

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**  
OF  
THE SOCIETY FOR WELFARE, ANIMATION AND DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE,  
CONVENT ROAD RAYAGADA – 765001, ODISHA, INDIA

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **SOCIETY FOR WELFARE ANIMATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### **(SWAD)**

#### **The structure of the organisation:**

##### **Preamble:**

The Society for Welfare Animation & Development (SWAD), the Official Social Service Society of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Berhampur is committed to actively safeguarding children and young people from harm and ensuring their rights to protection are fully realized. SWAD takes seriously our responsibility to promote Child Safe practices and protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation in any form. In addition we will take positive action to prevent child abusers from becoming involved with SWAD in any way and take stringent measures against any SWAD staff and / or Associate who abuses a Child. Every decisions and actions taken by staff will be based on child friendly principles. Together with partners, we envisage prevention of exploitation, harmful traditional practices and violence against children in their family and community; protection of children living in risky situations in communities; and restoration of children who have been abused, neglected or exploited. SWAD believe 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.

##### **Vision:**

A Society, in which every child is educated, protected, respected and valued.

##### **Mission:**

To facilitate an environment of caution concern and care for the children in the communities whereby the children are born, brought up and bred in a child friendly enviournment.

##### **Our Commitment:**

The Policy applies to all the General Body Members, Governing Body members and executive body members, staff, paraprofessionals, team members, consultants, interns, volunteers, partners and partner staff, vendors, suppliers sponsors, funding partner officials and representatives, directors of Catholic Child Care Institutions managed by the

Roman Catholic Diocese of Berhampur, its associates and staff, parents and guardians, People involved in Children's ministry and youth ministry in the Diocese of Berhampur.

The Society for Welfare Animation & Development (SWAD) is committed to actively safeguarding children and young people from harm and ensuring their rights to protection are fully realized. SWAD takes seriously our responsibility to promote Child Safe practices and protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation in any form. Hence,

- SWAD is committed to respect of dignity, liberty and freedom of the Child.
- SWAD takes positive action to promote the best interests of the Child.
- SWAD respects the Child's right to privacy and confidentiality.
- SWAD takes pro active role to control abuses both mental and physical.
- SWAD supports to revitalize the abused and violated children.
- SWAD organizes awareness camps to educate on the rights of children.
- SWAD believe 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.

#### **Child Protection: What does it mean for SWAD?**

- All the four major rights of children as enshrined in United Nation Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) viz. Right to Survival; Right to Development; Right to Protection; Right to Participation shall be protected and secured.
- According to the Integrated Child Protection Scheme - 'Child Protection refers to protection from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Violations of the child's right to protection, in addition to being human rights violations, are also massive, under-recognized and under-reported barriers to child survival and development. Children subjected to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect are at risk of: shortened lives, poor physical and mental health, educational problems (including dropping out of school), poor parenting skills later in life, homelessness, vagrancy and displacement.'
- Child Protection' is about protecting children from or against any perceived or real danger/risk to their life, their personhood and childhood. It is about reducing their vulnerability to any kind of harm and in harmful situations. It is also about protecting children against social, psychological and emotional insecurity and distress. It must ensure that no child falls out of the social security and safety net and those who do, receive necessary care and protection to be brought back into the safety net. Child protection is integrally linked to every other right of the child. The failure to ensure children's right to protection adversely affects all other rights of the child and the development of the full potential of the child. Integrated Child Protection schemes.

**Definitions:****Who is a child?**

A 'Juvenile' or 'child' means a person who has not completed eighteen year of age, as per section 2(k) of Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of children) Act, 2000 as amended in 2006. This is in conformity with UNCRC, 1989 (Article 1).

**Child Abuse:**

'Child abuse is a state of emotional, physical, economic and sexual maltreatment meted out to a person below the age of eighteen years.' (WHO) Child abuse is a violation of the basic human rights of a child. Child abuse has serious physical and psycho-social consequences which adversely affect the health and overall well-being of a child.

**The children need to be protected from the following:**

I}- **Physical abuse:** any form of labour for commercial exploitation; inflicting bodily harm on the child; including acts such as beating, pushing, kicking or including any form of corporal punishment.

ii)- **Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation:** including direct or indirect sexual exploitation by involving them or threatening them to engage in inappropriate sexual activities or behaviour; showing pornography to the child; child sexual abuse through inappropriate gestures, touching or fondling the child.

iii)- **Emotional and psychological abuse:** any intentional act causing trauma or emotional hurt to the child such as humiliating and ridiculing the child.

IV} **Neglect and Negligent treatment:** the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, safety, nourishment, education, and

**The need for a CPP**

The need for the CPP is based on the followings:

- To safeguard the rights of children so that they are prevented from any harm or abuse
- To educate children of the organisation on their rights, and what constitutes violation; to make children participate in the exercise of their rights, as well as to ensure that they know whom to contact if there is any violation or incident of abuse
- To keep all the employees, staff, volunteers/interns educated and trained in acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour by the organization so that they can safeguard themselves from allegations of misconduct.

**Guidelines such as:**

- All the children have equal rights and no child shall be discriminated against on the grounds of religion, race, and caste, and sex, place of birth, language and disability.
- Every child has the right to life, survival, development, education, protection and participation.

- The best interest of the child is a primary concern in all our decisions and actions affecting the child whether taken by legislative body, court, administrative authorities, public, private, social, religious or cultural institutions.
- Every child has the right to a dignified life free from exploitation.
- Institutions, schools, hospitals, families and communities are responsible for safety and security of children.

#### **Child Protection Policy Management:**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SWAD shall be responsible for management of this policy. All the information and evidences relating to concerns of abuse must be submitted to the CEO. He She shall keep this information securely and confidentially. Executive Officer of SWAD who is responsible for management of this Policy.

#### **SWAD undertakes the following actions for implementation of this Policy:**

- ❖ It is binding on all members of SWAD to sign up to and abide by the attached code of conduct.
- ❖ All members of SWAD shall have access to a copy of the child protection policy.
- ❖ Induction procedure will include a briefing on child protection issues.
- ❖ Every workplace of the organization will display contact details of the person in charge of management of Child Protection Policy for reporting possible child abuse.
- ❖ Disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated against the concerned members of SWAD in case of their indulgence in child abuse cases after due enquiry into such cases.
- ❖ The executive/ Governing Body will this Policy once in three years for necessary amendments.

#### **Prohibitions of CPP**

All forms of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children and if this happens then it constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment

- Engaging in sexual behaviour or in sexual activity with children regardless of the age of majority or age of consent as per the Indian Penal legislation
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading, ridiculing or exploitative behaviour
- Sexual relationships between project workers and beneficiaries since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the integrity of work to help vulnerable and excluded children
- A project worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether in the same organisation or not, s/he must report such concerns in accordance with the system and procedures in place.

#### **Child Protection Procedure:**

It is the responsibility of every member of SWAD to identify and report concerns about abuse, or suspected abuse, and to take part in, as required, the process of investigation.

All SWAD members have a responsibility to pass on any concerns immediately to the Chief Executive Officer who is in charge of management of Child Protection Policy.

It is the responsibility of SWAD staff to ensure that concerns are reported and that issues raised are listened to and handled appropriately by the Chief Executive Officer who is in charge of management of this Policy. It is neither the responsibility of the staff to establish all the necessary details from the child, nor to establish the truth.

#### **Application of this Policy:**

This policy applies to all the members of SWAD, which include management members, staff, volunteers, interns. It also includes consultants and visitors.

#### **Reporting and Investigation about Child Protection Concerns:**

Any child protection concerns regarding a SWAD member should be communicated to the Chief Executive Officer of SWAD who shall cause an investigation into the matter. Disciplinary action shall be taken against the concern member if found guilty. Where the matter is of non-compounding in nature, it will be intimated to the police. While adjudicating the concern, SWAD ensures that the best interest of the child is always the overriding concern.

#### **Confidentiality:**

SWAD shall maintain full confidentiality about child protection concerns and its investigation. However, appropriate information will be given to those who have a Right and a need to know.

#### **Recording and Information:**

A written record should be undertaken as soon as is reasonably possible and must be dated and signed. All records relating to the protection issue must be kept safely and securely by the Chief Executive Officer. All records must contain detailed information that can be accurately used in case conferences and court proceedings. If possible it is often particularly helpful to have noted the timing and location of particular events. When written records are being made, the language used by the individual raising concerns must not be altered or amended.

#### **Responsibilities of SWAD:**

SWAD will respond to all child abuse concerns keeping the following principle in mind:

1. Never abuse and / or exploit a child or act / behave in any way that places a child at risk of harm
2. Keep all the information confidential as we respond to a child who may have been abused or exploited.
3. Contribute to an environment where children are respected and encouraged to discuss their concerns of their rights.

**In view of operationalising the policy, SWAD will do the following;**

## 1. Prevention:

a. **Awareness and sensitization:** Raise awareness of child abuse and its risks for staff and partners. The development of an open and responsive culture in all SWAD and partners programmes and within the communities we work with is essential for safeguarding children. We as an organization and as individual co-workers need the courage to break the silence and taboo of discussing child abuse. Through protected, clear, and honest communication we give and receive both positive and critical feedback.

### b. Provide guidance on how to safeguard children from abuse

To prevent child abuse SWAD needs to create and maintain an environment which promotes the core values of the organization. Family strengthening programmes and any other initiatives specific to protection of children and programmes be supported.

## 2. Reporting: Set up and adhere to a clear and simple reporting procedure

SWAD takes all concerns raised seriously, be it in SWAD, community development Programme or other programs and take appropriate action. SWAD has defined clear reporting and responding procedures, internal communication lines, and the roles and responsibilities of all people involved.

## 3. Responding: Ensure clear action is taken when child abuse is suspected or reported

All forms of child abuse are taken seriously, without exception and in all SWAD programmes, and are to be responded according to the gravity of the offence. SWAD ensures that there is always a response, regardless of whether the abuse committed is considered large or small. By responding we guarantee that a transparent and fair procedure is followed, so that nobody is falsely convicted and the rights of everyone involved are protected.

### Duties of the employees:-

- The pre-conditions of working with an organisation are as follows:
- All employees including Board members, employees, staff, interns, volunteers, researchers, consultants, and advisers of SWAD are required to undergo the following:
- Provide satisfactory evidence of clearance in any past complaints of abuse of children
- Acceptance and commitment for adherence to Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct/ Values and behaviour for working with children.
- Providing a signed declaration stating any criminal convictions, including spent convictions.
- Providing the name and contact information of two past professional references excluding family members.
- Reporting incidents of child abuse to the concerned Child Protection officer, Specialist or the CPC.

## Conclusion:

Through this policy SWAD and her partners will ensure the protection of children with whom and where they work and create an atmosphere where the child enjoys freedom from abuse of exploitation, life with integrity and satisfaction and a platform where the child can bring out his / her potentiality, thus contribute to the nation building.

## Attachment - 1

### SWAD CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct is designed to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers responsible for activities involving children and young people under the age of 18 years. The Code serves to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. Management, staff and volunteers all agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.

#### **Director of SWAD will:**

1. Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers.
2. Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers.
3. Be appointing /nominating as the contact person to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

#### ● **Staff will:**

1. Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities of SWAD.
2. Maintain a duty of care towards others and be accountable for matters relating to the aims and functions of SWAD.
3. Establish and maintain a child safe environment in the course of their work.

#### ● **Staff and volunteers will:**

1. Be fair, considerate and honest with others especially children.
2. Treat children and young people with respect, listen to and value their ideas and opinions, and protect their wellbeing.
3. Remember to act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people.
4. Be professional in their actions through their use of language, presentation, manner and punctuality.

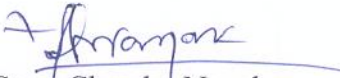


5. Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly, and report on any breaches of these standards of behaviour to the Management.
6. Maintain strict impartiality.
7. Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

## Attachment -2

### Procedure for making complaints

- Making a complaint: Confidential complaint in the prescribed format to the Line concerned person- for small CBOs- it can be the head of the organisation or Project Manager ; for NGOs- it can be the Line Manager or Child Protection Specialist
- Concerned person reports the matter to the Child Protection Committee: comprising of Senior Managers/Experts on Child Protection issues
- Suspension of the person accused till the proceedings: The person against whom the complaint is made would be suspended till the finalization of the CPC enquiry proceedings.
- Investigation and Child Protection Committee adjudicate on the complaint: The CPC would hold an enquiry/investigation and verify facts and the content of complaint. Statements of the witnesses and the accused person would be recorded. Thereafter a report would be prepared and shared with the head of the organization, CPC members, complainant and the person against whom the complaint is made. The child would not be called for the enquiry proceedings and for sharing the final decision taken on the case in protect the child from being re-traumatized. The same can be shared with the guardian or parent of the child.



Bishop Sarat Chandra Nayak

President **PRESIDENT**  
**SWAD.RAYAGADA**



Fr. Joseph Valiaparambil

Secretary cum Director  
**DIRECTOR/SECRETARY**  
**SWAD.RAYAGADA**



Fr. Sushil Kumar Gouda

Finance Administrator  
**FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR**  
**SWAD.RAYAGADA**