

Child Protection Policy 2021

Naripokkho

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Approval:

Name of the President:

Signature:

Date:

Mahmuda Begum Guinea

Introduction

It is recognized and proven that children are being abused in many organizations that work with children. It is very important for Naripokkho to ensure the safety of all children participating in various programs of Naripokkho and those who are participating in various programs of partner organizations either. To protect these children from any kind of abuse and take appropriate action against any abuse that occurs, Naripokkho intended to develop the Child Protection Policy, 2021.

Articles

01. Title of The Policy:

This Policy may be called “Child Protection Policy 2021, Naripokkho”.

02. Scope of The Policy:

This policy is mandatory for all members, staffs of Naripokkho and its partner organizations, consultants, vendors, volunteers, interns, service staffs including all concern persons. All concern persons will be covered by this policy too those who work with/for Naripokkho full-time or part-time for or without money.

03. Purpose of The Policy:

The purpose of the policy is to develop a common understanding of child protection, to protect children from any kind of abuse and to take appropriate action if any such abuse occurs. Try to work ethically with children and keep them safe and secured. It is assumed that if the policy is implemented child protection will be ensured. Even the members, staffs, employers will be protected either.

04. Date of Effect:

This policy will be effective from the month of Poush, 1427 Bangla / January, 2021.

05. Principles of Governing The Policy are:

1. The best interests of children come first and that will be considered making any decision:
2. It is needed to ensure that all children regardless of age, gender, qualifications, ethnicity and circumstances have access to benefits. Provide special attention to the disadvantaged children so that their safety needs are met to the highest extent and able to get important opportunities
3. Children should be taken care of and appropriate actions must be taken if understood that any child is at risk or has been abused
4. Although it is not possible to reduce all risk factors, it is important to try to minimize those as much as could

5. Each and everyone need to be informed about Child Protection Policy and the way we work to ensure their safety
6. Ensure privacy for sensitive information
7. Naripokkho will arrange training or orientation for the people related with Naripokkho's works to aware them about the risk of abuse that children may face
8. To protect children need to work with other organizations too. This may include Child-Rights Organizations and Law Enforcement Agencies as well
9. The Child Protection Policy will review every three years for purpose of monitoring its implementation.

06. Definitions:

6.1. Children: Under this policy, a Child means every human being below the age of eighteen. This definition is in The Children Act 2011 and in UNCRC (Convention on the Rights of The Child).

6.2. Child Protection Policy: The Child Protection Policy is commitment by the organization to protect children from all sorts of abuse child may face. A guideline on how their staffs, members and all other persons covered by the scope of the policy supposed to behave with the children. Child protection methods are as follows:

- a. Safe recruitment,
- b. Code of conduct of all concerned persons including staffs and members,
- c. If necessary reporting against any specific person based on authentic information by any child on any real case of abuse,
- d. All concerned persons including staffs and members will sign on a declaration that stating that they will be involved in Child Protection.

6.3. Definition of Child Abuse:

This policy refers protecting children from abuse is child protection so what Child Abuse means is need to be known first.

World Health Organization's Definition:

Child abuse refers to all forms of physical, mental, sexual abuse, negligence, neglected behavior, commercial or any other form of exploitation that causes real harm to children's health, survival, development and dignity or there are possibilities of mischief.

Internationally four types of abuses are recognized generally:

- a. Physical Abuse:** This refers injury, shaking, throwing, burning, scorching, drowning, suffocation or any other types of bodily harm to child. And any types of intentional or unintentional harm by parents and caregivers or anyone who them are looking after.
- b. Mental Abuse:** This refers sort of misbehavior which have a long-term negative effects on children's mental development. This may include to devaluing the child and telling them repeatedly that she/he is not able to do anything. Force any child to meet physical need of any adult person and offer money for that, which may endanger the child. This type of mental torture may happen in secretly.
- c. Negligence:** It means depriving children from attention as much as needed, not having adequate care by parents or the concerned persons (Teachers, Friends, Siblings or any other Relatives as well). Children's mental and physical development may trouble for this reason. Inadequate care and supervision may lead a child to a bad situation and push to a severe harm.
- d. Sexual Abuse:** Forcing or tempting a child to engage in a sexual activity such as physical touch, rape etc. in other hand sexual abuse can be non-contact activities i.e showing child pornography, use them for making pornographic materials, forcing them to have sex.

Moreover, children may abuse many ways in any places in family, educational institutes, playground, neighborhood, among friends, or on the internet also by anyone. Through smart phone digitally may abuse.

07. Responsibilities of the Organization:

Any one covered by the scope of this policy (article 2) can be responsible to ensure the implementation of the policy. If they get any information about child abuse to procedure and submitting the report, they should follow article 12 of this policy where about reporting is mentioned in detailed.

Report of any allegation of involvement of child abuse against any staffs, members or any person within the scope of this policy should submit.

08. Complaints:

There are some differences between complaint and an allegation according to the principles of this policy. Complaints are generally an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction or concern about facilities or services. An allegation is an oral or written declaration of wrongdoing or assertion of misconduct or criminal behavior.

The responsible person (Child Protection Focal Point) of Naripokkho will be the first contact point, if the parents or caregiver of any child wants to submit a complaint.

Naripokkho's executive committee can be decided how to handle with the complaints at its best.

09. Cultural Sensitivity:

Naripokkho is always sensitive to the best interests of children. It is very difficult to balance between the child protection and cultural sensitivity of a particular geographical location of a district where work with or for children.

As an organization, Naripokkho will endorse the principles of United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child where all child rights guaranteed without any discrimination and will follow the article 19 of CRC.

10. Focal Point for Child Protection:

To assist with the implementation of Child Protection Policy Naripokkho must nominate someone to act as The Child Protection Focal Point. It should be someone who has the necessary skills and commitment to taking on an additional role in child sensitive manner.

Responsibilities of Child Protection Focal Point include:

1. Supporting Naripokkho in implementing Child Protection Policy
2. Acting as a first point of contact for staffs, members and others in the scope of the policy on all child protection policy issues
3. Develop and maintaining a list of local specialist child welfare organizations and law enforcement agencies contacts
4. Providing advice and support to staffs, members and all concern persons covered the scope of this policy about child protection issue and deciding what action to take
5. Raising the issue to the Executive Committee of Naripokkho
6. If necessary referring the cases to the law enforcement agencies or child welfare organization
7. Maintaining records of complaint report or information/data of child abuse, protection properly.

11. Preventive Measures:

The most important key to child safety is prevention. That is why all staffs, members and others of the organizations along with the persons within the scope of the Child Protection Policy should treat children positively and nicely. Reduce and early detection of offending behavior against children is necessary at the same time.

11.1 Recruitment and Employment:

The safe recruitment and checks is a part of the recruitment process is the organization's first chance to detect potential offenders. Therefore, it is important to maintain a proper screening process before engaging with care of children.

Naripokkho will take the following steps to recruit only those who are not risky for children:

- a. All job, contract and service advertisements must state that Naripokkho works to protect children and for that those seeking work will be assessed regarding their suitability to work with children
- b. Before employing any staff, background-screening checks must be conducted to ensure their suitability. This includes independent references and other possible checks
- c. All staffs should ask to sign a self-declaration (article 14) stated that they have no intention to engage any harmful dead with children
- d. In exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible to obtain background checks and references. In these situations, a careful assessment should be made as to whether it is appropriate for the person to be put in the position of working alone with child
- e. Where any allegation is made about staff, careful consideration must take place about the appropriateness of the person continuing to work with Naripokkho. This may include suspension during any internal or external investigation and dismissal if the allegation proved.

11.2 Training, Supervision and Support:

Once staffs are recruited, they need to be adequately trained and supervised to ensure that any risks to the children are minimized through ensuring following steps:

- a. All staff are informed about the Child Protection Policy and given the opportunity to discuss its implications for them with both their line manager and the Child Protection Focal Point as part of their induction / orientation
- b. In general, staffs are not allowed to work alone with a child somewhere which is secluded or where they cannot be observed. It is acceptable for staff to work alone with a child where there are visibility panels / windows in doors
- c. In the case of overnight trips, in general, no staff should stay alone in a bedroom with a child unless they are the child's parent/guardian. We appreciate that in some situations children may not wish to be alone, or it may be more culturally appropriate

- to share rooms. If this is the case then the situation must be discussed with the Child Protection Focal Point before the trip
- d. Any accommodation provided must be in single sex rooms (i.e. boys and girls not sharing rooms)
 - e. All staff should sign a Declaration of Code of Conduct specific to the protection of children before working with any children
 - f. Staff should be informed about the policy of the Naripokkho in relation to the use of technology (such as computers and mobile phones) and understand that they must not use this technology for the purpose of accessing, producing or distributing any information or violent or sexual images that are harmful for children. This includes adult pornography also
 - g. Staff will have access to supervision, support and training regarding child protection and the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, via the Child Protection Focal Point and the Senior Management Team.

11.3 Professional Code of Conduct:

All staffs, members and the persons covered the scope of the policy should be required to sign a code of conduct regarding the protection of children. The behavior expected of them and their responsibilities in relation to the children they work with are mentioned there.

The code of conduct should include:

- a. Everybody should behave gentle in workplace. No language should allow which is humiliating children and to abuse children in any way
- b. To report any concerns they may have about the protection of children, in accordance with this policy
- c. To observe confidentiality and not talk about any situations of actual or suspected abuse that occurs except in accordance with this policy. This is necessary to protect the privacy of those who involved
- d. Not to pay for sexual services, of any kind, with anyone under the age of 18 years old, even with the sexual consent of a child less than 18 years.

11.4 Media, Communication and Information / Privacy:

A)

- i.** Ensure that personal information is kept confidential unless we have the agreement of the child and their parent/guardian
- ii.** Use images of children those are respectful (not degrading, or showing sexual images of children naked or partially clothed)
- iii.** Reproduce images of children only where we have the written permission of their parents/guardians.

B)

Before photographing or filming a child for work related purposes Naripokkho and partner organizations will:

- i. Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditional restrictions for reproducing personal images
- ii. Obtain consent from the child or a parent or guardian of the child and explain how the photograph or film will be used
- iii. Ensure photographs, films, videos present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
- iv. Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts and do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

12. Report:

It is expected that, if this policy is properly implemented, the chances of an actual situation of abuse occurring within the organization will be reduced.

Child Protection is a very sensitive and tricky issue. Speaking out when there is child abuse can be difficult and should not be. Sometimes it is hard to acquire concrete evidence of any case of child abuse.

It is not the responsibility of a staff / member to decide whether child abuse has taken place or not. All staffs/ members however, have a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the Child Protection Focal Point and/or Executive Committee.

To ensure that, all such situation is going to handle properly and effectively a report will be prepare mentioning the steps below:

- a) All cases should be considered seriously, regardless how unbelievable the situation may seems
- b) Any of the following situations must be reported:
 - i) any allegation or concern about actual or suspected situations of abuse involving any children or a child known to Naripokkho
 - ii) any allegation of any misconduct or abuse against any staff , member or any person covered by the scope of this policy (article 2) will be investigated, whether the child is or not known to Naripokkho.
- c) Report must be prepare, decision and action taken according to The Child Protection Policy
- d) All written records including the decisions related to child protection must be provided to the person who have recently taken the responsibility about Child Protection (Child Protection Focal Person). It should be mentioned which particular case is going to send to which organization
- e) All sensitive and personal information must keep confidential. The name of the complainant, the accused person and even the name of the person who made the complain report of the case of abuse
- f) If an allegation appears criminal and there are sufficient evidence to support it only then a case of abuse to be referred to a particular child friendly organization and /or

- law enforcement agency. Until the permission given by the child, his/her parents or guardian no information about the situation of child abuse will be provided to any person or any organization
- g) When it is presumed that a crime of abuse has been occurred, the name of any person or persons who may suspect a risk to the child shall be provided to the law enforcement agencies
 - h) If abuse is sent or received via the Internet or other technologies (such as child pornography images) even if this is received in the form of 'Spam' or passed on to Naripokkho from another organization, the images MUST NOT be sent via the Internet to law enforcement agencies or to any other person working for Naripokkho or its partner organizations. Instead, they should contact and be asked to advise how to send the information. This is because the distribution of child abuse images (i.e. child pornography) is illegal under international and domestic law. Links to websites can be sent to law enforcement agencies by email.
 - i) After completion of a child protection investigation against any person decisions and actions must be taken according to the Child Protection Policy and legal system.
 - j) If a report of abuse is made, or concerns are raised, even if the situation is ultimately found to be untrue, no retaliatory action will be taken against the person who made the report. If, however, the report is found to be malicious, the person against whom the allegation was made will be offered support and the Human Resources Department will decide on the course of disciplinary action against the person who submitted the report.

13. Child Protection Code of Conduct for Individuals:

This Code of Conduct provides guidance to staffs, visitors and volunteers on acceptable behaviors and appropriate boundaries when working with children.

A. Naripokkho's staffs, members and everyone covered with the article 2 of this policy will:

1. Act in the best interests of all children
2. Treat every child with dignity and respect, regardless of differences of ethnicity, religion, age, ability, gender, language, culture and economic status
3. Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all interactions with children
4. Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as a positive role model to children and as a representative of Naripokkho
5. Be sensitive and alert to children and any signs that may indicate abuse
6. Listen to children, take their concerns seriously and allow them to have a say in the decisions that affect them
7. Be friendly when working with children
8. Avoid being alone with children where possible and try to ensure that other adults are present when working with children.

B. All persons covered in the article 2 of this policy will not:

1. Engage in any behavior that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children
2. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
3. Condone, or participate in, behavior of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
4. Act in a way that shows unfair differential treatment, or favoring particular children to the exclusion of others
5. Do take photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.

14. Declaration of Code of Conduct:

Before come into direct contact of any children during any project or programme any staffs, members or volunteers of Naripokkho/ Partner Organizations or any persons covered with the scope of this policy (article2) should sign the declaration given below:

1. I will think about how my decisions and actions will affect children, and I will always base these decisions and actions on what is in the best interest of the child
2. I will treat all children and adults with respect regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, social background, religion, political beliefs, disability or any other status. I won't favor, belittle or exclude any child for any reason
3. I understand that I may be working in positions of power and trust in relation to children. I will never abuse this power or do anything that might endanger this trust. I will do my best to empower children, and to cultivate a culture of openness and security where children feel comfortable asking questions and seeking help
4. I will never act in ways that are abusive, exploitative, physically or emotionally harmful, and I will work to protect children from situations where they may be at risk for this from others, including from their peers
5. I will not behave in a way is physically inappropriate. I won't fondle, hold, hug, kiss or touch children in a culturally insensitive way, and I will never behave sexually
6. I will not spend time alone with children away from others; if privacy is needed, I will ensure that a staff member is aware and I will leave the door open or in some way maintain visibility
7. If I am not a member or staff of Naripokkho/ Partner organizations, I will always work in the company of a Naripokkho/Partner organization's staff / member. As a staff /member, I will ensure that any non-staff /member is accompanied by a staff /member at all times during working with children
8. I will obtain consent from each child and his/her parents or caretakers before taking any photographs or videos. I will ensure any images I take are respectful and empowering, and that they do not present children as victims, vulnerable or submissive. I will protect the safety and privacy of children by not publishing identifiable images in the media or on the internet, or use them in a way that reveals their location
9. I have a responsibility to report any incidents of child abuse or mistreatment that I observe, or that is reported to me, to a designated Child Protection Focal Point or the senior person responsible for Child Protection at Naripokkho or Partner Organizations.

I have read Naripokkho's Child Protection Policy and I will comply with all aspects of it.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

15. Policy Review:

If needed any refinement, improvement, alteration, amendment of this policy can be done in future.

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