



The Red Pencil

Humanitarian Mission

The Red Pencil (International) Child Protection Policy

When we rescue the child, we save the adult

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Introduction

The Red Pencil develops and offers arts therapy programmes to respond to the rapid growth of societies, migration issues and the evolving needs of beneficiaries in many cultural contexts. For children in particular, the chaos associated with these atrocities is overwhelming and traumatic. They could be facing grief, loss, displacement, violence, and uncertainty; basically it is an extreme change from the world that they know. As we often work with children, it is vital to have a child protection policy in place in order to do no harm. This policy sets out common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.

Child Protection

The definition of child protection, as agreed by the Child Protection Working Group¹, is “the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children”. Thus, child protection is not the protection of all children’s rights, but refers instead to a subset of these rights. It also refers to a broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of our organization, The Red Pencil, and individuals associated with us – towards children in their care.²

¹ The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), established in 2007, is a sub-group of the Global Protection Cluster part of an inter-agency body

² CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TOOLKIT (ChildHope, March 2005)

Definition of Child

The Convention on the rights of the child (UNICEF) defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger (UNCRC Article 1).

Child Abuse

According to the World Health Organisation, 'child abuse' or 'maltreatment' constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power'.

Children's Rights

Four Guiding Principles of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

Non-discrimination:

Emergencies often magnify existing differences and further marginalize those already at risk of discrimination. Humanitarians* must identify and monitor existing and new patterns of discrimination and power, and tackle them in the response.

Best Interests of the Child:

In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration. This principle should guide the design, monitoring, and adjustment of all humanitarian programmes and interventions. Where humanitarians take decisions regarding individual children, agreed procedural safeguards should be implemented to ensure this principle is upheld.

Survival, Development and Protection:

As well as children's right to life, humanitarian workers* must also consider the effects of the emergency and the response on the physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual development of children.

Child Participation:

Humanitarian workers must ensure that girls and boys are given space and time to meaningfully participate at all possible stages of an emergency preparedness and response. Boys and girls of different ages and abilities, and with different perspectives, should be supported to express their views in safety, and these views should be regarded with respect and taken seriously. Humanitarian workers must be aware of their own values, beliefs and assumptions about childhood and the roles of the child and the family, and avoid imposing these on these children. They should enable developmentally appropriate ways of child participation, share power with children in decision making, and be sensitive to how children's participation can, when done properly, upset children's social roles and power relations.

*humanitarians/humanitarian workers: a person that participates in charity or non-profit sector (staff, volunteers, interns etc.)

The Red Pencil's Values, Principles and Beliefs:

1. All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
2. Children will be assured the right to express their views freely
3. We will not discriminate against the child
4. Children will be treated with respect irrespective of age, gender, religion and background
5. The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.
6. Child abuse is never acceptable
7. We have a commitment to protecting children with/for whom we work
8. When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes.

Elements of a Child Protection Policy



The Red Pencil will meet their commitment to protect children from abuse through the following means:

1) Personnel Recruitment:

We will ensure that all employees, interns and volunteers, whether paid or unpaid, full time or part time, temporary or long-term, having direct or indirect contact with children undergo a thorough and standardized recruitment process. This is to ensure that the organization hires the best possible staff who are best suited to the specific role to work with children.

2) Awareness:

We will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.

3) Prevention:

We will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children.

4) Reporting:

We will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

5) Responding:

We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

6) Management Structure

In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, management and board of directors of The Red Pencil also ensure:

1. Take seriously any concerns raised
2. Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns



3. Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
4. Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigation
5. Are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
6. Listen to and takes seriously the views and wishes of children
7. Work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

Resources

1. Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Global Protection Cluster
2. Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action), UNICEF
3. Child protection policies and procedures Toolkit, ChildHope
4. Child protection policy, Save the Children

Annex 1

Child Protection Behaviour Protocols:

This information is used from the World Vision International child protection protocol

All The Red Pencil (TRP) people (including staff, volunteers, visitors, partners, Board/Advisory Council members, and independent contractors) will be expected to abide by the defined guidelines for behaviour:

Acceptable Behaviour:

- a) be careful about perception and appearance in language, actions and relationships with children, and behaviour including in person and on digital platforms, both online and offline demonstrates a respect for children and their rights.
- b) ensure that all physical and online contact is appropriate in the child's local culture
- c) use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behaviour
- d) accept responsibility for personal behaviour and actions as a representative of the organisation
- e) be always accountable for your response to a child's behaviour, even if a child behaves in a sexually inappropriate manner; adults avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position with children
- h) comply with WV digital child protection protocols in any online image or information sharing about children in WV programs.

Unacceptable Behaviour

TRP people within and outside their work environments do not:

- a) behave in an inappropriate physical manner, or develop a sexual relationship with a child (under 18 years old), regardless of the country specific legal age of consent
- b) fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way



- c) use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate or abusive, including language that causes shame or humiliation, or is belittling or degrading
- d) spend excessive or unnecessary time alone with a child, away from others or behind closed doors or in a secluded area
- e) condone or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive; including harmful traditional practices, spiritual or ritualistic abuse
- g) hit or use other corporal punishment against a child
- i) take a child alone in a vehicle, unless it is absolutely necessary, and with parental/guardian and managerial consent.
- j) communicate with a child in TRP's program areas via digital platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), via mobile technology (e.g. texting, Whatsapp, Skype), or online without consent and knowledge of his/her parents. Further, TRP people never communicate on mobile, digital or online platforms with children in ways that are inappropriate or sexual.