. We also make our workers, volunteers etc. aware of the importance of this Policy, its application and implementation.

Recruitment: all the selection procedures of workers, volunteer, executives, coordinators and Partners must take into account this Policy. Criminal backgrounds will be checked before hiring/collaboration.

Analysis of risks of child abuse will be made for all the projects, initiatives and activities promoted by Arci Solidarietà Onlus and provided to the project coordinators. Arci Solidarietà carries out local mapping exercises which provide information on the legal, social welfare and child protection arrangements. Child safeguarding risk assessments and mitigation strategies are incorporated into existing risk assessment processes at all levels.

Training: Arci Solidarietà Onlus provides periodical training courses about educational methodologies for all the employees, collaborators and volunteers, in order to strengthen the listening skills and the ability to understand children's needs. Training courses about Child Protection procedures will be also provided.

Use of the ICTs: in all the activities that involve the use of Information and Communication Technologies, Arci Solidarietà Onlus will pay the highest attention to prevent any risks for children.

Confidentiality: if a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. Adult and child must make a “pact” of collaboration in the exclusive interest of the child.

New cases and Policies: to get this Policy “more and better”, we will learn through experience and will integrate this Policy with new procedures and implementation criteria. Learning from practical case experience informs policy review and changes to child safeguarding measures.

¹ Episodes of serious harm and/or risk for children must be immediately reported to local authorities. Workers who witness an episode of serious harm and/or risk must provide, if possible, immediate help.



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Responsibilities and accountability

Towards constant improving

The Policy referent, the coordinators of each specific project and the Executive Board are responsible of the creation of a collaborative working environment, to facilitate and guarantee the application of this Policy.

Progress, performance, and lessons learnt are reported to key stakeholders and included in organisations' reports. Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals.

The implementation of the policy is constantly monitored. The Policy referent is responsible to monitor and review the safeguarding procedures among all the projects and spaces of the organization. Project coordinators are in charge for reporting any suspicious case and/or violation of the procedures.



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