



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND ESSENTIAL PROTOCOLS



Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

Bangalore - Chennai - Dimapur - Guwahati - Hyderabad - Kolkata - Mumbai - New Delhi - Panjim - Shillong - Tiruchy



YAR

Young at Risk



Title of the Book: Child Safeguarding Policy and Essential Protocols

Published by: Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

First Published: May 2024

Approved by: Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia (SPCSA)



Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

Don Bosco House C-991, Sector - 7, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110077

 info@dbyarforum.org  +91 8851653538  www.dbyarforum.org



In association with: Don Bosco Youth Animation South Asia

Copyright © 2024 by the publisher

All rights reserved. Reproduction, storage or transmission of any part of this publication in any form or by any means, only with prior permission of the publisher.

Design and layout: Raj Parit

Printed at: Bosco Society for Printing & Graphic Training, Okhla Road, New Delhi

DON BOSCO

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

AND

ESSENTIAL PROTOCOLS



Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

Bangalore - Chennai - Dimapur - Guwahati - Hyderabad - Kolkata - Mumbai - New Delhi - Panjim - Shillong - Tiruchy

Acknowledgements

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (DB YaR Forum) extends heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Adrian Philips, Ms. Surbhi Sharma and the dedicated team of ASKD-We Resolve Legal Associates LLP for their tireless efforts in preparing the proposed draft of this Child Safeguarding Policy. DB YaR Forum gratefully remembers Fr. Tony Pellissery SDB for initiating the process of updating its YaR Child Policy to Child Safeguarding Policy. DB YaR Forum is immensely grateful to its General Body and Governing Body members and the members of consultative committee for their valuable feedback.

DB YaR Forum acknowledges sincere appreciation to Fr. Patrick Lepcha SDB and Mr. Ramesh Dondapathi for their meticulous review of the document, and to Fr. (Dr.) John Alexander SDB and Fr. (Dr.) Emmanuel Maddhichetty SDB for their insightful inputs and suggestions. Special thanks to Fr. Varghese Pallipuram SDB for sharing a copy of the 'Child Safeguarding Policy' of Bangalore Province, which provided more understanding to this document.

DB YaR Forum owes special thanks to Fr. (Dr.) John Parankimalil SDB, the Secretary of SPCSA (Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia) for facilitating with SPCSA for obtaining permission to publish this Child Safeguarding Policy.

DB YaR Forum thanks Fr. (Dr.) Biju Michael Pulianmackal SDB, the President and Regional Councillor of SPCSA and Fr. Thomas Santiagu SDB, the President and Provincial Responsible for DB YaR Forum for scripting their thought-provoking messages. Sincere appreciation to Fr. Francis Bosco SDB and Fr. Ratna Neelam Kumar SDB, the Joint Secretaries of DB YaR Forum, for their support and cooperation.

DB YaR Forum acknowledges with gratitude Fr. Joe Prabu SDB, the National Executive Director, for steering the process with expertise and dedication. DB YaR Forum is thankful to Ms. Moumita Roy Choudhury, the National Program Coordinator, for her meticulous compilation and revision of the document, and to Mr. Raj Parit, the National Data Management Coordinator, for his creative design contribution.

DB YaR Forum acknowledges the unwavering commitment to safeguarding children's well-being by its member organisations.



Sede Centrale Salesiana

Via Marsala, 42, Roma - 00185 – Italia

Tel. 0039.06.656.121 Fax: 0039.06.65612556 - www.sdb.org

FOREWORD

The Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (DB YaR Forum) has formulated the Child Safeguarding Policy with key principles to implement child protection strategies. It is an assurance and guarantee that children play a major role in our organization. We promise our children that their care and protection matter the most to us.

This policy is centred around preventive and responsive approaches to ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. It sets out **Don Bosco's Educational Methodology** of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. This policy is designed to protect children from abuse and neglect while they are in the care of our organizations. It ensures that all children can enjoy equality of opportunity to participate in *the activities safely regardless of their gender, ability, race, ethnicity, circumstances, or age*. It complies with the legal and statutory guidelines to safeguard the children. Thus, it aims to create a *safe environment in which no child or adult will experience harm or exploitation during their contact with us*.

The Policy states the DB YaR Forum's position on preventing and reducing harm to children and adults at risk when they are in contact with the staff, workers, or volunteers, who are their care givers. It reassures that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities of safeguarding and is provided with the necessary information, training, and support on safeguarding matters.

The Policy requires that any suspicions and allegations involving harm to children and/or adults at risk are referred to the designated child protection committee, to determine what action, if any, must be taken. This will enable each situation to be investigated thoroughly, whilst treating the parties involved fairly and sensitively. The procedure for managing suspicions and allegations aims to strike balance between the need to protect children and adults at risk from abuse and the need to protect staff, workers, and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations. It will also ensure that appropriate steps are taken as a result of any investigations.

The Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia (SPCSA) appreciates the efforts of DB YaR Forum and wishes the YaR forum members to consider the spirit of this policy and apply it in full measure. It has been approved "*ad experimentum*" by the SPCSA. Let us unite and commit ourselves to create safe environment for the maturing of children into happy citizens of our society.

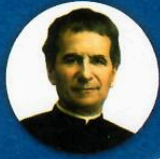
Dr. Fr. Biju Michael SDB

Regional Councillor for South Asia
President, Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia



Fr. Biju Michael SDB

General Councillor for South Asia Region - asiasud@sdb.org



PROVINCIAL DON BOSCO PROVINCIAL HOUSE

Don Bosco Nagar Post, Bandlaguda Jagir, Himayathsagar Road
Hyderabad - 500 086, Telangana State, INDIA.

President's Message

Dear Members of the Don Bosco YaR Family,

It is with immense care and conviction that I address you today regarding the vital safeguarding of the young souls under our nurturance.

DB YaR National Forum for the Young at Risk is grounded in Don Bosco's teachings of compassion and care for vulnerable youth, has an unwavering duty to protect the dignity, welfare and human rights of every child. This Child Safeguarding Policy represents our steadfast commitment to building safer spaces where our children can learn, play and flourish.

I deeply appreciate ASKD Law Firm's integral role crafting our Child Safeguarding Policy and their invaluable contributions reinforcing our mission of promoting child dignity across all programs. It has been a privilege collaborating with the gifted legal minds to develop nuanced policy protections that uphold Don Bosco's legacy of nurturing youth within a secure environment.

I urge each one of you - Salesians, educators, staff, volunteers - to internalize the principles enshrined within this policy. Let it serve as a guiding light illuminating the way forward. Be vigilant guardians, attuned to any signs of distress. Equip yourselves with skills, knowledge, and tools to recognize and prevent harm. Enable open communication so our children feel heard and valued.

This policy is our promise and sacred covenant to actively foster nurturing environments for our young. It echoes our mission's enduring dedication to helping children grow with their innocence, self-worth and hope intact.

Together, let us walk this path of courage, wisdom, and compassion. Through continuous education, soulful action, and grace, we can continue Don Bosco's legacy for generations to come. Our children are depending on us. God bless you all.

In solidarity,

Fr. Thomas Santiago sdb

President

DB YaR Forum





Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

Bengaluru-Chennai-Delhi-Dimapur-Guwahati-Hyderabad-Kolkata-Mumbai-Panjim-Shillong-Tiruchy

PRESENTATION

It is with great honour that I present this Comprehensive Child Safeguarding Policy, renewing our commitment to realizing Don Bosco's vision for empowering young people at risk and creating safe nurturing environments where they can thrive holistically. As the Executive Director, it is my duty to uphold our founding mission 'To inspire and lead Salesians and their collaborators to respond with courage, creativity, and commitment to the needs of the Young at Risk and to engage and collaborate with individuals, civil society organizations and governments to ensure for the Young at Risk safe, enabling environments and opportunities for growth, and development.'

Over the past two years, our child safeguarding standards and practices have evolved significantly with guidance from child protection experts and government bodies. We have made concerted efforts towards developing more robust mechanisms, procedures, and accountability systems to prevent and respond to any child protection incidents proactively and effectively. This revised policy ensures tailored child protection guidelines for nationwide programs.

The policy has also drawn on the latest legal frameworks, international safeguarding protocols, trauma-informed care principles and best practices around the world, contextualized specifically for our unique Indian context.

At its very heart, inspired by Don Bosco's vision 'a world where every child and every young person lives and grows towards "fullness of life" in secure, enabling environments', the policy places the welfare of every child and young person at the heart of our mission-their right to feel safe, respected, heard, and believed. Their safety, dignity and growth remain our first priority as their best interests will always prevail over any institutional priorities. Through its clear protocols and guidelines, we hope to leave no room for doubt or confusion when it comes to safeguarding responsibilities.

In the Don Bosco ethos, preventative systemic action is emphasized alongside compassionate responses. Thus, the policy has a dual focus – ongoing awareness and capacity building to prevent harm in the first place, coupled with trauma-informed care to support healing if incidents occur. It outlines ethical codes of conduct, guidelines for interactions with children, selection procedures for staff/volunteers, protocols and detailed response procedures adhering to legal, psychological and Salesian principles of restorative justice. With proper implementation, our institutions shall transform into safer and more caring sanctuaries where young people can truly flourish.

This policy shall be integrated and implemented with due importance across every Salesian program dealing in line with young persons at risk. Let us strive together towards creating environments where the young entrusted to us are valued, empowered and protected.

Fr. Joe Prabu SDB
Executive Director

ABBREVIATIONS

CCEO & CIC	Two Codes presently in force from the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith
CSC	Child Safeguarding Committee
CPO	Child Protection Officer
CPR	Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DCPU	District Child Protection Unit
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
ILO	International Labour organisation
IPC	Indian Penal Code
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board
MMS	Multimedia Messaging Service
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NOC	No Objection Certificate
POCSO	Protection of Children against Sexual Offence
PSTD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RO	Reverse Osmosis
RTE	Right to Education
SCPCR	State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SMS	Short Message Service
SPCSA	Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Contents

1. Background of Salesians of Don Bosco	01
2. Journey to Child Safeguarding Policy:	02
A. Salesians of Don Bosco: 'With' & 'For' the Young at Risk	
B. Purpose	
C. Priorities	
D. Scope	
3. Context of Child Safeguarding	04
A. Definition of a Child	
B. Definition of Child Safeguarding and Child Protection and the Differences	
C. National and International Policies	
D. Child Safeguarding Enshrined in the Constitution	
E. The Principal Laws Governing the Safeguarding of Children in India	
4. Guiding Policy Principles	09
5. Key Areas of Intervention	12
A. Awareness and Training	
B. Prevention	
C. Reporting	
D. Responding	
E. Intervention shall be further understood in terms of behaviour	
6. Evaluation and Review of Policy	27
7. Conclusion	29
8. Child Safeguarding Acknowledgement	30

9. Annexures

1) Essential Protocols	31
2) Parental Behaviour	44
3) Art. 2.1 - 2.2.2 - Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions	47
4) Art. 5 - Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions	49
5) Art. 6 - Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions	54
6) Risk Assessment	57
7) Definitions	60
8) Listing Various Acts Related to Children in India	62
9) National Agencies Protecting Children in India	63
10) A Summary and Highlights of the UNCRC	64

10. Appendices

1) Appendix 1 - Application Form	66
2) Appendix 2 - Child Protection Code of Conduct	69
3) Appendix 3 - Self-Declaration and Disclosure	73
4) Appendix 4 - Reporting Form	74
5) Appendix 5 - Review of Standards for Child Safeguarding	76
6) Appendix 6 - Consent Form for Beneficiaries (above 18)	77
7) Appendix 7 - Consent Form for Minor Children (under 18)	78
8) Appendix 8 - NCPCR criteria for Child Safe Institutions	79
9) Appendix 9 – Guidelines for A Safe Virtual Environment	87

11. Reference

88

CHAPTER – 1

BACKGROUND OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

Founded in Italy in the 1850s, the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) have consistently prioritized the comprehensive development of marginalized youth. Extending their mission to South India in 1906 and Northeast India in 1922, their commitment to aiding "Young at Risk" groups intensified in the 1970s in various provinces. The formal setting up of the National Forum at Delhi in 2002, garnering support from SDB members, partner organisations, and government entities.

Don Bosco YaR Forum reaches out to the Young at Risk through presences on streets, in marketplaces, in railway and bus stations, in “slums” engaging in rescue and emergency assistance to children in difficult circumstances. We run a variety of childcare institutions, including drop-in centres; open shelters and reception units; and children’s homes. We offer counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration, vocational guidance, skill development and placement services. We run bridge courses, coaching classes and drop-out prevention centres. We offer young people opportunities for holistic and integral education adapted to individual requirements. Our multi-skilled and dedicated teams enable and empower them to take their place in society. We work in collaboration with individuals and groups, state and non-state actors and communities and families of young people to ensure for those vulnerable and deprived young - safe, dignified environments, and rights, opportunities and resources for survival, protection, participation, and maximum development.

The Child Safeguarding policy will not only as only a legal requirement but also a moral and ethical imperative for the organisation. It establishes a foundation for creating a safe, nurturing and empowering environment that enables children and young people to thrive, develop and integrate into society with dignity and resilience.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

CHAPTER – 2

JOURNEY TO CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Don Bosco Institutions and Personnel (Salesians), in collaboration with State, non-State actors, and families of children, strives to offer every child a nurturing, respectful and safe environment based on an agenda of equity and the best interests of the child, to enable all children to access rights, opportunities and resources for survival, protection, development and participation, to ensure for them a safe and happy childhood and to secure their future prospects.

A. Salesians of Don Bosco: 'With' & 'For' the Young at Risk

The term “Young at Risk”, over the years, has come to be applied to some specific categories of the young - such as children on the streets, child labourers, abandoned orphans, children in conflict with the law, children with disabilities, run away children, children from dysfunctional families, institutionalized children, young substance abusers, children in war-torn and conflict areas, refugee children or children of the displaced including ethnic groups and minorities, children in sex trade and children affected by HIV/AIDS, children who have dropped out of education, trafficked children and children in very serious danger of being trafficked, and all children who are found in any other situation of serious vulnerability. Challenged by poverty, hardships, oppression, exploitation, and marginalisation of the young, the Salesians in general and Young at Risk (YaR) network organisations in particular, reach out to young in extreme situations of exploitation and marginalisation with emergency services as well as other forms of short and long-term services to protect them and to care for them.

B. Purpose

i. The Child Safeguarding Policy demonstrates our commitment to protecting all children in our care from harm. Its purpose is to provide a framework where the best interests and safety of children are prioritized in Salesian programs. It aims to safeguard children from violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect through preventative actions, and by ensuring accountability. We chose 'child safeguarding' rather than 'child protection' since our goal is to make all spaces safe for children, not just protect specific children from risk. Safeguarding children is vital because when trust is exploited and safeguarding standards fail, immense long-term damage is caused in children's lives, families, and communities.

ii. Salesians of Don Bosco have always been working for the young at risk. Even today the vast majority of our works are clearly for the young people who run the risk of being left out of education and development, if not for our interventions. The Central and State Governments of India today call upon our expertise for various services such as State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR), Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and for the formulation of child- and youth-related policies.

iii. The Child Safeguarding Policy aims to prevent harm and nurture children's growth by protecting them from all dangers. It creates a loving, family-like environment for children to thrive having a safe environment in which they can grow and thrive. It incorporates educational, social sciences and laws regarding child welfare to educate Salesians and adult collaborators on safeguarding children in their care.

iv. It is meant to provide guidelines to the various organisations operating in different locations in the country.

v. This comprehensive policy protects, supports, and empowers all children and caregivers regardless of identity or ability. It expresses the Salesians' commitment to safeguard every child according to these outlined principles and priorities.

C. Our Priorities

To create a child friendly space for children through the presence and preventive system:

i. Preventive Interventions-

Taking action to reduce the likelihood of a child being harmed or abused.

ii. Responsive Interventions-

Taking actions to ensure that where concerns are raised or situations of suspected harm or abuse are identified, appropriate action is taken to ensure that the child is supported and prevented from similar situations occurring again.

D. Scope

i. Our work prioritizes promoting children's safety and security through visible, explicit commitment and determination.

ii. This Policy applies to all Salesians and Salesian personnel including staff, interns, consultants, and volunteers at any level and in any location.

iii. In addition, this Policy also defines what is expected from Salesian partners, contractors, and suppliers with regard to child safeguarding and reporting of suspicions of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children in all programming connected to the Salesians.

CHAPTER – 3

CONTEXT OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

A. Definition of a Child

- i. The National Policy for children 2013 in its Preamble *“recognizes that – a child is any person below the age of eighteen years”*.
- ii. In India different Laws have different definitions of a Child. For the purposes of this policy, in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and, the National Policy’s recognition of who is a child, we have chosen to accept the definition given under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, according to which a child *“means a person who has not completed eighteen years of age.”*
- iii. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006: Considers a male below 21 years and a female below 18 years as a child.
- iv. The different headings under which Vulnerable Children may be listed:

a. Abandoned Child

A child deserted by his biological or adoptive parents or guardians [The Guardian and Wards Act, 1890, The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956, The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015].

b. Begging Child

A child, soliciting or receiving alms in a public place or entering into any private premises for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms, under any pretense, exposing or exhibiting with the object of obtaining or extorting alms, any sore, wound, injury, deformity, or disease, whether of himself or of any other person or of an animal. [The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015].

c. Street Child

According to the UNICEF, street children fall under two categories: on the street and of the street. "Children of the street" are homeless children who live and sleep on the streets in urban areas. They are on their own and do not have any parental supervision or care, though some do live with other homeless adults.

"Children on the street", earn a livelihood on the streets as street urchins and beggars. They return home at night and have contact with their families. The distinction is an important one because children of the street lack emotional and psychological support of a family [The Juvenile Justice (care and Protection) Act 2015, The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986].

d. Terminally-ill Child

The child who is affected or infected by any of the diseases that has reduced the child's life expectancy; and is considered incurable in the medical field, such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, polio and so on.

e. Child in Conflict with Law

Child in conflict with law means a child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence and who has not completed eighteen years of age on the date of commission of such offence. [The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015].

f. Mentally and/or Physically Handicapped Child

Children with an impairment that may be physical, cognitive, intellectual, mental, sensory, developmental, or some combination of these that results in restrictions on their ability to participate in everyday activity.

g. Disaster-affected Child

Child affected in any calamitous event, especially one occurring suddenly and causing great loss of life, damage, or hardship such as a flood/other natural disaster.

h. Institution Drop-out

Children who discontinue their studies for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary institution.

i. Child Labourer

A child working in contravention of labour laws. (The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986; The Factories Act, 1948; The Mines Act, 1952; The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961; The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1967).

j. Missing Child/Runaway

A child whose whereabouts are not known to the parents, legal guardians or any other person who may be legally entrusted with the whereabouts/well-being of the child, whatever may be the circumstances/causes of disappearance.

k. Child Trafficked

There is a close link between child labour and child trafficking. Trafficking is the process of recruiting, contracting, procuring, or hiring a person either for commercial sexual exploitation, for organ harvesting, or for labour or such similar purpose.

l. Child Contracting Marriage

Child at imminent risk of marriage before attaining the legal age of marriage, and whose parents, family members, guardians and any other persons are likely to be responsible for the solemnisation of such marriage.

m. Unaccompanied Child

Any child under the age of 18 who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult, who by law or custom has the responsibility to do so; and the child does not know his/her whereabouts and his/her parents are searching for the child.

n. Abused Child

Abuse is the physical or psychological ill-treatment of a child and can be broadly classified into 4 major categories of abuses: (i) physical abuse, (ii) emotional abuse, (iii) neglect and (iv) sexual abuse.

B. Definition of Child Safeguarding and Child Protection and the Differences

i. **Child Safeguarding** refers to the policies and practices that institutions follow to keep children safe and promote their well-being. It refers to the action that an institution takes to promote the welfare of children are impacted by their institution - and protect them from harm.

ii. **Child Protection** is the activity that is undertaken or that which is in place, to protect children who are likely to suffer harm or already suffering significant harm and forms a part of Child Safeguarding. It may be understood as focusing on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

iii. The simplest understanding of the **difference between Child Safeguarding and Child Protection** is – ‘Child Safeguarding is to prevent harm; child protection is how we respond to harm’ (NSPCC).



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

C. National and International Policy

- i. United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the UN in 1989 and ratified by India in 1992.
- ii. The National Policy for Children was first adopted by the Government of India on 22nd August 1974. This long preceded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and describes children as a supremely important asset; makes the State responsible to provide basic services to children, both before and after birth, and during their growing years and different stages of development.
- iii. In between 1974 and 2013, India launched an Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) in the year 2009-10 dedicated to children in need of care and protection and children in conflict.
- iv. Later a new Policy was adopted in India on 20th April 2013 that reiterated the country's commitment to safeguard, inform, include, support, and empower all children within its territory and jurisdiction; a rights-based approach for children.

D. Child Protection enshrined in the Constitution of India

- i. Article 15(3) of the Indian Constitution, reiterates that **“the state has the power to make special provisions to women and the children”**.
- ii. Article 24 of the Indian Constitution prohibits employing children in factories or mines. **“No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.**
- iii. In Part IV of the Indian Constitution, makes it imperative for the state to protect children from all sorts of abuses. The State shall direct its policy towards securing that **“the health and strength of workers, men, and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength”**.
- iv. The 42nd Amendment to the Indian Constitution, saw a new provision for the protection of children inserted into the Directive Principles of the State Policy. The State shall direct its policy towards securing that **“children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment”**.

E. Principal Laws Governing the Safeguarding of Children in India

i. The Child Labour (Regulation & Prohibition) Act, 2016: Child Labour Act, 2016 has brought Indian law in line with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention's laws. It advocates for a full prohibition on child labour so that children can get obligatory basic education under the Right to Education. It has toughened the penalty for hiring youngsters and made child labour a punishable offence.

ii. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009: The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 in India. It prohibits discrimination, ensures infrastructure standards, and promotes inclusive education. The Act aims to provide quality education, fostering holistic development and equal opportunities for all children, fostering a literate society.

iii. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015: The Act seeks to hold the child accused of crime accountable, not through punishments, but through counselling. The Act provides for an efficient and organized system for the adoption of orphaned, surrendered, and abandoned children.

iv. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012: The POCSO Act, 2012 is a comprehensive law to ensure the protection of children while at the same time, safeguarding the interests of the kid at every stage of the judicial process by incorporating child-friendly mechanisms for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation, and speedy trial of offences through designated Special Courts. The Act is gender-neutral and prioritizes the child's best interests and well-being. In keeping with the simplest international child protection standards, the said Act also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences. This casts an obligation upon an individual who has knowledge that a child has been sexually abused to report the offence; if a person fails to do so, the person may be punished with six months imprisonment, fine or both.



*Image Credit: Canva

CHAPTER – 4

GUIDING POLICY PRINCIPLES

Overview of the eight principles that have served to guide this Policy:

- A. Zero-tolerance of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children
- B. Recognition of the best interests of the child
- C. Decisions affecting children need to involve children
- D. Assess and manage child protection risk and impact
- E. Sharing responsibility for child protection
- F. Procedural fairness
- G. Consideration of the context of child’s environment
- H. Strengthening the policy to make it inclusive

A. Zero-tolerance of Violence, Abuse, Exploitation, and Neglect of Children

- i. The safety and security of children shall be of prime importance. The children will be protected from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, and violence as they have the right to protection.
- ii. The Salesians have a zero-tolerance approach to violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children. Harming children through violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect will result in criminal, civil and/or disciplinary sanctions.
- iii. The Salesians will not knowingly engage—directly or indirectly—with anyone who poses a risk to children.
- iv. Salesians shall strive to eliminate the risks of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect associated with their programs, and to ensure their personnel, partners, contractors, and suppliers understand their responsibilities and obligations under this Policy.

B. Recognition of the Best Interests of the Child

The best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration in all actions concerning or affecting the child.

C. Decisions Affecting Children Need to Involve Children

Consultation and participation of children in a manner appropriate to their age, in all matters affecting them, is an indisputable right of every child and shall be respected in all Salesian dealings with children.

D. Assess and Manage Child Protection Risk and Impact

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect against children, careful planning and monitoring can identify, mitigate, manage, and curtail the risks to children that may be associated with Salesian programs. The Salesians will take all reasonable actions to create systems and environments where children are safe. This includes conducting a child risk analysis for all programs, developing necessary tools, and providing technical support to and monitoring of programs.

E. Sharing Responsibility for Child Protection

- i. To effectively manage risks to children, Salesian institutions require all personnel to take responsibility for child safeguarding.
- ii. Collaborating with the State to implement its laws, policies, and schemes for the care and protection of children will be an important contribution of the Salesian society, while being faithful to the guiding principles and standards of this policy.
- iii. The Salesian institutions also require the commitment, support, and cooperation of partner organisations, including national societies, and individuals who help to deliver programs administered by Salesians or represent the Salesians in any way.

F. Procedural Fairness

Any allegation of violation of this Policy will be promptly assessed to determine whether it raises legitimate concerns and warrants an investigation. Where allegations are substantiated, disciplinary process will follow with action taken as required. Due process will be followed to ensure that those accused are provided with a full and adequate opportunity to defend themselves. Throughout the process, the Salesians will adopt a survivor-centered approach to ensure the safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination of children and wherever possible respect their wishes.

G. Consideration of the Context of Child's Environment

Contemporary child protection efforts in India align with national policies that prioritize child-centric and culturally-sensitive interventions. There is a focus on providing psychosocial support services to address mental health needs. Educational programs empower children on safety issues. Community awareness campaigns highlight collective responsibility. Legal processes aim to be child-friendly to prevent re-traumatization. With growing digital usage, positive safeguarding looks at online threats, promoting safe internet conduct. Multi-agency coordination between governmental, non-profit and community groups enables comprehensive assistance. Preventative early action to mitigate risks is favoured over late redressal. Practices should evolve based on research and specialist input from within the cultural context.

H. Strengthening the Policy to Make it Inclusive

- i. By adopting measures to make it more inclusive, the policy can better uphold non-discrimination principles, especially for people who may experience additional challenges or potential risks due to their disability or vulnerable status.
- ii. Having trained personnel or advocates who are experienced in conversing with and supporting children with any kind of disabilities (e.g. physical, intellectual, sensory, etc.).
- iii. By ensuring that interview settings and materials are fully accessible to the children . (e.g. wheelchair access, documents in braille/large print, ramp etc.).
- iv. Providing flexibility in the interview process and timing for accommodating special needs.
- v. Giving young people the opportunity to have a trustworthy person present for emotional support.
- vi. By ensuring that interviewers are trained to be culturally sensitive to minimize biases and successfully communicate with children with disabilities and varied backgrounds.
- vii. Interviewers to use language and practices that are age-appropriate for the child's developmental level.
- viii. By ensuring that there is access to professional translation and interpretation services as needed.
- ix. By ensuring that the child has access to social services and legal resources dedicated to advocating for special children and marginalized ones.



*Image Credit: Canva

CHAPTER – 5

KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

- A. Awareness and Training
- B. Prevention
- C. Reporting
- D. Responding
- E. Behaviours



*Image Credit: Canva

A. Awareness and Training

All representatives at Salesian Institutions receive training and contextualized support in order to prevent, report, and respond to safeguarding concerns.

i. The Salesian ministry or organisation will provide preventive education for the young people and their families/guardians. Adapted according to the child's age, preventive education involves explaining to the child the acceptable and unacceptable behaviour on the part of their peers and adults and showing them ways in which they can raise a concern to the warden, any other higher authorities or use of suggestion or complain box.

ii. Salesian Institutions will ensure that this policy and the reporting procedures are publicized, accessible, and made available to children, their caretakers, all staff & representatives, and all relevant third parties and stakeholders in a language and format they understand.

iii. Child Safeguarding Policy training/orientation will be made available by the Salesian Ministry and delivered to all staff, representatives, and relevant staff of partner agencies. Training, capacity-building programs and relevant activities will be conducted by the organisation to help all personnel to understand the content of the Child Safeguarding Policy, guidance on promoting a culture where children's rights are upheld and, how to identify potential harm to children, how to report allegations and suspicions of abuse, Child Rights, legal systems in the country pertaining to Child Rights and the Preventive System.

iv. Implementing partners are responsible to take preventative measures to protect children involved in programming. All partners must be made aware of procedures for reporting concerns, complaints, or violations of this policy and its accompanying procedures.

- v. Guests and volunteers traveling to program sites with or on behalf of the Salesians should be aware of the policy and required to adhere to it.
- vi. All the personnel, volunteers, and guests must sign a statement stating that they are aware of the contents of the Child Safeguarding Policy and would respect and abide by it and understand that action would be taken against them in cases where their behaviour is not in accordance with the policy.
- vii. To ensure a protective environment for children always and everywhere the Salesians will network with the allied systems of the State, NGOs, donors, society at large, family, civil society groups, responsible citizens, etc. We work together towards transforming the society to become a caring community that protects and takes care of its children.
- viii. By creating awareness about harmful customary practices such as child marriage, corporal punishment, ragging, human sacrifices, honour killings and witch hunting.
- ix. Advocate before the State for special protection measures, schemes, and rehabilitation measures to address the special needs of children at risk.

B. Prevention

Through awareness raising, implementation of procedures, and good practice, Salesian representatives demonstrate an understanding of the risks to children within and across programs and operations, and engage effective strategies to mitigate harm, abuse, and exploitation.

The Priority Areas under Prevention are:

- i. Recruitment and Selection
- ii. Building Child Safeguarding into Management Systems and Processes
- iii. Information and Technology
- iv. Documentation and Research



*Image Credit: Canva

i. Recruitment and Selection

- a.** All salesian, staff and everyone working with children will receive support to ensure that they create a safe, healthy environment where children's rights are respected, and child abuse is prevented.
- b.** Safe Recruitment processes that help keep children safe, including robust safety checking, will be followed. Salesians will only recruit representatives who are suited to work with children.
- c.** Strict child-safe recruitment practices apply to all candidates, which include but are not limited to comprehensive background screening in the jurisdictions where the individual has resided, thorough interviewing procedures, and robust reference checks. Preference will be given to persons who have proven track record of positive contribution for the promotion of child welfare.
- d.** Persons selected have to be child-friendly, with qualifications pertaining to childcare such as degrees/training in social work, sociology, pedagogy, psychology, law and/or long-term experience of working with children.
- e.** All personnel shall fill out a questionnaire/application before they can be considered for employment or volunteer service. The questionnaire will include information about why the applicant wants to work with children, previous experience of working with children, qualifications for working with children, etc.
- f.** All personnel will be required to provide both professional and personal references as part of the application process. All references and historical facts submitted by applicants will be thoroughly reviewed. A representative of the Salesian presence shall contact the references, including previous employers who have submitted written references.
- g.** All personnel shall be interviewed in person by at least two Salesian supervisors presence/set up prior to being granted employment or permission to volunteer services. Volunteers should have sufficient previous contact with the Salesians prior to becoming a volunteer.
- h.** In view of the best interests of children, the organisation will not appoint anyone with a prior conviction for child abuse, paedophilia, or related offences. All employees shall consent to security clearance.
- i.** The Child Safeguarding Policy is signed by all staff and is a binding commitment that the employee agrees and is committed to following all safeguarding policies and procedures, both in their professional and personal interactions with children.

i. The Child Safeguarding Policy is signed by all staff and is a binding commitment that the employee agrees and is committed to following all safeguarding policies and procedures, both in their professional and personal interactions with children.

j. The Salesians will share and collaborate with other entities, to ensure that only persons who have been properly screened and do not pose any known risk of harm to children are engaged in Salesian activities.

k. Exclusion of a person from working with children: Salesians and our collaborators are called to safeguard children from all harm. Taking this obligation seriously, we recognize that some transgressions are so serious that they exclude a person from working with children, such as:

- Offenses committed by the person may include but are not limited to, murder, assault, sexual assault, child injury, abandonment or endangering of a child.
- Bigamy, incest, interference with child custody, luring a child, or hiding a runaway child.
- Prostitution, obscenity, sexual performance by a minor, possession or promotion of child sexually explicit material.
- A violation of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance designated as a controlled substance by a governing or law enforcement agency.
- While driving under the influence of intoxicants is a serious offense, it must disqualify someone from driving for any program sponsored by the Salesian presence. This infraction must bar the individual from transporting young people to and from an event.
- Civil or criminal cases for damages, or settlement agreements, whether confidential or otherwise, for any of the aforementioned sorts of acts or omissions may also be pursued.

ii. Building Child Safeguarding into Management Systems and Processes

a. The safeguarding and well-being of children is Salesians' top priority. Ensuring that operations, programs, research, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), campaigns, communications, and other organisational activities are safe for children take precedence over all other considerations.

b. Behaviours that exploit or pose a risk to children, or actually lead to child abuse, will not be tolerated. Within all levels at Salesian Institutions, any existing or new practices, processes and systems must incorporate the standards of this policy to ensure the rights of children are observed and risks are adequately mitigated.

c. This policy must be reflected in all processes that define or determine how staff and representatives carry out their work. This includes but is not limited to job descriptions, terms of reference, codes of ethics, performance management systems, and disciplinary procedures. Failure to adhere to the standards and best practices of child safeguarding is a serious disciplinary breach and will result in proportionate personnel action.

d. Every Salesian within Salesian Institutions is responsible for understanding and communicating with their staff the functional responsibilities they hold to ensure that programs and operations are safe for children, mitigate foreseeable risks, and execute a duty of care across all contexts.

e. Child Protection Officer (CPO), at management level, will be appointed. The CPO is duty bound to be involved with and kept informed of all children's activities. The role of these representatives is to ensure that all planning takes into account child safety from both intentional and unintentional harm.

f. The cost of implementing the standards associated with this policy must be reflected in all operational, and programmatic plans, budgets and funding proposals.

g. There should be clear and open lines of communication.

h. There should be confidentiality of reports and personal information on children and disclosure on a need-to-know basis only.

iii. Information and Technology

a. As Salesian Institutions adopt more technologically advanced ways of working and utilize information technology and platforms to engage children, and their caretakers, Salesian IT department will develop and continuously improve technically sound IT policies and practices to ensure adequate protection from online and technology-facilitated abuse and exploitation.

b. All Salesian information systems will prohibit access to indecent and abusive material depicting children through the use of firewall and/or other appropriate measures.

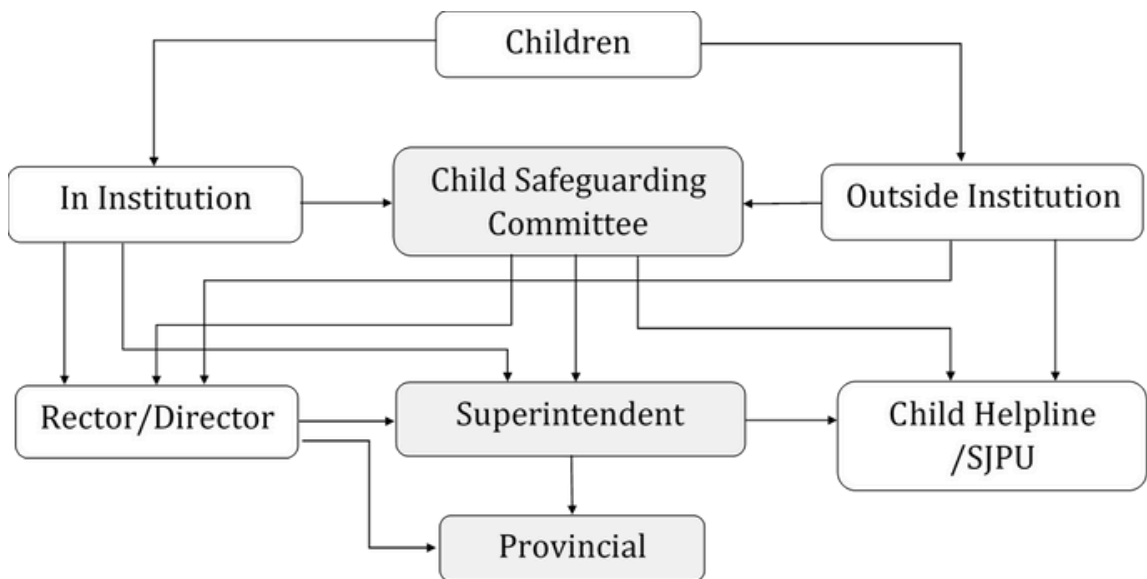
iv. Documentation and Research

- a. Guided by the Juvenile Justice Act, the Data Protection Act, 2023, and other relevant policies, efforts should be made to establish appropriate data collection mechanisms and systems to effectively document information about the children served, about the activities and programs conducted, and about the organisation itself.
- b. Reports generated from the documentation would help identify existing lacunae and to plan the future operations on behalf of the Salesian Institutions.
- c. Child-focused research and a comprehensive training of personnel will also be initiated to meet emerging needs and to improve the effectiveness of services to the Young at Risk.
- d. The progress of the child under the care of the organisation has to be documented ensuring that all aspects of their growth is taken care of till such time as they are positively rehabilitated.

C. Reporting

All Salesian representatives should know how to report and whom to contact when any concern arises, no matter how small or trivial.

The following flowchart shows possible channels for reporting child abuse.



The Priority Areas under Reporting are:

- i. Assessment and Risk Management
- ii. Audit
- iii. Data Protection

i. Assessment and Risk Management

All project and program designs will integrate the principles enumerated herein.

- a.** Risk assessments must be conducted for all activities - from proposal through design and implementation up until exit - to ensure standards of child safeguarding. This includes activities carried out by Salesian institutions, stakeholders, and partners.
- b.** Risk assessments must be performed for all activities delivered by Salesian representatives. Mitigating actions must be assigned to all risks identified, and such actions are routinely monitored for the duration of implementation.
- c.** Plan and implement programs to reduce the risks faced by vulnerable children and collaborate with stakeholders at all levels to ensure that children are protected from all forms of inhuman degrading treatment including abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence.
- d.** Engagement with children and their caretakers for all purposes must be done with assent and informed consent and must not exploit the child or their caretakers, neither increase their vulnerability nor place them at risk.
- e.** The use of images or video of children and details about their lives for media, advocacy, and other purposes, must never include images, video, or information that would allow a child or children to be identified, particularly by ensuring that a child's full name, specific location and image are never combined.
- f.** This policy strictly prohibits the acquisition and use of images or video depicting child abuse or exploitation.
- g.** The Tools for Risk Assessment as enumerated in Annexure VI (pp. 57-60) may be made use of.

ii. Audit

- a.** Salesians across India will cooperate with all audits commissioned by the Salesian Provincial, Internal Audit Teams, or other external stakeholders to monitor the level of compliance in implementing the standards as described in this policy.
- b.** The organisation will be committed to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of childcare, protection procedures and behavioural protocols.

c. Once a year the staff and volunteers will undergo a self-appraisal, peer appraisal, and organisational assessment to evaluate and to monitor their services for the care and protection of children.

iii. Data Protection

a. It is important that all sensitive or confidential materials are retained in a case file and stored securely in a place designated by the data controller. Access to the files is to be limited to people in named roles – e.g., child protection officer and properly designated child safeguarding personnel, who either need to know about the information in those records, and/or who have a responsibility to manage the records.

b. Any information of a sensitive and confidential nature – if stored electronically – must always be password protected. Arrangements have to be made for the contents of the relevant files, as well as their location and storage arrangements, should be passed on from the data controllers to their successors.

c. The principles of relevant data protection legislation should be taken into account when considering whether or not to share information with persons other than civil authority agencies. Legal advice obtained may be confidential and may not be shared without the consent of the head of the institution. Sharing information with statutory agencies attracts the protections cited above only insofar as it relates to child protection.

D. Responding

Engage in action that supports and protects children, with a child centric approach, to address concerns and ensure children's well-being.

i. Responding to concerns includes the institutional mandate to investigate all credible allegations of child abuse, harm, or safety violations. All representatives are required to cooperate with any subsequent investigation. Corrective measures, including any personnel or disciplinary action, will be taken to prevent the recurrence of such activity.

ii. Within the organisation, children must not be disciplined using any form of violence. Children must not be expelled from the care of the organisation arbitrarily by an individual, but such decisions must be the result of a consultative process among authorized persons (management and administration) that keeps in mind the spirit of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

iii. If a child who is under the care of the organisation has dropped out of an educational institution, efforts must be made to enroll them back into another institution and steps must be taken to prevent them from dropping out again.

iv. Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse especially when a child/young person may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them.

Priority Areas under Responding are:

- i. Principles and Practice for Responding to Allegations of Abuse or Sexual Exploitation
- ii. Child Safeguarding Committee and its Procedure
- iii. Roles and Responsibilities for the Implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy
- iv. Support to Victims

i. Principles and Practice for Responding to Allegations of Abuse or Sexual Exploitation

a. The information about an alleged offence can come from various sources:

- o From the alleged victim, their guardians, or others claiming knowledge about the matter, formally informing the authorities orally or in writing.
- o From the authorities exercising their duty of vigilance.
- o From the civil authorities through established channels.
- o From the media (including social media).
- o Through hearsay or any other means.

b. Staff responding to allegations of child abuse, including sexual exploitation and abuse, must be trained, and guided by the highest standards and practices within the sector to promote healthy reactions to the affected child(ren) and reduce the probability of creating or compounding harm. The best interests and safety of the child(ren) and witnesses must be paramount to any response undertaken in order to protect their safety, physical and psychological health and welfare, and to respect their rights to confidentiality, equality, and access to justice.

c. If any personnel in the organisation has reason to believe that a child from the neighbourhood society and not necessarily a child under the care of the organisation is being abused, the staff must report it to the competent authority in the organisation within 48 hours, and the competent authority in the organisation will be required to make arrangements to report it to the competent legal authority in the locality.

d. While information from anonymous sources should not automatically discredit the report (especially if accompanied by documentation suggesting its likelihood), such reports should be treated with great caution and anonymity should not be encouraged.

e. Investigations are survivor-centered and promote a child-driven and equitable process. Salesian Institutions are to conduct investigations in accordance with established protocols by acting swiftly and effectively to an allegation and/or cooperating with any subsequent, external process of investigation.

f. The preliminary investigation is not a trial and does not seek to establish moral certainty about the alleged events. Its purposes are:

- To gather data for a more detailed examination of the report.
- To determine the plausibility of the report sufficient basis in law and fact to consider the accusation as having the semblance of truth.

g. All staff are required to cooperate and participate in any internal or external investigation and maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality. Failure to avail oneself, destruction or withholding evidence, or refusal to cooperate with the investigation, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If other related reports become known during the investigation, they must also be looked into.

h. Notification of the accusations and proofs allows the accused the possibility of self-defense. "Proofs" include records of accusations, relevant documents, witness statements, and expert opinions (medical, psychological, etc.) collected during the investigation, subject to confidentiality rules.

i. All Salesian representatives are institutionally mandated to report child safeguarding and child welfare concerns. All staff have the duty to manage sensitive information in a respectful, professional manner that complies with the applicable law. Staff must keep all information about any suspected or reported incidents strictly confidential. Information may only be divulged to the National Child Safeguarding Focal Point, Legal Department, and/or any other senior staff directly involved in the investigation, except as may be required by law.

j. An accusation of abuse by a child will not be dismissed without appropriate investigation, no matter who the alleged perpetrator is.

k. Any personnel of the organisation to whom a child has revealed that he or she is abused or who has enough reason to believe that a child has been abused by some personnel or by an extern is duty bound to report the matter to the child safeguarding committee of the organisation.

l. Even without a legal obligation, the authorities should report to the competent authorities if necessary to protect the person involved or other minors from further criminal acts.

- m.** Avoid any act that could be interpreted by the alleged victim as an obstacle to exercising their civil rights.
- n.** Where an allegation has been made that some personnel of the organisation has abused a child, the organisation will take appropriate action with promptness to deal with the allegation. In dealing with these allegations the Salesians will comply with the demands of the existing legal provisions. If the abuse falls under IPC, POCSO or any other relevant law a first information report (FIR) must be filed with the local police by the respective Centre and/or Provincial Commission for Professional Standards, as the case may be.
- o.** The child safeguarding committee after due consideration will decide about what and how to inform the police and the media.
- p.** If a foreigner is involved in child abuse, the relevant embassy should be informed.
- q.** The allegation will be kept confidential, with only those directly concerned having the information. Any investigation into the allegations will also be kept confidential. Records will be made of all facts related to the investigations of child abuse allegations and they will be carefully and confidentially filed by the committee.
- r.** Confidentiality must be maintained during this phase, but silence cannot be imposed on the person reporting, the alleged victim, or witnesses.
- s.** When making public statements, exercise great caution in providing information, avoid sensational announcements, refrain from premature judgments about guilt or innocence, and respect the alleged victims' privacy.
- t.** If the initial plausibility of the report is unfounded, there is no need to pursue it further, but the documentation and reasons for the decision should be recorded.
- u.** Assistance from competent persons may be sought in drafting the proclamation, where appropriate.
- v.** The final judgement should primarily explain the reasoning behind the decision rather than focusing on precise legal terminology.
- w.** Both the child and the alleged perpetrator will be treated with respect from the start of the process to its close. Extreme care will be taken to protect the child who is more vulnerable. This could include placing the accused on administrative leave until the investigation is completed, without prejudice to the existing state/labour laws.

ii. Child Safeguarding Committee and Its Procedure

Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. The committee is appointed by the members of the Salesian House Council after consultation with Educative Pastoral Council (EPC).
- b. They should have the ability to empathize, maintain confidence, and be objective.
- c. They should have the time and interest to facilitate child safety education through programs and events.
- d. They should be able to proactively identify and respond to child-safety risks.
- e. They should be determined to implement the child safeguarding policy.
- f. They should ensure staff agreement with the child safeguarding policy annually.
- g. They should involve in promoting children's participation in child safety.
- h. They should be a person of great prudence, wisdom, and ability to discern.
- i. The child safeguarding committee of the organisation is to be constituted of five persons who are child friendly, possess adequate knowledge of the Child Safeguarding Policy, child rights and the relevant legal provisions and have sufficient experience of working with children. The head of the committee will be known as the child protection officer, and it will be appropriate to have a woman member in the Child Safeguarding Committee .
- j. The child safeguarding committee on receiving a complaint of child abuse will initiate a preliminary inquiry into the allegation after obtaining the permission of the Director of the organisation. If the inquiry reveals that the allegation is not of a grave nature the committee will proceed with the stabilize the truth of the facts. If found guilty, further actions shall be initiated in accordance with the applicable law. The Committee must respond to the issues of abuse in the institution within 24 hours of receipt of such knowledge by any member of the committee.
- k. If the allegation of abuse is of a grave one, the child safeguarding committee asks the Director of the organisation to report it to the Provincial. If the allegation is against the Director, then the committee will ask the President of the Trust or the Society to report it to the Provincial who will direct the allegation to be investigated by the Provincial Commission for Professional standards. In any case if the abuse falls under IPC, POCSO or any other relevant law a first information report (FIR) must be filed with the local police by the respective Centre and/or Provincial Commission for Professional Standards, as the case may be.

iii. Roles and Responsibilities for the Implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy

- a. The members of the child safeguarding committee are accountable for raising visibility to and compliance with the Child Safeguarding Policy, including reporting of, and responding to alleged policy violations.
- b. The Committee as a whole, monitors and responds to issues of child protection in the Institutions. It ensures the Conducting of need assessment & vulnerability mapping as well as the Development Annual Action plan addressing child protection issues.
- c. Staff selected for leadership, managerial, or supervisory positions are responsible for identifying preventive measures to mitigate risks that occur within our operations and programs and must report any concerns that arise.
- d. The child safeguarding committee is committed to taking all appropriate corrective actions. Disciplinary, legal, or other applicable actions in response to any violation of this policy will be taken against any individual who has committed a child safeguarding violation and/or anyone who knew of such a violation and failed to act or report.

iv. Support to Victims

- a. The effects of an abuse can be damaging and long lasting. Hence, all Salesians everywhere (India) must commit themselves to support and accompany the victims of abuse and their families to the best of their ability, in order to facilitate healing and reconciliation.
- b. The process of sending the child to a designated expert for counselling, advice, or care in their best interest (referrals) shall be followed. All Salesian Institutions will under take to follow the advice of the experts on referrals and provide the child/children the needed care to build resilience and promote their safety.
- c. A record of the details regarding the child and any circumstances around sending the child for a referral shall be maintained. These details shall include:
 - Date, name of the person making the referral, designation, telephone number, name of the institution.
 - Name, designation and address of the person or organisation to which the child is referred.
 - Details about the child: Full name, date of birth/age, sex, address, contact details of the family, information about siblings, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
 - Details of why the need to refer such child in brief.

d. In the aftermath of abuse, especially when the victims are young and the trauma has enduring and demoralizing effects on both the individual and their family, it is crucial for the Child Safeguarding Committee to take proactive remedial measures.

- The institution should bear the expense of providing counselling and therapy for the victim, and where necessary, refer them to mental health professionals or institutions. The committee must engage expert agencies to facilitate these services, ensuring a comprehensive approach to rehabilitation.
- Ongoing counselling and therapy should be extended to both the victim and their family, maintaining regular contact and furnishing essential information about available services and facilities.
- Additionally, the committee should consider the extension of medical facilities if required and make arrangements for alternative accommodation in cases where the child is at risk at home, with consultation and approval from the Child Welfare Committee of the district.
- Throughout this process, providing unwavering moral support to the victim and their family is paramount.
- The Management Systems of the Institutions should properly respond to, manage, and learn from Incidents.

e. Salesian Institutions may deploy internally trained investigators or retain the services of an external investigator to manage an incident. Investigation reports include remedial steps and personnel actions to address the concern, and any long-term actions required to safeguard children and improve systems.

f. Salesian institutions must provide after-care and survivor-care for children who have been harmed or abused within the Salesian operations or programs.



*Image Credit: Canva

E. Intervention shall be further understood in terms of Behaviour

i. Children must not be disciplined using any form of violence. Children must not be expelled from the care of the organisation arbitrarily by an individual, but such decisions must be the result of a consultative process among authorized persons that keeps in mind the spirit of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

ii. All personnel need to be aware that they may be working with children who, because of the circumstances and abuses they have experienced in life, may exploit a relationship to win special attention. The adults are always expected to behave appropriately and responsibly in their interaction with children even when a child may be acting in a provocative or seductive manner. The adult should avoid being in a compromising or vulnerable situation.

iii. Children who are victims or who are suffering from grave problems need to be cared for by professionals and by responsible persons who have the skills to give them the proper care.

iv. All personnel must be concerned about demeanour and appearance in their dress, language, action, and relationship with children. It is important to maintain an appropriate standard of behaviour in the presence of children. (e.g., They should not use unbecoming language, tobacco products and liquor, or any other narcotic or psychotropic substances, in the presence of children who are under the care of the organisation).

v. Inappropriate behaviour towards children and/or, the failure to behave in accordance with the Child Safeguarding Policy can lead to disciplinary action including termination of employment/volunteer status/internship and/or board/committee membership.

vi. Information about children should be confidential. Disclosure of information about the past or present abuse of children and/or of any of the persons involved with such incidents, should be treated with confidentiality, and disclosure should be limited only to the persons who are entitled to know and on matters they strictly need to know.



*Image Credit: Canva

CHAPTER – 6

EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF POLICY

The problems and difficulties being faced by children today may change over time. Current challenges may be overcome, and new issues could emerge that require new approaches not covered by this policy. This necessitates that the policy be an evolving document that is periodically reviewed both in approach and implementation methods. The periodic annual review will be conducted with reference to issues put forth in this document and others emerging and relevant to the care and protection of children, especially the Young at Risk.

A. Mechanisms for Collecting Feedback

i. Children

- a. Establish a children's committee from various age groups, backgrounds, and talent that meets on a regular basis to provide feedback on policies, initiatives, and issues that affect them.
- b. Conduct periodic surveys, interviews, or focus groups with children to gather feedback on safeguarding measures, their effectiveness, areas for improvement, and so on.

ii. Family

- a. Hold periodic open forums where families can interact with committee members, ask questions, and provide recommendations.
- b. Conduct annual surveys of parents and caregivers to assess their satisfaction with the safeguarding policies, highlight any issues, and make improvements.

iii. Stakeholder

- a. Review comments, incidents, and issues made through grievance redressal processes, whistleblower channels, and other channels on a regular basis in order to rectify course.
- b. Engage staff, volunteers, service providers, and other stakeholders in surveys, listening sessions, or discussions to discover gaps or areas for improvement.

iv. External

- a. Conduct frequent third-party audits, assessments, or evaluations by child safety professionals to critically analyze policy, implementation, and provide recommendations.
- b. Feedback systems must be secure, accessible, child-friendly, and confidential. The organisation's leadership must demonstrate a commitment to actively listening, appreciating insights, and creating an environment of accountability and continual learning.

v. Yearly Review

The Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every year at the Annual General Body Meeting of the Don Bosco National YaR Forum. However, a comprehensive review spearheaded by the Don Bosco National YaR Forum, in consultation with all stakeholders, including children, will be conducted once in 3 years.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

CHAPTER – 8

CHILD SAFEGUARDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. In the Case of Individuals:

I acknowledge that I have been provided with and have reviewed the Salesian Policy & Procedures on Child Safeguarding with the effective date of _____ (the “Policy”). I agree to comply with all aspects of the Policy & Procedures, and I understand that my ongoing compliance with the Policy & Procedures is a condition required for my participation in any visits to Salesian program sites or any other Salesian related activities. This Child Safeguarding Acknowledgement shall have effect for a period of two (2) years from the date on which it has been signed as indicated below.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Site Visit Location: _____

Date: _____

2. In the Case of Institutions:

The Director of _____ (Name of the Institution) will ensure that a committee be formed for operationalising the Child Safeguarding Policy in _____ (Name of the Institution).

The Child Safeguarding Committee of _____ (Name of the Institution) for the term from _____ to _____

Designation	Full Name	Contact Details
1. Child Protection Officer		
2. Member		
3. Member		
4. Member		
5. Member		

This policy is adopted by: (Name of the Institution)

on: _____ (Date)

CHAPTER – 9

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE I

Essential Protocols

Child Safeguarding Policy outline the procedures organisations must follow to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. Within these policies, essential protocols provide clear direction on critical safeguarding issues, ensuring staff members understand roles and responsibilities related to child protection. Examples of key protocols include mandatory reporting of suspected abuse, properly investigating allegations and complaints, safety planning when risks are found, screening staff and volunteers, enforcing codes of conduct, protocols for interactions with children, emergency procedures, and confidentiality of children's information.

organisations can use detailed, unambiguous essential protocols to activate planned responses to protect children both proactively and when incidents occur. They ensure that Child Safeguarding Committee are accountable and responsible. Clear essential protocols contribute to better policy implementation, staff direction, and safer environments for growth and development of children. They are critical for translating commitment to child safety into action.

1. Behavioural Protocols

i. Appropriate Behaviour of Staff towards Children

Do's

- a. Respect each child.
- b. Observe attitudes and behaviours of children with patience and from their local and developmental contexts.
- c. Be watchful of red flags that could indicate that a child is undergoing abuse.
- d. Be empathetic rather than sympathetic towards children.
- e. Listen and value views of children with objectivity.
- f. Encourage children to express their feelings and to participate in decisions which affect their safety.
- g. Ensure confidentiality.
- h. Work with children within the sight of others.

- i. Give children the choice of working with staff based on gender preference in activities of counselling or health check-ups.
- j. Follow child safeguarding guidelines.
- k. Obtain assent from children and consent from guardian/parents for taking any images of children or using their stories as case studies.
- l. Maintain anonymity of children by changing names or not using any personal identifying information when using their story as case studies.

Do Not's

- a. Stigmatize or humiliate children.
- b. Use corporal punishment.
- c. Discriminate a child or a group of children.
- d. Ask a child to keep a secret.
- e. Develop sexual relationships with any child.
- f. Behave in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- g. Sleep alone with an individual child.
- h. Use slang words or abusive language in the presence of children.
- i. Provoke children towards any malpractice or addiction.
- j. Reveal the identity of child in case studies or reports.

ii. Appropriate Behaviour of Visitors/Volunteers

Do's

- a. Obtain written permission from the concerned authority, regarding the purpose of visit before interacting with children.
- b. Empathise with the child rather than sympathise.
- c. Ensure that any physical contact with children is appropriate to the age and circumstance.
- d. Ensure that any physical contact is initiated by the child rather than by the adult and in the presence of relevant staff.
- e. Obtain assent of children and consent of the concerned authority before taking any photographs.
- f. Interact with children at their convenience.
- g. Wear clothes appropriate to the local context.

Do Not's

- a. Discriminate a child or a group of children (includes gifts).
- b. Use offensive or slang language in front of children.
- c. Visit private areas of children's homes, unless in the best interest of the child.

iii. Appropriate Behaviour of Children towards Other Children

Do's

- a. Respect all staff, teachers, parents, and outsiders.
- b. Report any known child safety risks and incidents to the concerned staff.
- c. Share information and learning about child safety with other children.
- d. When you witness bullying, stop it.
- e. Role-model child safe behaviours.

Do Not's

- a. Physically assault or sexually abuse a child.
- b. Tease a child or use nicknames.
- c. Threaten a child.
- d. Spread rumours about a child/adult.
- e. Bully a child or watch and enjoy a child being bullied.
- f. Use slang or abusive language.
- g. Use internet without proper permission from the authorities.
- h. Encourage a child to harm one's/other's body or life.
- i. Keep quiet about known child abuse or child safety risks.

2. Communication Protocols

Do's

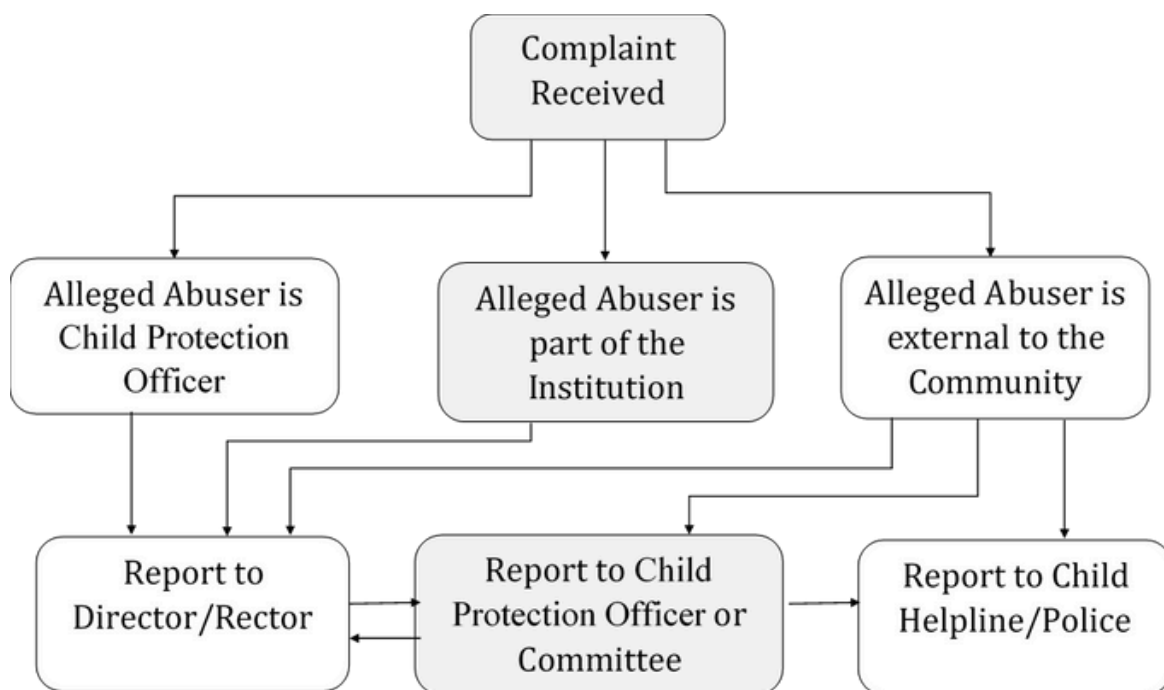
- a. Ensure that only the child protection officer in consultation with the Director interacts with the media.
- b. Protect confidentiality of the child unless it poses harm to the child and others.
- c. Obtain the assent of children and consent of the parent or concerned authority (by giving details about purpose and use) before taking their photographs.
- d. Follow POC SO 2019 Guidelines for dealing with cases of sexual offences.

Do Not's

- a. Say anything to suggest disbelief of a report of child sexual abuse.
- b. Interview a child about any sexual offence during the night (even in a police station).
- c. Photograph or film a minor without the written consent of his/her parents or guardians.
- d. Publish or disseminate, including via the web or social networks, photos, videos, portraying a minor in a recognisable way without the consent of parents or guardians.

3. Reporting and Responding Protocols

The following flowchart shows a suggested process for handling a report of child abuse:



Protocol to be followed if a child directly brings a complaint of child sexual abuse:

- i. Don't show shock and disbelief.
- ii. Let the child know that the abuse is not their fault.
- iii. Appreciate the child for their courage in reporting the abuse.
- iv. Explain that while it will not be possible to keep it confidential, only those people involved in the child's safety will be told.

- v. Don't ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- vi. Report any allegation of abuse to the child protection officer/child safeguarding committee immediately or within 24 hours.
 - a. If the complaint is against the child protection officer, report to the Director directly or through the Complaint/Protection Box mentioning the accused by name.
 - b. If the alleged accused is the Director, report to the Rector/Provincial of the Salesians of Don Bosco.
 - c. If the accused is another child, ensure the accused child also has access to counselling while following the POCSO guidelines. Refrain from extreme reactions to the accused child.
 - d. Use the reporting format to record the exact words of the child as far as possible.
- vii. Do not allow the accused to come in direct contact with children in case of an allegation by a named individual from a very reliable source.
- viii. If within 72 hours of the incident, try to preserve evidence by not:
 - a. Bathing the child
 - b. Washing the clothes of the child survivor
- ix. The Director on receiving the complaint will support the child safeguarding committee to undertake an investigation. The child will be referred (accompanied by their trusted parent/s) for medical examination and to a trained counsellor/child safeguarding committee member. Other assistance including psychological and legal aid can be offered through other support services.
- x. Do not penalise the complainant (for acting in good faith) or treat the person in any way that could be construed as disapproving or threatening.

If the Allegation is found to have Merit, the Director will

- i. Report allegations of child sexual abuse to the Special Juvenile Police Unit using the exact words the child used according to POCSO guidelines, 2019.
- ii. Institute disciplinary action as determined by the policies of (Name of the Institution), dismiss the accused individual if the allegation is proved and proceed for appropriate legal action with support of parents/guardians or the state.

iii. Verify all instances of child sexual abuse, corporal punishment and anything that puts a child in dire harm (e.g., child marriage, child labour, child trafficking etc.) will immediately be reported to the Police (Special Juvenile Police Unit of that jurisdiction) with the help of partner organisations (Child Helpline), if needed, after an emergency meeting of the child safeguarding committee and Director. Adverse determination from an investigation is open to challenge through a legal appeal process.

4. Proactive Safety Protocols

This Policy envisions Preventive Actions as its priority, among which actions are Proactive Safety Protocols. These Actions shall include:

i. Supervision

- a. All children should always be monitored.
- b. Any adult/staff member assisting a teenager should always be supervised.
- c. CCTV cameras should be installed around the campus especially in frequently used spaces. Working condition checks and backups should be scheduled and monitored.

ii. Safe Access

- a. Access is controlled to sensitive areas such as a server room, terraces, and utility areas.
- b. Toilets used by children are separate for boys and girls and are externally monitored.
- c. A lady helper assists younger children (3 yrs. to 6 yrs.) in the toilets.

iii. Role of Management

- a. Child protection officer is kept informed by all committees planning children's activities.
- b. Anti-bullying policy should be annually disseminated, so children are educated on the same. Action should be taken as and when an act of bullying is reported or observed.
- c. No form of corporal punishment should be tolerated in the institution. All teaching and non-teaching staff should be informed of the same at the time of joining and annually at the beginning of every year.
- d. Child safety education should be planned. Sex Education should be conducted annually for children of different ages.
- e. Cyber safety sessions should be conducted for children and awareness about cyber bullying should be created.

- f. Computers used by children should be made to have access to limited websites as required for endorsed programmes.
- g. All members of every Salesian institution interacting with children should be made aware of proper conduct and handling of children.

iv. Child Participation

- a. A 'suggestion' box should be kept for children or others to unobtrusively report issues if any faced by them. Reports and analysis of issues that come in should be regularly monitored by the child safeguarding committee in the presence of the Director or his designate.
- b. Suggestion/complaint boxes kept in the institution can be used by any stakeholder to drop in complaints. The boxes can only be opened by the Director or the Trustee, with the child protection officer.
- c. Institutions may begin child safety clubs or have child safety officers nominated by the management and children.

v. Field Trips/Outings

- a. When organising a trip/outing, the institution should make sure a trip/outing slip is completed. This includes details about the trip and a section for parents to give their consent (if applicable). These slips must be returned before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip with the completed group information/consent forms. (If a group information/consent form has not already been completed for a child or young person, then it has to be completed).
- b. In the case of trips or outings, it should be made clear if staff cars will be used and where the children or young people will be dropped.
- c. If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving, and should have clean licenses. There should always be at least one other responsible person (18 or over) in each vehicle. Drivers and accompanying staff should not be under the influence of intoxication. All vehicles should be tracked.
- d. Children and adolescents should be informed or guided to participate in developing rules for their safeguarding and encouraged to ensure child safety.

5. Indicators of Possible Abuse

A child who's being abused may feel guilty, ashamed, or confused. He or she may be afraid to tell anyone about the abuse, especially if the abuser is a parent, other relative or family friend. That is why it is vital to watch for red flags, such as:

- a.** Withdrawal from friends or usual activities
- b.** Changes in behaviour - such as aggression, anger, hostility, or hyperactivity - or changes in institution performance
- c.** Depression, anxiety or unusual fears, or a sudden loss of self-confidence
- d.** An apparent lack of/avoidance of supervision
- e.** Frequent absences from institution
- f.** Reluctance to leave institution activities, as if he or she doesn't want to go home.
- g.** Attempts at running away
- h.** Rebellious or defiant behaviour
- i.** Self-harm or attempts at suicide

Specific signs and symptoms depend on the type of abuse and can vary. Keep in mind that warning signs are just warning signs. The presence of warning signs doesn't necessarily mean that a child is being abused.

i. Physical Abuse Signs and Symptoms

Unsatisfactory explanations, varying explanations, frequency, and clustering for the following events are high indices for concern regarding physical abuse, which include:

- a.** Physical punishment
- b.** Beating, slapping, hitting, or kicking
- c.** Pushing, shaking, or throwing
- d.** Abrasions/lacerations
- e.** Haemorrhages (retinal, subdural)
- f.** Damage to body organs
- g.** Poisonings
- h.** Repeated (prescribed drugs, alcohol)
- i.** Failure to thrive
- j.** Coma/unconsciousness
- k.** Death
- l.** Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, fractures or burns
- m.** Injuries that don't match the given explanation

ii. Emotional Abuse Signs and Symptoms

- a. Delayed or inappropriate emotional development
- b. Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem
- c. Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm
- d. Depression
- e. Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to institution or ride the bus
- f. Desperately seeks affection
- g. A decrease in institution performance or loss of interest in institution
- h. Loss of previously acquired developmental skills
- i. Rejection
- j. Lack of comfort and love
- k. Lack of attachment
- l. Lack of proper stimulation (e.g., fun and play)
- m. Lack of continuity of care (e.g., frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- n. Continuous lack of praise and encouragement; persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child on the part of the parent or caregiver
- o. Bullying
- p. Conditional parenting in which care, or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviour or actions
- q. Extreme over-protectiveness
- r. Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. Locking child in bedroom)
- s. Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- t. Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development

iii. Neglect Signs and Symptoms

- a. Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- b. Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- c. Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e., child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also due to emotional deprivation
- d. Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental problems including intellectual stimulation

- e. Inadequate living conditions, like, unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- f. Lack of adequate clothing
- g. Inattention to basic hygiene
- h. Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- i. Persistent failure to attend institution
- j. Abandonment or desertion
- k. Taking food or money without permission
- l. Hiding food to eat later

iv. Sexual Signs and Symptoms

- a. Overly affectionate behaviours
- b. Injuries to anal/genital areas, STDs, pregnancy
- c. Sexualised drawings or play.
- d. Having unexplained sums of money
- e. Changes in usual demeanour
- f. Depression, self-mutilation, running away
- g. Fear of changing clothes
- h. Regressed behaviour patterns, such as thumb sucking, recourse to old teddy bears etc.
- i. Promiscuity, provocative behaviours/acts
- j. Using sexualized language inappropriate to age
- k. Using bad touches on lips, chest, buttocks and between the legs
- l. Sexual behaviour or knowledge that's inappropriate for the child's age
- m. Blood in the child's underwear
- n. Statements that he or she was sexually abused
- o. Inappropriate sexual contact with other children

v. Exploitation Signs and Symptoms

Child exploitation is using a child unfairly for (including but not limited to one's own) advantage. When someone grooms and controls a child for a sexual purpose, it is known as exploitation. This involves:

- a. Befriending, gaining their trust, giving them drugs, alcohol or gifts, and asking them to perform sexual acts as a favour or in exchange for something.
- b. Grooming children online for the purpose of sexually abusing them would also be exploitation. This would involve adults befriending children through social networks, email, texting, etc. to gain their trusts and stalking their online activities in view of sexual involvement or any personal gain or advantage.

vi. Cyber Bullying Signs and Symptoms

Bullying committed online is known as cyber bullying. Cybercrimes are offences that can be perpetrated against people, organisations, or businesses using computers, the internet, or mobile technologies. Cybercriminals can perpetrate these crimes by attacking their targets through channels like social networking sites, emails, chat rooms, websites, etc. Victims are not only restricted to adults; children can also fall victim to the crime. Cyber Technology is being used increasingly to disseminate both adult and child sexually explicit material.

Images transmitted across the internet, once downloaded/uploaded can be subsequently misused beyond one's knowledge or control. Internet child sexually explicit material is a criminal offense. A person who views child sexually explicit material is playing a major role in promoting the sexual exploitation of children and is involved in criminal activity.

6. Boundary Violations

Don Bosco insists “that the youngsters should not only be loved, but that they themselves should know that they are loved.” There are many ways of showing affection, some of which are appropriate and others inappropriate. The following lists may help us to strike an accepted and happy medium in this area. More than a list of ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’, they are a reminder to live a role where one enjoys trust with responsibility.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

Contacts and Activities that are Appropriate Under Most Circumstances

- a) Handshake
- b) Normal hugs when initiated by a child
- c) Pat on the shoulder
- d) Sitting close to or in the midst of children
- e) Verbal praise of a child's achievements
- f) Holding hands during prayer, or when the child is upset
- g) Holding hands while walking with small children
- h) Holding and picking up children
- i) Smiling at and/or laughing with a child

Restrictions on Physical Activities and Contacts

- a) Any touching of a child shall be age appropriate and based on the need of the child and not on the need of the adult. If a child initiates physical contact, an appropriate, limited response is proper
- b) One does not engage in wrestling with a child
- c) One does not hold, hug, or touch a child if the child resists in anyway
- d) One does not engage in excessive or frequent hugging
- e) If one-on-one pastoral care of a child should be necessary, avoid meeting in isolated environments and in closed rooms where one cannot be seen. Schedule meetings and use locations that create accountability and do not give rise to suspicion
- f) All trips, rides, vacations, and other such activities must have the approval of the parents and/or the appropriate institution prior to the activity
- g) No child shall live in the living quarters of adult personnel
- h) No child shall be taken to an adult personnel's living quarters unless accompanied by other adults
- i) No overnight trips with a child or a group of children unless at least one other adult (Salesian, parent, or collaborator) is present
- i. **Emotional Boundary Violations:** Emotional boundary violations mean treating the relationship with a child as if it were a romantic or intimate relationship, or an adult-adult relationship. Some examples are:

- a. Spending too much time with a minor
- b. Calling, or writing too frequently, at inappropriate times of the day
- c. Communicating too much through social networks: e-mails, texts, etc.
- d. Getting involved in too many of the minor's activities.
- e. Becoming possessive

ii. Behavioural Boundary Violations: Behavioural boundary violations mean involving a child in activities that a parent or guardian would not allow the child to do. Some examples are:

- a. Ridiculing the beliefs of a minor's parents
- b. Allowing a minor to do things against the wishes of the minor's parents
- c. Offering minors tobacco, alcohol, or drugs
- d. Allowing minors to look at sexually explicit material
- e. Allowing minors to visit inappropriate Internet sites
- f. Giving minors gifts without a parent's permission
- g. Asking a minor to keep secrets from his or her parents
- h. Administering medicine without proper training and authorization

iii. Electronic Communication: No personnel should not communicate with minors (other than relatives) using electronic media except as a part of their professional/ministerial responsibilities. This includes email, instant messaging, texting, or social networking sites. If a minor were to contact personnel, a polite response is permitted, but future communications should be avoided.

During any usage of social media or other electronic communications with minors, Salesians and staff are not to:

- a. Make comments that are, or could be construed by any observer to be, harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, degrading or humiliating
- b. Engage in sexually motivated conversations or discussions about sexual activities unless these are part of a pastoral situation
- c. Post sexually oriented or morally inappropriate pictures, photos, or comments
- d. Post photos of minors or details of ministry/program activities involving minors on any electronic media without the explicit, written permission of a parent or legal guardian
- e. Engage in one-on-one video chatting or have one-on-one interaction in a chatroom
- f. Initiate or accept a 'friend' request (or similar social media 'connection') using a personal account

ANNEXURE II

PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR

Sometimes a parent's demeanour or behaviour may pose red flags about child abuse. Warning signs include a parent who:

- Shows little concern for the child.
- Appears unable to recognise physical or emotional distress in the child.
- Blames the child for the problems.
- Consistently belittles or berates the child, and describes the child with negative terms, such as 'worthless' or 'evil'.
- Expects the child to provide him or her with attention and care and seems jealous of other family members getting attention from the child.
- Uses harsh physical discipline.
- Demands an inappropriate level of physical or academic performance.
- Severely limits the child's contact with others.
- Offers conflicting or unconvincing explanations for a child's injuries or no explanation at all.

Child health experts condemn the use of violence in any form, but some parents or caregivers still use corporal punishment, such as spanking, as a way to discipline their children. Any corporal punishment may leave emotional scars. Parental behaviours that cause pain, physical injury or emotional trauma - even when done in the name of discipline - could be child abuse.

Risk Factors

Factors that may increase a person's risk of becoming abusive include:

- A history of being abused or neglected as a child.
- Physical or mental illness, such as depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Family crisis or stress, including domestic violence and other marital conflicts, or single parenting.
- A child in the family who is developmentally or physically disabled.
- Financial stress, unemployment, or poverty.
- Social or extended family isolation.

- Poor understanding of child development and parenting skills.
- Alcohol, drugs or other substance abuse.

Possible Complications Arising from Child Abuse

Some children overcome the physical and psychological effects of child abuse, particularly those with strong social support and resiliency skills, who can adapt and cope with bad experiences. For many others, however, child abuse may result in physical, behavioural, emotional or mental health issues — even years later. Below are some examples.

Physical Issues

- Premature death
- Physical disabilities
- Learning disabilities
- Substance abuse
- Health problems, such as heart disease, immune disorders, chronic lung disease and cancer

Behavioural Issues

- Delinquent or violent behaviour
- Abuse of others
- Withdrawal
- Suicide attempts or self-injury
- High-risk sexual behaviours or teen pregnancy
- Problems in institution or not finishing high institution
- Limited social and relationship skills
- Problems with work or staying employed

Emotional Issues

- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty in establishing or maintaining relationships
- Challenges with intimacy and trust
- An unhealthy view of parenthood
- Inability to cope with stress and frustrations.
- An acceptance that violence is a normal part of relationships

Mental Health Disorders

- Eating disorders
- Personality disorders
- Behaviour disorders
- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Sleep disturbances
- Attachment disorders



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE III

“Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions”, (Art. 2.1 - 2. 2. 2), published by SPCSA, New Delhi, 2006.

2.1 Screening Procedures for Personnel who are not Salesians

In order to ensure the well-being of children Don Bosco insisted that all “teachers, craft masters and assistants must be of acknowledged morality”. The Salesian Society is committed to making all reasonable efforts to assure that its personnel are trustworthy and morally upright. All hiring or acceptance of employees shall be done carefully. All existing agreements with the non-Salesian personnel shall be reviewed and shall be amended, if necessary, to include the statement that anyone found guilty of a grave act of child sexual abuse will be terminated immediately without prejudice to the respective State/ Labour laws.

2.1.1 Information and References to be Provided

All non-Salesian personnel will be required to provide certain information about themselves and names of some persons who can be referred to as part of the application process by filling up the forms given in Appendix (Application Form, including Criminal Record Form). The information and references submitted by potential personnel are to be carefully reviewed.

2.1.2 Interview

All Non-Salesian personnel shall be interviewed in person by a team consisting of at least two Salesians designated by the institution.

2.1.3 Acknowledgement of the Child Abuse Policy

The Policy of the Province with regard to preventing and dealing with cases of child sexual abuse is to be made part of the “Service Rules” of the Institution or part of the “Code of Conduct for those working in Salesian Institutions.” All personnel shall consent to abide by the “Service Rules” or “Code of Conduct.”

2.2 Employee Education and Policy Information

2.2.1 Making Available this Policy Statement and Guidelines

All Personnel will receive a copy of the “Service Rules” or “Code of Conduct” of the Institution. Copies of this “Policy Statement and Guidelines for Preventing and Treating Cases of Child Sexual Abuse,” shall be made available in all Salesian institutions of the province at a place easily accessible (e.g., library) to all personnel.

2.2.2 Training

All new personnel will be made familiar with this “Policy Statement and Guidelines for Preventing and Treating Cases of Child Sexual Abuse,” during in-service training.

Presentations on Child Abuse and on this Document will also be given at appropriate gatherings such as: Faculty/Staff meetings; Workshops/training programmes for faculty/staff and Orientation programmes for children.

The text, “Guidelines for Affective and Sexual Maturity: For Formation of Lay Collaborators in Dealing with Young People,” prepared by Fr. Abraham Vettical could be used for giving training.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE IV

“Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions”, (Art. 5), published by SPCSA, New Delhi, 2006.

Article 5: The Provincial Commission for Professional Standards and the Process of Investigation

5.1 Establishment and Composition of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards

- a) Each Province shall set up a Provincial Commission for Professional Standards to assist the provincial in his task of dealing with alleged cases of sexual abuse of children.
- b) The Commission is made up of three to five competent persons like a lawyer, a psychologist, a priest, and possibly other members endowed with wisdom and prudence. It is recommended that some members of the Commission be lay persons. The names of the Commission members are made known to the province.
- c) The Coordinator of this Commission is appointed by the Provincial and he will have power to act in the name of the Provincial.

5.2 Competence and Purpose of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards

- a) The Provincial Commission for Professional Standards exists to investigate cases of child sexual abuse in keeping with the directives of Canon Law and the Salesian Congregation, to provide advice and to review policies and has no independent power or authority.
- b) The Provincial Commission for Professional Standards shall:
 - a. Examine alleged cases of sexual abuse of children on the part of Salesians, for the purpose of informing the Provincial of the innocence or culpability of the accused.
 - b. Suggest to the provincial modes of procedure in conformity with the laws of the country, state, and the Church.
 - c. Interview the accused Salesian, the victim(s), and other persons of interest and will inform them of the results of the enquiry.

- d. Propose to the Provincial criteria and guidelines for the Province in dealing with the victim, the accused and at members.
- e. Review the Provincial's pastoral response to the individual making the allegation and, as appropriate, to his/her family.
- f. Maintain contact with the parallel committee of the diocese.
- g. Offer to the provincial opinion concerning the suitability of the accused person for continuing in religious life and ministerial priesthood.

5.3 Officers

- a) The Coordinator of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards shall chair the meetings of the Commission. He shall ensure that the work of the Commission is properly documented and communicated to the Provincial and appoint other ad hoc assistants from among the other Commission members as may be required to accomplish the work of the Commission.
- b) At the beginning of each meeting of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards, the coordinator shall appoint a recording secretary to record the decisions and other relevant actions of the Commission.

5.4 Record Keeping

- a) The Provincial Commission for Professional Standards shall maintain a file on every case or matter it considers. Each file shall contain a written description of the matter presented to the Commission, a written report of the investigation conducted, conclusions reached, and a written summary of the advice given to the Provincial.
- b) The files of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards are the property of the Province whose member is being investigated.
- c) The records kept, and all other documents and information received by the members of the Commission shall be treated as confidential



*Image Credit: Canva

5.5 Operating Procedures

5.5.1 Preliminaries – Responding to a Complaint

- a) When there is an allegation, which according to the considered judgement of the provincial needs further investigation, the Provincial shall notify the coordinator of the Commission. The coordinator shall promptly contact the other members of the Commission and schedule a meeting as soon as possible.
- b) The Provincial shall provide the Commission with all the information that is at his disposal relevant to the matter under consideration.
- c) The Commission will determine if the accusation deals with an abuse that should be treated by penal process as described in the Code of Canon Law (CIC 1720-1728; CCEO 1471-1479), or if the complaint can be dealt with by correction and apology, and accordingly give the complainant other means of addressing the issue. This may include voluntary mediation in an issue. The Commission will keep in mind the gravity of the offence as indicated by CIC 1395ç2, 1321ç3; CCEO 1453 ç1, 1414 ç 2.
- d) The Commission may make a recommendation concerning any immediate action that needs to be taken in relation to the protection of vulnerable children and adults.
- e) The coordinator shall inform the accused of the nature of the complaint if it is possible to do so. The accused needs to be given enough details about the complaint, and the complainant to be able to make a response. The accused shall be entitled to information about the process for dealing with the complaint. The accused will be offered the possibility of choosing a support person, if needed, from a list of support persons indicated by the province. The accused may choose someone of his preference from outside the list also.
- f) The coordinator shall seek a response from the accused within a specified time limit in order to determine whether the facts of the case are significantly disputed.
- g) The Commission may ask the provincial to see that the accused stands aside from a particular office or from all offices held in the province, pending investigation. The provincial may seek the opinion of others involved in the matter before making a decision and shall give the accused the opportunity to be heard on the matter. Where the accused is a Salesian, the provincial shall comply with CIC 1722, CCEO 1473.
- h) Under no circumstances shall there be any attempt to intimidate a complainant or to dissuade a complainant from proceeding with a complaint.

5.5.2 Proceeding with the Investigation

- a)** Where the complainant is not the victim, the coordinator shall not make arrangements to interview the victim without first discussing the matter with the complainant. If the facts are disputed, and it is not possible to interview the person who has been victimized, then it may not be possible to proceed any further in dealing with the complaint unless relevant information from other reliable sources are available.
- b)** When a child has to be interviewed the coordinator shall get the services of someone professionally recognized as skilled in interviewing children. The province shall make available the names of skilled practitioners in interviewing children.
- c)** Special care shall be taken in interviewing persons with intellectual or psychiatric disability. Only a qualified and experienced person shall conduct such interviews.
- d)** The coordinator has the discretion to close a matter if the complainant decides not to cooperate with the process and there is no reasonable ground of getting reliable information from other sources.
- e)** The coordinator shall arrange an interview with the accused if the person is available and willing to speak to the coordinator or other members of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards. If the accused does not wish to cooperate with the process, the process will continue and reach a conclusion concerning the truth of the matter so that the provincial can make an appropriate response to the complainant.
- f)** Where an interview has to take place with the accused, the coordinator shall inform the accused that in Church law a person is presumed innocent till proven guilty. An accused person may be invited to admit to an offence but is not bound to do so, nor may an oath be administered (CIC 1728 ç2, CCEO 1479).
- g)** The accused has a right to obtain independent legal advice. The accused is entitled to have one support person of his/her choice during any interview.
- h)** Decisions about who should be interviewed are made after taking into account also the wishes expressed by the complainant and the accused. The coordinator will make known to the complainant the version of events as presented by the accused.
- i)** The province is not required to disclose documents which it has an obligation to guard as confidential to the accused or to any other person.

- j)** A written record shall be made of all interviews.
- k)** The Provincial Commission for Professional Standards will provide a written report to the provincial of its findings. They shall also comment on how serious the offence was from a pastoral perspective and the punishment to be imposed. The punishment is to be “according to the gravity of the offense, not excluding dismissal or deposition” (Motu Proprio, Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela, 2001, no 4 ç2; Cf. CIC 1395 ç2, 1321ç3; CCEO 1453 ç1, 1414 ç2.; Criteria and norms for Salesian Vocation Discernment, nos.75- 76).
- l)** The complainant and the accused are entitled to know the findings of the assessment promptly. The provincial should communicate this to them. The Provincial may delegate the coordinator to do this.
- m)** If the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards decides to reject the complaint, then it must provide reasons for its decision to the complainant.
- n)** During the assessment, and therefore, at a time when guilt has been neither admitted nor proven, the issue of guilt, liability or the particular course of action that may follow assessment cannot be commented upon.
- o)** As the assessment process is a difficult and trying time for all concerned, particularly the complainant and the accused, the process of assessment shall be undertaken and concluded as quickly as possible (three months).
- p)** Where the accused is a Salesian, the documents associated with the investigation (penal process) shall be preserved in accordance with CIC 1719, 489-490; CCEO 1470.
- q)** The records of the interview and all other documents are to be treated as confidential.
- r)** The process of investigation is complete in relation to the complainant when the provincial gives a response to him/her at the end of the investigation. It may happen that the complainant does not pursue the case or does not show interest in the case after the initial complaint. In such a situation the investigation may not have been initiated or completed and it is considered as officially closed three months from the day the complaint was accepted. [At times the investigation may not have been initiated because the complainant shows no interest in the case indicating that the complaint may not be true]. The process is complete in relation to the accused when the provincial has made known to the accused his findings as well as his decision concerning the ministry that the accused person may engage in from that time.

ANNEXURE V

“Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions”, (Art. 6), published by SPCSA, New Delhi, 2006.

Article 6: Actions to be taken when one is found Guilty or Innocent

6.1 The Duty of the Provincial and His Council

Once the Provincial has received the findings of the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards, he will present the findings to his Council, which gives its judgement, expressing this also by a vote. The Provincial, after consulting his Council, will also decide on the measures to be adopted canonically (including the prohibition to exercise the priestly ministry and possible dismissal).

6.2 Actions to be taken when an Employee is found Guilty

- a) If an employee admits guilt, does not contest guilt, or there is a finding of guilt, with regard to a grave act of sexual abuse of a child, his or her services are immediately terminated without prejudice to existing State/Labour Laws. Adequate safeguards are taken to assure that the Salesian Society does not employ the individual in any capacity.
- b) For acts of sexual abuse of a child of a lesser degree (e.g., indecent proposal), one is punished with a just penalty, not excluding dismissal.
- c) For the evil/criminal act committed and the legal consequences that arise from it he/she alone is responsible.
- d) He/she is exhorted to own his/her responsibility and to cooperate fully with any investigation that may be initiated.
- e) The province will accompany him/her according to the demands of Christian charity to face the new situation.

6.3 Actions to be taken when a Salesian is found Guilty

- a) Once the accusations have been verified, the Provincial will inform the Local Bishop.
- b) The Provincial will send all the documentation with his final judgement to the Rector Major.

c) If a Salesian member, who has completed the initial formation (e.g. Perpetually Professed Salesian Brother, Priest) admits guilt, does not contest guilt, or there is a finding of guilt, with regard to a grave act of sexual abuse of a child that person is removed at once from every public, pastoral or educative ministry, and placed in a position where the possibility of contact with children will be minimal. He may be suspended a divinis (from the ministry of clerics) or restrictions may be placed on his exercise of sacramental ministry. He could be dismissed from the clerical state if the case so warrants (cf. CIC 1395 §2; CCEO 1453 §1; Rector Major's Letter of 19 July 2002).

d) In the case of one in initial formation he is not admitted to renewal of profession or orders and is asked to leave the congregation (Criteria and Norms for Salesian Vocation Discernment, nos.75-76)

e) For acts of sexual abuse of a child of a lesser degree (e.g., indecent proposal), one is punished with a just penalty, not excluding removal from office and ministry (cf. CIC 1395 §2; CCEO 1453; Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela, n.4 §2)

f) In the case of public scandal when a priest or deacon is concerned, he is to be immediately suspended a divinis (from the ministry of clerics). In certain cases, it is fitting that the confrere asks for dispensation from celibacy. He may be also dispensed from the clerical state and the congregation if the case so warrants.

g) For the evil/criminal act committed and the legal consequences that arise from it the guilty person alone is responsible (in the spirit of Regulations 191).

h) The accused confrere is afforded a competent follow-up of a spiritual, psychological, and medical kind through a well chalked out Ongoing Accompaniment Plan (see article 8).

i) No Salesian who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a child may be transferred for ministerial assignment to another province/diocese.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

j) Before a Salesian can be transferred for residence to another province, diocese/eparchy the provincial shall forward, in a confidential manner, to the local provincial and bishop/eparch of the proposed place of residence any and all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a child and any other information that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people (Cf. Letter of Fr Adriano Bregolin dated 24 July 2004 addressed to all Salesian Provincials as well as “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, art 14).

6.4 Actions to be taken when the Accused Person is Proved Innocent

a) If the individual is found innocent, all charges are dropped. The Provincial will consult the Provincial Commission for Professional Standards and the Director of the Institution where the accused had worked to determine if it is to the benefit of all to restore the individual to his or her duties. In any event, the situation shall be noted in the individual’s personal file for future reference if necessary.

b) The Provincial will coordinate communication with all appropriate parties so that reconciliation can take place where possible and the damage done to reputations can be repaired.

c) The Provincial shall take whatever steps are necessary to restore the good reputation of the one who was accused.

d) If it is ascertained that the accusation was done maliciously legal action for defamation may be initiated against the one who made the false accusation.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE VI RISK ASSESSMENT

Area of Risk	Risk Description	Mitigating Actions	Name and Responsibility of the Person	Date to be completed	List Priority
<p>1. Unsafe environment within the project for Children & Staff abuse and exploitation</p>	<p>Having environments where children are at risk to harm, abuse and exploitation.</p>	<p>Developing and Implementing a Child Safeguarding Policy. A policy provides clear guidance and demonstrates how you will ensure children are protected from harm.</p>			
<p>2. Staff & Volunteers - Screen - Training - Behaviour</p>	<p>Staff & Volunteers - Screen - Training - Behaviour Levels of contact/interaction staff have with children, is there a possibility that this staff member/volunteer could harm a child/young person? What background knowledge do you have on this person?</p>	<p>Child-safe recruitment and screening processes are essential to enable you to choose the most appropriate person for a position that involve contact with children. a) Recruitment of staff/volunteers. Interview plan, documented reference and criminal record checks on staff and volunteers. b) Staff have briefing/induction training on child safeguarding. c) Staff is aware of the code of behaviour and signed up for it. d) Supervision Ratios e) Staff is aware of how to report a concern regarding child protection.</p>			

Area of Risk	Risk Description	Mitigating Actions	Responsibility Name of Person	Date to be completed	List Priority
<p>3. Place & Physical Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire Exits - First Aid - Accommodation - Behaviour within the accommodation 	<p>Fire Hazard</p> <p>Accident requiring assistance/medical care.</p> <p>Unsuitable/Unsafe accommodation resulting in accidents, ill-health and harm inappropriate.</p> <p>Behaviour/Abusive situation arising between male/ female or older/ younger child.</p>	<p>a) Access to Fire Exits/Fire Prevention training, all staff/volunteers aware of how to deal with fire hazards.</p> <p>b) First Aid supplies, personnel trained in first aid, access to medical care.</p> <p>c) Meet criteria for safe, accessible accommodation.</p> <p>d) Separate supervised accommodation for males and females.</p> <p>e) Separate, supervised accommodation for older youths and young children.</p> <p>f) Develop Codes of Behaviour for the Children with the children.</p>			
<p>4. Service & Programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision - Consent - Awareness/Education - Health - Organised activities; trips away 	<p>Harm to children because of lack of adult supervision</p> <p>Parents/Guardians unaware of whereabouts of children.</p> <p>Children unaware of their rights and their right to protection</p> <p>Parents/ Guardians/ Community unaware of children's rights</p> <p>Illness/Accident/Child on Medication.</p> <p>Harm to Children as a result of traveling away from home.</p>	<p>a) Adequate supervision of children during all activities (2 adults present)</p> <p>b) Consent from Parents/Guardians for child to attend services& activities.</p> <p>c) Information communicated with children/ young people are rights and safeguards. Codes of Conduct for Children</p> <p>d) Education/Awareness raising for Parents/Guardians/Community on</p> <p>e) First Aid supplies/access to medical personnel and care</p> <p>f) Trips away: safe transport, insurance Appropriate sleeping arrangements</p>			

Area of Risk	Risk Description	Mitigating Actions	Responsibility Name of Person	Date to be completed	List Priority
5. Information/Communication - Storage of personal information - Images of children - Social Media	Breach of confidentiality Inappropriate images of children Misuse of images of children Misuse of social media	a) Adequate, protected storage of all personal data. b) Use of images with consent for the purpose specified c) Provide appropriate information on use of technology for staff/children d) Information for staff/ volunteers on the use of images/information for personal social media			
6. Partners	Contact with Children on project. Safety of Children on Project	Understanding of Safeguarding Policy Communication with Partners			
7. Associates - Consultants - Contractors - Service Providers	Contact with Children on Project.	a) Induction of Safeguarding Policy			
8. Harm to Children/Abuse of Children	Children are vulnerable and at risk of harm.	a) Safeguarding Policy/Poster b) Named Child Protection Person/Safeguarding Person c) Reporting Procedures d) Support services e) Awareness raising for Staff/Children/Parents f) Guardians/Community			

ANNEXURE VII

DEFINITIONS

Definition of terms used in this policy:

- **Allegation:** An allegation is defined as an unproved as yet, accusation made by a person or a group of people in a legal setting, which then needs to be proven through an investigation.
- **Alleged Accused:** A person against whom a complaint of child abuse is lodged prior to the complaint being proved.
- **Child:** Definition as has been provided for herein above chapter 3 (page 4).
- **Mental/Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and the child. 'One off' and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency, and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.
- **Neglect:** Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including severe weather conditions and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of negative influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect. Neglect is physical, educational, or emotional.
 - a. Physical neglect can include not providing adequate food or clothing, appropriate medical care, supervision, or proper weather protection (heat or cold). It may include abandonment.
 - b. Educational neglect includes failure to provide appropriate access to institutions or special educational needs, allowing excessive trancies.

c. Psychological neglect includes the lack of any emotional support and love, never attending to the child, spousal abuse, and drug and alcohol abuse, including allowing the child to participate in drug and alcohol use.

- **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur on a single occasion or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, maybe, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any physical contact and advances of a sexual nature such as but not limited to, touching a child's genitals, forcing a child to watch or take part in sexually explicit material or coercing the child to have sex, sexually coloured remarks, a demand or request for sexual favours, sexual contact, using online media, displaying sexual parts to child or making child display the sexual parts, photographing child showing sexual parts, both homosexual and heterosexual act as explained in POCSO, 2019. It is considered abuse whether it is with or without the child's consent. Sexual exploitation is the exchanging of money or other economic favours in return for sex.
- **Vulnerable person:** A vulnerable person is defined as any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence [Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons by the Vicariate of Vatican City].



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE VIII

Listing Various Acts Related to Children in India

1. Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 and Rules 2006
2. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Rules 2016
3. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and Rules, 2012
4. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and Rules, 2010
5. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016
6. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1986
7. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
8. Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act, 1956
9. Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
10. Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994
11. The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Amendment Act, 2003
12. National Food Security Act, 2013
13. Convention on the Rights of the Child, CRC, 1989



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE IX

National Agencies Protecting Children in India

National Agencies	Website
National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)	https://nhrc.nic.in/
National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)	https://ncpcr.gov.in/
Ministry of Women and Child Development	https://wcd.nic.in/
Ministry of Labour and Employment and Related Bodies	https://labour.gov.in/
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment	https://socialjustice.gov.in/
Ministry of Human Resource Development	https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/RTIHE-010917.pdf
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	https://main.mohfw.gov.in/
Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)	https://cara.wcd.gov.in/
Central Social Welfare Board	http://www.cswb.gov.in/



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

ANNEXURE X

A Summary and Highlights of the Child Rights in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Basic Rights (Articles 1-14)

Article 1: Defines a child as anyone under 18 years of age.

Article 2: Ensures non-discrimination in enjoying these rights.

Article 3: Emphasizes the best interests of the child in all decisions.

Article 4: Requires governments to take action to implement these rights.

Article 5: Recognizes parental guidance while respecting the child's evolving abilities.

Article 6: Guarantees the right to life, survival, and development.

Article 7: Grants the right to a name and nationality.

Article 8: Protects a child's right to maintain their identity.

Article 9: Limits separation from parents except for the child's best interests.

Article 10: Ensures procedures for family reunification.

Article 11: Prohibits the unlawful removal or retention of children from their country.

Article 12: Recognizes the right of children to express their views and participate in matters affecting them.

Article 13: Guarantees the right to freedom of expression, including seeking, receiving, and sharing information and ideas.

Article 14: Guarantees freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

Survival and Development (Articles 15-41)

Article 15: Protects children from war and armed conflict.

Article 16: Safeguards the right to privacy.

Article 17: Ensures access to mass media and information.

Article 18: Promotes freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Article 19: Protects children from all forms of violence, injury, or abuse.

Article 20: Provides special care for children deprived of a family environment.

Article 21: Promotes the adoption process in the child's best interests.

Article 22: Ensures care for refugee children.

Article 23: Protects children with disabilities and promotes their participation in society.

Article 24: Guarantees health care services and fights childhood diseases.

Article 25: Periodic reviews of child health care systems.

Article 26: Ensures social security benefits.

Article 27: Provides adequate living standards for children.

- Article 28:** Guarantees the right to education and its continuous improvement.
- Article 29:** Promotes education to develop respect for human rights and the environment.
- Article 30:** Encourages cultural awareness and the right to participate in cultural life.
- Article 31:** Ensures leisure, play, and recreation.
- Article 32:** Protects children from economic exploitation and harmful work.
- Article 33:** Prohibits the sale, trafficking, and abduction of children.
- Article 34:** Combats sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Article 35:** Prevents the sale and trafficking of children for prostitution or sexually explicit material.
- Article 36:** Protects children from other forms of exploitation.
- Article 37:** Prohibits torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 38:** Protects children during armed conflict.
- Article 39:** Promotes recovery and reintegration for child war victims.
- Article 40:** Administers juvenile justice in a fair manner.
- Article 41:** Defines appropriate standards for the care of children in detention.

Special Protection Measures (Articles 42–46)

- Article 42:** Guarantees the best attainable health care services.
- Article 43:** Promotes mental and physical recovery and social reintegration.
- Article 44:** Ensures disabled children receive care, education, training, and support.
- Article 45:** Provides disabled children with equal opportunities for participation in cultural life, recreation, and leisure.
- Article 46:** Promotes awareness of children's rights with a disability.

Participation (Articles 47–54)

- Article 47:** Children can express views (considering age and maturity).
- Article 48:** Children have right to access information from various sources.
- Article 49:** Children can join/form associations and participate peacefully in assemblies.
- Article 50:** Governments should promote children's cultural identity, language, and traditions.
- Article 51:** Children are protected from harmful information or materials.
- Article 52:** Children exposed to harmful material can seek special protection.
- Article 53:** Governments must raise awareness about children's rights.
- Article 54:** Governments collaborate to implement the UNCRC and monitor progress.

CHAPTER – 10

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION FORM

(Application form for Employment/Volunteering)

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Name of the Institution :

Name:

Surname:

Gender: (Male/Female/Other)

Date of Birth:

Home Address:.....

.....

.....

Email-ID:

Telephone numbers:

Details of persons to be contacted in an emergency:

Contact Person Address:

.....

.....

Telephone numbers:

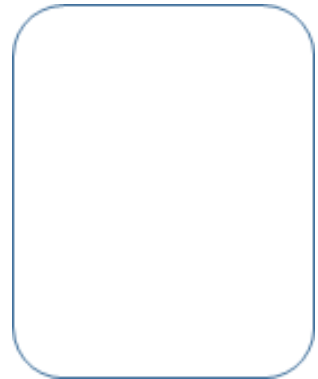
Details of previous work experience with children and youth aged 18 years and below:

.....

.....

.....

.....



Details of Qualifications/Training in Children’s Work:

.....

.....

.....

Character References:

Please give the names and addresses of two persons who can provide information on your suitability to work with children and young people:

1.

2.

Do you have any personal records related to incidents of inappropriate conduct towards minors (individuals below 18 years of age)? **Yes** **No**

Other Residential Addresses:

List other addresses where you lived over the last five years. Please include dates. Write ‘none’ if this section does not apply to you.

S. No.	FROM DATE	TILL DATE	NAME OF OWNER	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER

WORK HISTORY: List the details of earlier employments.

S. No.	FROM DATE	TILL DATE	NAME OF REPORTING MANAGER	NAME AND ADDRESS OF ORGANISATION	PHONE NUMBER

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS, IF ANY:

Serial Number:

Conviction Date:

Court offense:

Sentence:

PERSONAL DECLARATION BY VOLUNTEER/STAFF:

I have no history of abuse of children and no record of convictions relating to offenses against children, or for violent crimes and consider myself suitable to work in this institution/project.

I understand that in case a history/incidence of past sexual abuse or convictions is discovered, I alone will be held responsible, and my services will be terminated, entertaining no claims whatsoever towards any benefits or compensation.

I will understand and abide by the child safeguarding policy of this institution.

I declare that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge and that I agree to verification of these particulars by the police or other competent agencies. Besides, I have attached the Police Verification Certificate here.

Signature (Volunteer/Staff):

Signature (Director/Project leader for Salesians of Don Bosco):

Date:

Place:

APPENDIX 2

CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

I am aware of “Don Bosco YaR Child Policy & Essential Protocols”, the official child protection policy of Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (DB YaR Forum). I am aware and accept that compliance with it is a condition of service in this organisation.

I,....., hereby accept and consent to being held ethically and/or legally accountable for abiding by this Child Protection Code of Conduct in letter and in spirit. I state that my signature below affirms my declaration of adherence to it as a condition for my being a member/employee/volunteer of this organisation.

Accordingly,

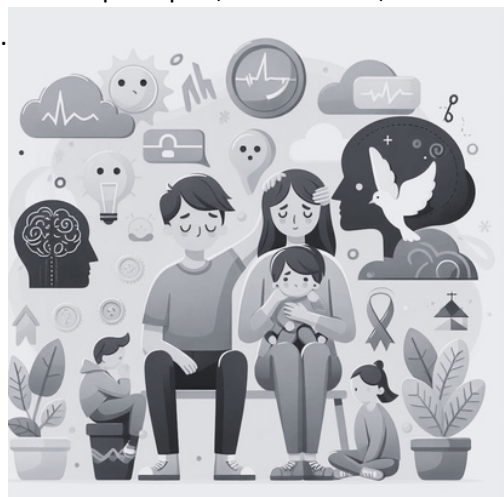
A. I shall always ensure that:

1. I respond to each child or young person as a unique creation of God, with dignity and the right to grow and develop to his/her full potential in a secure, nurturing environments.
2. I interact with every child and/or young person in a manner which demonstrates respect, dignity, integrity, empathy, understanding and patience – regardless of nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, language, colour, political or religious affiliation, economic or social status, level of physical or mental ability.
3. I model socially appropriate adult behaviour to children and young persons, which reflects the capacity to listen to, understand and be respectful towards them.
4. I seek to establish a caring, attentive, protective, and respectful relationship with each child or young person.
5. While being available to a child or young person, I maintain professional boundaries of relationship with them.
6. My relationships are governed by the age and developmental stage of a child or young person.
7. I physically restrain a child or young person, only when there exists a danger to the individual or to other individuals in the area.

8. I respect every resistance by a child or young person to involvement in any activity that is not part of the legitimate service of the institution/organisation.
9. On the internet and social networking sites, I interact with a child or young person only professionally and in my official capacity.
10. Any physical touching is in response to the needs of a child or young person and never of an inappropriate kind.
11. The doors of a room are always open or that visual access is always maintained, when I am alone with a child or young person.
12. There are other professional adults to supervise me, when there is a sleep over or stay in a hotel/hostel/home with children or young people I am professionally associated with.
13. I speak up and promptly report concerns and/or genuine cases of exploitation or abusive behaviour towards children or young people.
14. I am vigilant to harm to children and young people and shall immediately report any concern I have of the same to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer, in my institution/organisation.
15. I maintain confidentiality, to the extent possible within legally permissible limits, about information known to me about a child or young person.
16. I refer all media queries to the spokesperson designated for the task and make no other comments or statements.
17. I comply with all procedures of “Don Bosco Child Safeguarding Policy and Essential Protocols”.
18. I comply with all relevant Indian and international principles, conventions, laws and standards relating to children and young people.

B. I shall always avoid:

1. Engaging in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children or young people.
2. Using inappropriate, offensive, or discriminatory language when speaking with children or young people.
3. Slapping, hitting or in any way physically assaulting a child or young person.



*Image Credit: MS Bing Image Creator

4. Developing and/or using disciplinary means, which are physically or emotionally derogatory to a child or young person.
5. Engaging in sexual conversations, activities that sexualize my relationship with a child or young person, or developing exploitative relationships with children or young people is strictly prohibited unless approved for legitimate teaching on sexuality issues.
6. Displaying sexually inappropriate material to children or young people, whether in print or digital form, or possessing such material on institution/organisation premises, along with misusing any official or personal device to access illegal or inappropriate content aimed at exploiting or harassing them, is strictly prohibited.
7. Behaving provocatively or inappropriately with a child or young person.
8. Holding, kissing, cuddling, or touching a child or young person, in an inappropriate, unnecessary, or culturally insensitive way.
9. Entering any area of privacy for children or young people, unless legitimate business of the centre requires me to, and without announcing my presence.
10. Sleeping in the same bed/room or close to unsupervised children or young persons I am professionally engaged with, unless absolutely necessary.
11. Performing medical/physical examinations of children or young people, unless it is my legitimate professional duty or a medical emergency.
12. Exposing areas of my body considered private, in an inappropriate manner in the presence of children or young people.
13. Indulging in behaviour with children or young people that leads to close physical contact, unless it is an unavoidable part of a structured sports activity of the centre /institution.
14. Seeking to make contact and spend private time with any child or young person outside of legitimate official programme times.
15. Photographing or videoing a child or young person, without their consent and that of their parents or guardians.
16. Condoning or participating in behaviour of children or young people that is illegal, unsafe, or abusive.
17. Acting in a manner that shows unfair and/or differential treatment of particular children or young people.

18. Engaging or recruiting children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate to their age, or which interferes with their education or recreational activities or which places them at significant risk of injury.
19. Transporting children or young people, without the permission of their parent or legal guardian, except as a direction from a superior or in the event of an emergency.
20. Using, possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol when in the presence of or while supervising children or young people.
21. Supplying alcohol or illegal drugs to children or young people.
22. Discriminating against a child or young person on the basis of their, gender, sexual orientation, language, status, ethnicity, nationality, caste, religion, etc.
23. Neglecting to take action when a child or young person is in real need.
24. Seeking to avoid any involvement by not speaking up for the rights of any person, especially children and young persons who are being abused.
25. Letting allegations made by a child or young person go unaddressed.
26. Making any report that is aimed at “getting even” or “fixing” another individual and/or that can be termed as frivolous or vexatious in nature.

Member / Employee / Volunteer

Witness

Signature

Signature

Name:

Name:

Date:

Date:

Executive Director/Authorized Signatory

Signature

Name:

Date:

* We use “child or young person” to refer to children up to the age of 18 and those above that age, who are in our care, as used also in the Statutes of DB YaR Forum. Whatever the age of the child or young person in our care, this code of conduct will apply uniformly.

APPENDIX 3

SELF-DECLARATION AND DISCLOSURE

Private and Confidential

Name			
Address			
Telephone:		Email-ID:	
Have you ever been known to any children’s services’ department as being at risk or potential risk to children?		YES / NO	
If Yes, please provide further details:			
Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children		YES / NO	
If Yes, please provide further details:			
Confirmation of Declaration			
I am aware that..... is the Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer at Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk and would be contacted at		YES / NO	
(Email Id) or (phone) in case of any complaint or clarification.			
I confirm that I have read the Child Protection Code of Conduct and I agree to be bound by it. I understand my responsibility as an adult in the course of any activity undertaken in this institution/organisation/centre.		YES / NO	
I understand that the information contained on this form and information supplied by third parties may be supplied by the organisation to other persons or organisations in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard other children.		YES / NO	
By affixing my signature to this document, I agree to be bound by “Don Bosco YaR Child Safeguarding Policy & Essential Protocols”		YES / NO	
Signature			
Name			
Date			

APPENDIX 4

REPORTING FORM

(To be used by the CPO/CSC in reporting an instance of child abuse)

NAME OF THE COMPLAINANT

AGE SEX NATIONALITY

ADDRESS/CONTACT DETAILS

TELEPHONE/MOBILE

NAME OF THE CHILD (IF DIFFERENT FROM THE COMPLAINANT)

AGE SEX NATIONALITY

HAS THE CHILD/GUARDIAN GIVEN CONSENT TO COMPLETION OF THIS FORM: YES / NO

DATE OF INCIDENT..... TIME.....

PLACE.....

PHYSICAL STATE OF CHILD

EMOTIONAL STATE OF CHILD

NAMES OF WITNESSES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

S. No.	NAME	AGE	SEX	JOB TITLE	LOCATION (ORGANISATION DETAILS)	PHONE NUMBER

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT/S (ATTACH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NEEDED)

DETAILS OF PERSON/S ACCUSED

S.No	NAME	AGE	SEX	JOB TITLE	LOCATION (ORGANISATION DETAILS)	PHONE NUMBER

Has the child/guardian contacted the police? Yes/No

If yes, what happened:

Report submitted to on..... FIR#

If no, does the child/guardian want police support:

Has the child/guardian been informed of the following:

- o The need to inform police? YES/NO
- o The need for medical care? YES/NO
- o The need for counselling? YES/NO
- o Any Other:

Child Safeguarding Committee Members Present for Follow-up Action:

.....

Has a referral been made? YES/NO(If yes, to whom) NAME

PH#

Has the Police been called? (If yes) NAME

DESIGNATION..... FIR#

Is this incident reported to Director? Yes/No Provincial? Yes/No

NAME OF REPORTER: DATE:

(All information must be held securely and handled strictly in line with applicable reporting and investigation procedures laid out in this child safeguarding policy)

APPENDIX 5

REVIEW OF STANDARDS FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING

(Checklist to be maintained by the Child Safeguarding Committee of the Institution)

ORGANISATION:

S. No.	Standards	In place	Partially	Not in place yet
1	A written CSP about which all staff and children are knowledgeable			
2	An active, committed child safeguarding committee and designated officers			
3	Signatures of staff agreeing to comply with CSP			
4	Assessment of child safety in the organisation using standard tools (NCPCR)			
5	Compliance with behaviour protocols when working with children (staff, volunteers, etc.)			
6	Publicising and implementation of equal rights of all children to safeguarding			
7	Enhancing child participation in child safety			
8	Regular education and training in child safety			
9	Access to advice and support in child-related issues			
10	Increased partnerships for enhancing child safeguarding			

BRIEF REPORT:

Child Protection Officer's sign: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 6

CONSENT FORM FOR USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION/IMAGES OF ADULT BENEFICIARIES (ABOVE 18)

I, (name of the beneficiary) do hereby grant permission to (Name of the Institution) and its employees or representatives, to take and use my: photographs, video and/or digital images for use in promotional or educational materials pertinent to the (Name of the Institution) program as follows:

- In printed publications or materials
- In electronic publications or presentations
- On the (Name of the Website)
- On (Name of the Institution) related social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube)
- On the Don Bosco network websites

I agree that my identity (please select and tick): may be revealed/may not be revealed in descriptive text or commentary in connection with the image(s).

I authorize the use of these images indefinitely without compensation to me. All negatives, positives, prints, digital reproductions, and video shall be the property of (name of the institution).

Name of beneficiary:

Signature of the beneficiary: Date:

Address:

.....

APPENDIX 7

CONSENT FORM FOR USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION/IMAGES OF CHILDREN BENEFICIARIES (UNDER 18)

I,, (parent or guardian name)
parent or legal guardian of (child's name),
do hereby grant permission to (Name of the
Institution) and its employees or representatives, to take and use: photographs, video
and/or digital images of my child for use in promotional or educational materials
pertinent to (Name of the Institution)
program as follows:

- In printed publications or materials
- In electronic publications or presentations
- On the (Name of the Institution)
..... (name of the website)
- On (Name of the Institution)
related social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube)
- On the Don Bosco network websites

I agree that my child's identity: **may be revealed** **may not be revealed**

in descriptive text or commentary in connection with the image(s).

I authorize the use of these images indefinitely without compensation to me. All
negatives, positives, prints, digital reproductions, and video shall be the property of
..... (name of the institution).

Name of parent/legal guardian

Signature of parent/legal guardian: Date:

Address:.....

APPENDIX 8

NCPCR CRITERIA FOR CHILD SAFE INSTITUTIONS

(Though institutions are mentioned, the child safeguarding committee can use the referenced NCPCR child safety standards as applicable, to assess the institution annually and recommend practices for enhancing child safety.)

10.1 Section I – Physical Safety

10.1.1 Institution Building

1. Is the Institution building as per the norms under the National Building Code of India 2005?
2. Does the institution maintain the standards and norms of an institution as specified in JJ Act, 2015 and Rules, 2016?
3. Has the building been certified as safe for housing the children by the local authorities?
4. Are the institutions building and premises free from inflammable and toxic materials?
5. Are there ramps at the entry to the institution, rooms and classrooms, toilets, playground, library, canteen, and auditorium for children with disabilities?
6. Is an alarm system/Centralised Public Announcement system installed in the institution?
7. Is the CCTV monitoring system monitored regularly?
8. Are the electrical fittings in the rooms and classrooms and corridor working properly and secured properly?
9. Are switch board/main switches working properly? Is the switch board covered and cautioned?
10. Do water coolers and other electrical gadgets cause electrical shock? If yes, have remedial measures been taken?
11. Has there been any case of electric shock or problem of any type reported by the staff/children?
12. Have any sparks or short circuits occurred in the past one week?
13. Are the room's and classroom's doors, emergency doors, corridors and staircases clear of obstruction?
14. Make sure floor evacuation plan is displayed properly.
15. Make sure fire extinguishers are in place.

16. Are water filter/purifier/RO systems functional?
17. Are there separate toilet blocks for children for 3 to 6 years of age?
18. Are there attendants for children in age group for 3-6 years to assist children?
19. Is there running water facility in all the toilets?
20. Are toilets cleaned and maintained regularly?
21. Do toilets have arrangements for disposing waste material, especially for girls? Are these functional?
22. Are ceiling tiles or plaster hanging from the wall/roof?
23. Is there any dampness in the wall?
24. Is cross ventilation in rooms and classrooms and library maintained?
25. Are rooms properly illuminated?
26. Are chemicals in safe places away from the reach of the children, ventilated and an exhaust fan working?
27. Is a lightning conductor in place and working properly?(Specially prior to and during the rainy season).
28. Are there any suggestions from children/staff for upgrading floor safety?
29. Are the institution premises disabled-friendly?
30. Is the lift in the institution capable of serving the needs of children with disabilities?
31. Do open wells/ponds (if existing) in the institution campus have protective walls and iron grills covering the wells/ponds?
32. Is movement of children towards wells/ponds/river/canals/tanks (if exists)restricted?
33. Does the institution have a swimming pool?
34. Are the (Sports Authority of India) SAI guidelines for swimming pools followed?

10.1.2 Fire Safety Management

1. Does the institution have a fire safety certificate?
2. Is the fire safety certificate of the institution updated and renewed periodically?
3. Does the institution have adequate firefighting systems in place to meet any emergency?
4. Is the institution in touch with local firefighting agencies for mock drill training and retraining to a crisis management group?
5. Are emergency steps in place in the institution for fire safety management?

6. Is there a trained management team available in the institution for initial fire hazard management and disaster management?
7. Is the institution in touch with the local fire safety authorities and local disaster management authorities for training and retraining the people?
8. Has the institution obtained NOC from the Fire and Rescue Services Department?
9. Are there any cracks in the institution structures and are steps being taken to repair them?
10. Is the institution situated in or around old or dilapidated buildings?
11. If so, has it been brought to the notice of the local authorities or management so that adequate steps are taken for relocating the institution?
12. Is the institution located near any railway track? If yes, is the impact of such locations being examined by the local authorities for the safety of the children?

10.1.3 Earthquake Management

1. Is the institution situated in the earthquake risk zone?
2. How safe is the institution building to face a natural disaster of this kind?
3. Are there any emergency steps in place for disaster preparedness at institutions?
4. Are periodic earthquake drills conducted as per the guidelines of NDMA?
5. Have necessary steps been taken during construction of the building for earthquake safety for the building?
6. Are the staff of the institution trained/ oriented for initial response to any disaster?
7. Is the institution in touch with the local disaster management authorities for training and retraining them?

10.1.4 Flood/Cyclone/Landslide Management

1. Is the institution situated near the seashore or a river? If so, are adequate measures taken to avoid easy access by children?
2. Is there any contingency plan prepared by the institution in dealing with natural disasters such as floods/flash floods, cyclones, cloud bursts and heavy rains?
3. Is there a transport mechanism in place for emergency transport of children?
4. Is the institution situated on hilltops or where there is a possibility of landslide? If so, are adequate measures in place to evacuate children, if required?

5. Is the institution located near an industry or a chemical factory producing toxic chemical products? If so, are adequate measures in place to evacuate children or carryout first aid, if required?

10.1.5 Electrical Safety

1. How safe are the electrical systems in the institution? Are they being checked periodically?
2. Has the institution ensured limited access to the area of electrical installation only to those who are required?
3. Are there any uncovered live wires?
4. Are warning signs displayed near electric poles?

10.1.6 Safety from Constructional Hazards

1. Does the institution have any ongoing construction? Has permission from local authorities for construction / repair been taken?
2. Has the institution put barricades and signboards in the construction area prohibiting the movement of children?
3. Are water storage sources for any construction covered to prevent small children from any possible mishap?

10.1.7 Water Safety

1. Is the safety certificate for drinking water obtained? Is the water source well protected?
2. Is the water provided to the children tested by the local authorities periodically?
3. Does the institution ensure safe potable water always?
4. Does the institution have a water management system in the event of a fire? Is there access to such sources?

10.2 Section II – Emotional and Personal Safety

10.2.1 Trauma Management

1. Does the institution have a trauma management team to help them during any accident or disaster?
2. Does the institution have the contacts available for trauma management?
3. Are the senior persons in the institution aware of the telephone number of the hospitals, ambulance, and the fire stations near the institution?

10.2.2 Safety of the Children with Disabilities

1. Are the institution and premises disabled friendly?
2. Are there any designated officials in the institution who is entrusted with the exclusive responsibility of their needs in any emergency?
3. Whether differently abled children are accompanied by an attendant when using toilets?
4. Are fellow children sensitive towards children who are differently-abled?

10.2.3 Health

1. Does the institution keep the medical records of children with special health problems?
2. Is there a doctor-on-call for emergency, in institutions?
3. Does the institution hold regular health check-ups as prescribed by the Department of Education (DoE)?
4. Is the Individual Child Health Card/File maintained and updated periodically?
5. Do parents communicate their child's health issues to institution authorities?
6. Does the institution have an understanding with the nearest hospital?
7. Is the medical room equipped to handle medical emergencies?
8. Is a basic medicine kit/first- aid box available in the institutions?
9. Are the First-Aid protocols for common injuries displayed at prominent places in institution?
10. Make sure contact numbers of Doctors, Hospital, Ambulance, including private service, for emergency medical care are displayed in a prominent location.
11. Teachers and key staff have to be trained in first aid and CPR. Do they have basic training in counselling, identification of disabilities, learning difficulties etc.?
12. Is Health Education, with topics on health issues including balanced diet, nutritious alternatives to junk food, regular eating habits, personal hygiene etc. provided to children?
13. Is there a dietician/meal plan for meals?
14. Is there a separate kitchen with store facility?
15. Is the kitchen kept clean, hygienic, rodent and pest free?
16. Are all food products always covered and stored hygienically?
17. Are Gas stoves with ISI mark, kept in a safe place, maintained, and checked regularly?

18. Are gas stoves kept out of reach of the children?
19. Is the staff present when children have their meals to observe their eating habits?

10.2.4 Sanitation and Hygiene

1. Are there separate toilets for boys and girls?
2. Are there toilets for children with special needs?
3. Do the toilets doors have child-friendly latches?
4. Does the institution regularly conduct hand washing sessions for children?
5. Are regular inspections of water and sanitation facilities conducted?
6. Are hygiene etiquettes disseminated through supplementary reading material.?

10.2.5 Safety of Children against Sexual Abuse

1. Does the institution have a grievance committee for Child Sexual Abuse(CSA)?
2. Is all teaching, non-teaching, contractual and other staff sensitised on the CSA committee and child laws?
3. Are the teaching and non-teaching staff specifically trained to be alert to signs and indicators of child abuse, protection of child rights, child safety and child development, child abuse and related issues?
4. Are parents and children sensitised from time to time on the Child Safeguarding Policy/Guidelines/child laws and reporting Mechanisms?
5. Is there a recruitment and verification protocol and procedure in place for teaching, non-teaching, contractual, voluntary and other staff, before they are allowed to work with children?
6. Do you follow a clearly laid out procedure and line of reporting for teachers and other members of the staff, in the event of a child abused by teaching or non-teaching staff or anyone else connected with the institution?
7. Is the Child Safety poster on display in prominent locations of the institution?
8. Are there books/reading materials on child safety and protection available in the institution?
9. Does the institution have a qualified Child Counsellor/Psychologist – part time or full time or an on-call consultant available requirement related to mental health related emergencies? Are children regularly oriented towards good touch and bad touch?

10. Are children educated about preventive steps to be taken w.r.t Child Sexual Abuse?

11. Does the institution conduct awareness programs to sensitize children on the harm caused by substance abuse, mutual and peer respect, gender sensitivity, social responsibility and consequences of behaviour or action, including penalisation under law such as JJ Act, 2015 and POCSO Act, 2012?

12. Does the institution have Children's Forums or Clubs that promote children's participation and provide platforms for them to discuss and share with the teachers and those in authority, about safety, protection, and other relevant issues?

10.3 Section III – Social and Emotional Safety

1. Are children given guidance and trained on adequate age-appropriate social skills to manage emotions like fear, anger and stress and prevent abuse of self or others to build self-esteem and confidence and build healthy peer relationships?

2. Is there an Anti-Bullying Committee in the institutions are the children aware of it?

3. Are all types of bullying discouraged and prohibited in the institution premises?

4. Are children asked to refrain from bullying, ragging, criticism, rude language, and malicious gossiping?

10.4 Section IV – Cyber Safety

1. Is access to computer rooms and use of electronic and technological devices by children supervised by teachers? Are social networking sites blocked on the institution computers?

2. Are children regularly educated on the safe use of technology and how to be a responsible digital citizen – sensible use of mobiles, SMS, MMS, internet, mail or net chats, effect of plagiarism, the consequences under the laws on cyber misuse, bullying, harassment and how to avoid risky behaviour?

3. In the event of cyber abuse or crime, are the institution authorities and children aware of the procedures to be followed and steps prescribed within the legal framework, legal recourse, and information about the Cyber Crime Department in the Police?

4. Are cyber-crimes handled with sensitivity and confidentiality?

10.5 First Aid Kit in Institutions

All Institutions should be equipped with a First Aid Kit containing:

- Thermometer
- Roller Bandage
- Gauze Pad
- Lotion Chlorhexidine (SAVLON)
- Lotion Povidone-Iodine (BETADINE)
- Framycetin Sulphate (SOFRAMYCIN)
- Splints
- Tourniquets
- Kidney tray
- Cotton
- Eye pads
- Adhesive tape
- Band aids
- Scissors
- Box Bag Sample
- Hot Water Bottle



*Image Credit: Canva

APPENDIX 9

GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

During pre-COVID times, as part of our child safeguarding protocols, we were advised not to communicate with children and minors through social media. However, in the new circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, to overcome the challenges and limitations of physical distancing, it has become necessary to use online and social media communication with children and young people. Accordingly, the following guidelines for a child-safe virtual environment are to be observed in our institutions.

1. Virtual Spaces: Online environments where people interact. For example:

- a. Virtual/Online meetings: Skype, Google Hangouts, Zoom, FaceTime, GMeet etc.
- b. Messenger applications: iMessage, Google Voice, WhatsApp, Slack, etc.
- c. Telephone: cellular phone or landline

2. Parental Permission: Similar to a physical gathering, parental consent must be obtained and documented. The requested permission should specify the date and time of the virtual gathering, and the digital medium that will be used to conduct it.

3. Contact Information: In addition to parental consent, when communicating with children, parents must have the contact information of the person contacting: specifically, the telephone number, email ID or account to be used. In the case of a virtual/online meeting, the parents should also receive the link.

4. Messaging/Chats: Avoid messaging a minor directly unless required for educational purposes as most messaging applications do not comply with Salesian Safe Environment protocols.

5. Online Gatherings: Supervision by management of online live sessions is required and an additional adult presence during sessions is encouraged.

6. Proper Setting: Live online gatherings should be hosted from appropriate spaces (not places that look like bedrooms or bathrooms). Children and youngsters who participate should also be instructed to choose an appropriate space. Both the children and the person conducting the session should be properly dressed.

7. Recording: Meetings may be recorded only with appropriate and prior notification to both parents and as well as the participants.

REFERENCE

Article 15(3), Article 24, Part IV, 42nd Amendment of Constitution of India.

CBCI child protection policy for Catholic schools in India (Revised version). (2023). CBCI Office for Education and Culture.

Child safeguarding policy. (2020, June). Don Bosco Child Care Institutions Sacred Heart Province of Bangalore.

Don Bosco YaR Child Policy and Essential Protocols. (2013). Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk.

Fr. Abraham Vettical. Guidelines for Affective and Sexual Maturity: For Formation of Lay Collaborators in Dealing with Young People.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. (2012)

Protection of Minors: Policy Statement and Guidelines for use in Salesian Institutions. (2006), SPCSA, New Delhi.

Regulatory guidelines for hostels of educational institutions for children. (2018). Education Division National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act. (2009).

SCI External Facing Child Safeguarding Policy. (2019, August). Save the Children.

The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act. (1967).

The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act. (1986).

The Data Protection Act. (2023).

The Factories Act. (1948).

The Guardian and Wards Act (1890).

The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act. (1956).

The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act. (1956).

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. (2015). Ministry of Law and Justice.

The Motor Transport Workers Act. (1961).

The Mines Act. (1952).

The National Policy for children. (2013).

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act. (2006).

Understanding Children Rights: NCPDR's Handbook for Media Professionals. (2018). National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Vademecum on certain points of procedure in treating cases of sexual abuse of minors committed by clerics. (2021, December 8). Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>

DB YaR Forum Network & Reach





Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk

Bangalore - Chennai - Dimapur - Guwahati - Hyderabad - Kolkata - Mumbai - New Delhi - Panjim - Shillong - Tiruchy

C - 991, Don Bosco House SPCI, Sector 7 Dwarka, New Delhi - 110077



info@dbyarforum.org



+91 8851653538



DB YaR Forum