

CHILD
PROTECTION
POLICY

2nd April

2022



Change Initiatives

Preamble: Change Initiatives is committed to the protection and well-being of children participating in our programmes and activities. This Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to creating a safe and secure environment for children and provides guidelines for preventing, recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect.

Purpose: Children are a key stakeholder in Change Initiatives, which counts Education as one of its principal activities. We believe Children are entitled to their rights as enshrined in United Nations Convention of Child Rights (UNCRC) Charter and the Constitution of India, including protection from all kinds of abuse, violence, discrimination, and neglect. The purpose of our Child Protection Policy is to make all our stakeholders — including staff, project partners, vendors, volunteers, governing body members, donors and well-wishers — aware of Child Rights, know that Child Rights is a *sin qua non* in all aspects of our project activities and any violation of the Policy will lead to summary termination of our relationship, arrangement, and contract with the concerned stakeholder.

Principles

Change Initiatives is guided by the following principles:

- **Best Interests of the Child:** The best interests of the child will be a primary consideration in all decisions and actions
- **Non-Discrimination:** All children, regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, or socio-economic status, have the right to protection from abuse and exploitation
- **Respect for Rights:** Children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and their voices should be heard and taken into account in matters that concern them

Code of Conduct:

Change Initiatives staff, associates, and volunteers MUST:

- Respect the privacy and dignity of every child
- Ensure safety of children by identifying and managing risks periodically in all spaces accessed by children.
- Be conscious of and sensitive towards making appropriate arrangements for the special needs of children, particularly physically and mentally challenged children
- Be sensitive towards children's age, sex, ethnicity, background, sexuality, religion, etc.
- Always seek informed consent from children and their parents or guardians regarding taking photographs and videos of children
- Ensure that all images / videos taken of children are respectful of their dignity

Change Initiatives staff, associates and volunteers MUST NOT:

- Engage in any behaviour to intimidate, bully, humiliate, shame, threaten, coerce, or belittle any child
- Physically abuse or hit any child or use any form of corporal punishment against any child
- Engage in any behaviour in a manner that is viewed as offensive, sexually provocative, overt or otherwise
- Disclose the identity and /or personal information of children.
- Display or distribute images of children without informed consent from children and their parents and appropriate authority

- Stigmatize or discriminate against a child, or show differential treatment to some children to the exclusion of others

Recruitment and Training

- a. All staff and volunteers working with children will undergo background checks as part of the recruitment process.
- b. Child protection training will be provided to all staff, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders.

Reporting Procedures

- a. Any staff member, volunteer, or individual associated with Change Initiatives who suspects or witnesses child abuse or neglect is obligated to report it immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer.
- b. The Child Protection Officer will follow the established reporting procedures and ensure that appropriate authorities are notified

Response and Investigation

- a. Change Initiatives will investigate all reported cases promptly and impartially.
- b. The organisation will cooperate with law enforcement agencies and child protection authorities in the course of any investigations

Confidentiality

All information related to child protection cases will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, shared only with those who need to know for the protection of the child.

Review and Revision

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any necessary revisions will be made in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Contact Information

The contact information of the designated Child Protection Officer will be made readily available to all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

Child Protection Officer: Ms Jhumpa Ghosh — 91-9831073306