

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Educational Centre Eksena

Educational Centre Eksena main purpose is realization of human rights in everyday life of people and strive for social progress and better standards of life through our education in the field of personal relations in accordance with our vision *"to return respect, compassion and love to the individual, with that his true value and so to help create a society that is successful and creative, without being destructive."*

Basis of our work are Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNESCO Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, with special attention to children. We are highly committed to respecting and promoting children's rights, acting in their best interests, keeping them safe and protecting them with zero tolerance for violence against children.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive Educational Centre Eksena services,
- To maintain strong child protection system and procedures,
- To provide staff, volunteers, partner organisations' staff and associates with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection;

Educational Centre Eksena believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe with love and dignity. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

ECE Child Protection Policy is grounded on:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- General Comment No. 13 (2011) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence;
- Data protection Act 1998,
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012,
- Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia (Art. 56);
- The Code of Ethical Principles in Social Protection (Social Chamber of Slovenia);
- Domestic Violence Prevention Act;
- The Lanzarote Convention,
- I'Albero della Vita Child Protection Policy.

DEFINITIONS UNDER THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Children

In line with the UNCRC, for the purposes of the present Policy, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. (UNCRC Article 1).

Violence is defined as physical, psychological (psychosocial), and sexual violence to children through abuse, neglect or exploitation, as acts of commission or omission in direct or indirect forms, that endanger or harm the child's dignity, physical, psychological, or social status, or development.

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

EDUCATIONAL CENTRE EKSENA PRINCIPLES

1. All children have equal rights to protection from harm and abuse and to be respected and loved.
2. All children have equal rights for full and harmonious development of his or her personality in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.
3. Organisations have a duty of care to children with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.
4. Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
5. The right of children to have their best interests be a primary consideration in all matters involving or affecting them must be respected, especially when they are victims of violence, as well as in all measures of prevention.
6. Children's rights to be heard and to have their views given due weight must be respected systematically in all decision-making processes, and their empowerment and participation should be central to child caregiving and protection strategies and programmes.

ECE principles to child protection will be guided by the following commitment:

a) **Awareness:**

- we will promote the open and free discussion about all issues related to child protection, promoting child wellbeing and keeping children safe,
- we will ensure that all ECE staff and partners as well as stakeholders involved in projects are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children,
- we will ensure, that children and their parents/guardians are informed about ECE Complaint Procedure, about their rights to be heard;

b) **Prevention:**

- We will guarantee extremely high professional standards to be applied during the selection of the respect and the enforcement of ECE Child Protection Policy,
- We will ensure, that all programmes and projects will be designed and implemented to minimise the risk of harm to the children we come into contact with or impact upon directly or indirectly by our actions,
- we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that ECE staff and partners minimise the risks to children,
- we will promote a safe, free and open environment where children are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights;

c) **Reporting:**

- we will ensure, that ECE staff and partners are clear on what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children,
- we will ensure child-friendly reporting mechanisms, so that child can report in confidence and safety,
- we will guarantee that any child abuse/child protection concern is treated and investigated keeping the highest degree of confidence;

d) **Responding:**

- we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns of abuse arise,

- we will periodically review the Policy, according to the feedback and experience.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 20th of June 2019

Signed:

Miran Pečnik



Ksenija Pečnik



Ajda Bezenšek Špetič

