

# *Child Protection Policy*



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## **An Overview**

**Chetna Vikas is working in rural area of Jharkhand since the year 1985. The organisation's one of the prime focus has been children and it has endeavoured to "improve the quality of life of the rural disadvantaged children and protect the rights of the child through education, health and social mobilization". Protection is the right of every child. Chetna Vikas commits to confirm to all partnership standards for child protection intended to protect children from disregard, exploitation, substantial and sexual abuse. Chetna Vikas constantly observe the need to lessen the risk to the children in all its activities. Chetna Vikas believes in children's active participation and in respecting their freedom of expression and communication which are advocated in the United Nation Convocation on the rights of children.**

**Chetna Vikas considers that child protection is crucial to ensuring that children under 18 years of age have the rights, confidence and environment, in which they can make choices, express their views and communicate effectively with other children and adults. Children cannot become empowered change agents to improve their lives and that of their families and communities if they are not safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind, be it physical, sexual, emotional or neglect.**

**Thus CHILD PROTECTION POLICY is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to ensure that the organization is taking its duty of care seriously.**

## **Scope-**

**The child protection policy applies to every working for or associated with Chetna Vikas. It encompasses the whole of Chetna Vikas and includes without limitation:**

- **Staff at all levels**
- **Chetna Vikas associates- these includes board members, volunteers, community volunteers, sponsors and consultants. also the staff and or representatives of partner organizations and local govts who have been brought into contact with children or are party to Chetna Vikas's sensitive data while working for or with Chetna Vikas.**
- **Chetna Vikas's visitor- e.g. donors, journalists, media, researchers, etc.) Who may come into contact with children through Chetna Vikas are also bound by this policy**

## **2. Objective**

**The board objective of the policy is to set minimum standards and procedures on child protection that seek to ensure and maintain a safe environment for children , specifically the policy seeks to protect children from abuse and exploitation by encouraging good practice among staff members and preventing behaviour that may be abusive to children .**

## **4. Policy guideline**

- ❖ **Current and potential employees with direct or regular contact with children shall undergo a screening procedure to check for any child abuse related criminal record.**
- ❖ **The job interview should include specific questions at the first stage on child protection issues to probe the application's attitude, experience, and approach to working with children relevant to the post applied for.**
- ❖ **Two employment references should be taken up for applicants before appointing to post. This include (where possible) an employer who can comment on the applicant's work with children.**
- ❖ **During induction of a new employee , the relevant coordinator and executive council member should observe the "child friendly personality " of the staff and give feedback to executive committee / management before final appointment.**
- ❖ **During induction period , feedback would be taken from children about the staff and opinion of children would be counted**

- ❖ Along with the appointment letter a copy of child protection policy and employee manual shall be given to the new employee .( Child protection policy may be included in the employee manual) the employees shall be asked to sign a statement that he/she has read the policy and shall abide by it.
- ❖ All existing staff shall be given full training on this policy as part of ongoing training programmes.
- ❖ Specialised orientation for child protection shall be provided for staff working directly with children.

**5. Case management -**

- ❖ Chetna Vikas is having a team of members who are solely working on child rights and child protection issues. So, in this respect designated members are supposed to take care of these issues in-office, field etc.
- ❖ The matters concerning children in the field areas are to be treated in strict confidence in the interest of the accused, and similarly the reporter and the system should be very much friendly for the children taking into account to address the best interests of the children.
- ❖ Reporters that are made maliciously or not in good faith shall warrant strict disciplinary action by the executive council / management
- ❖ Based on the evidence and careful deliberation of the case, the executive council/management will decide whether to have the matter dropped, further handled internally or referred to the police depending upon the level of assessed gravity and complexity.
- ❖ The process leading to the decision making should be well documented and all facts or written allegations and responses kept file.
- ❖ When a case is immediately dropped the reasons for doing so shall be communicated to the person who reported the matter.
- ❖ Though investigation will be carried out before such decisions or actions are taken.
- ❖ As soon as case of misconduct is brought to the attention of the governing body they shall consider the case and if the matter warrants further investigation then the accused staff member shall be suspended pending investigation and final decision.

**6. Statement of commitment -Staff, interns, volunteers, consultants (as and when required) to sign statements of commitment attached to the policy document. The level of details in statements of commitment and**

expectations may vary depending on the contractual status of person, the nature of assignment and the level of contact with children in line of work.

➤ **Chetna Vikas Associates and visitors must not:**

Disclose information that identifies sponsored families or children or make it available to the general public without explicit consent from Chetna Vikas.

7. **Communication about children**-In its communication and fundraising strategy, Chetna Vikas may use images and recordings of children and field texts. Chetna Vikas has a responsibility towards the children that are portrayed and should ensure that children are treated with dignity as human beings with rights by avoiding the following:

- Inaccurate representation of children through words and images.
- Communication that shames, degrades or victimizes children.
- Taking pictures and statements from children without informed consent.
- Depicting children in sexually provocation poses.
- Disabled children.
- Depicting the helpless conditions of the children-indicating poverty.

8. **Responsibilities under the child protection policies**

Chetna Vikas staffs, associates and visitors must:

- ❖ Be empathetic rather than sympathetic towards children.
- ❖ Act on children's concern/problems immediately.
- ❖ Appreciate their good efforts and performances.
- ❖ As far as possible work with children in a place within the view of others.
- ❖ Never stigmatize or humiliate children.
- ❖ Never use corporal punishment.
- ❖ Do not use slang words or abusive language in front of children.
- ❖ Never develop sexual relationship with any child.
- ❖ Must wear clothes that are appropriate keeping in mind the local context in which the children live.
- ❖ Never abuse and /or exploit a child or act / behave in any way that places a child at risk of harm
- ❖ Report any child abuse and protection concerns they have in accordance with applicable local office procedures. This is a mandatory requirement for staff. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- ❖ Respond to a child who may have been abused or exploited in accordance with applicable local office procedure.

- ❖ Cooperate fully and confidentially, in any investigation of concern and allegations.
- ❖ Contribute to an environment where children are respected and encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights
- ❖ Always ask permission from children (or in the case of young children their parent and guardian) before taking images (e.g. photographs, videos) of them. Respect their decision to say no to an image being taken. Ensure that any images taken of children are

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### **Respectful (for example: children should have adequate clothing**

**That covers up the sexual organs. Images of children in sexually suggestive poses or that in any way impact negatively on their dignity or privacy are not acceptable), stories and images of children should be based on the child's best interest.**

- ❖ Be aware that where concern exist about the conduct of staff or associates in relation to child protection and / or where there has been a breach of the child protection policy, this will be investigated under the policy either: by consideration of referral to statutory authorities for criminal investigation under the law of the country in which they work, and or by Chetna Vikas in accordance with disciplinary procedures. This may result in disciplinary sanctions and/ or dismissal for staff.
  - ❖ Be aware that Chetna Vikas will serve all relation with any Chetna Vikas associate or visitor who is proven to have committed child abuse.
  - ❖ Be aware that if a legitimate concern about suspected child abuse is raised, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the reporter .however any employee who makes false and malicious accusation will face disciplinary action. Be aware that Chetna Vikas will take appropriate legal or other action against Chetna Vikas associates and visitors who make false and malicious accusations of child abuse.
- **Chetna Vikas Staff must not:**
- **Disclose information that identifies sponsored families or children or make it available to the general public unless that disclosure is in accordance with standard Chetna Vikas policies an procedure**



**This booklet has been designed to help Chetna Vikas to protect children by ensuring their rights. Child Protection is the responsibility of every adult who is involved with children.**

### **Chetna Vikas Policy on Child Protection**

#### **Acknowledgement Receipt**

**This is to acknowledge that I have received the Child protection Policy of Chetna Vikas. And hereby I pledge to work for the children to provide a better and a safe environment for them.**

**Name of the Staff:.....**

**Permanent Address: .....**

**Organization:.....**

**Designation: .....**

**Signature with Date:.....**