



Rädda Barnen

STRATEGY  
PROCESS  
PLAN



**POLICY**  
GUIDELINE  
RUTIN

# POLICY FOR SAFE AND SECURE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

**SAFER TOGETHER - SAVE THE CHILDREN'S CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Established by: Board of Directors

Date: 2023-05

Responsible for revision: Child Safeguarding Director

Policy to be updated: Within 2 years

Responsible for monitoring: Child Safeguarding Director

Applies to: All Save the Children activities.



Rädda Barnen

# POLICY FOR SAFE AND SECURE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

## Background and purpose

Save the Children is the world's leading children's rights organisation. To achieve our mission as the world's leading children's rights organisation, one of the most fundamental things we must ensure is that our activities are always safe and secure for children. We at Save the Children are determined to do everything in our power to ensure that every child in our organisations is and feels safe. Children should feel good in our organisations and have their rights fulfilled according to the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. At the same time, those of us who represent Save the Children should be safe and feel confident about the work we do with and for children. Therefore, Safer Together, or Child Safeguarding as it is called in the international operations, consists of a set of internal policies, guidelines, procedures, working methods and tools to ensure that Save the Children conducts safe and secure activities for children.

This policy relates to the Save the Children Global Alliance's *Child Safeguarding Protocol*, adopted in March 2010 and revised in April 2019. The Protocol describes the policies and procedures that all member countries and Save the Children International are obliged to put in place to ensure that all children with whom we come into contact are respected and that their right to freedom from all forms of intentional or unintentional harm, discrimination, violation, violence, and sexual abuse and exploitation in the organisation's activities is met.

This policy is a complement to Save the Children's *Ethical Guidelines* and *Guidelines for Voluntary Work in Save the Children*. The Code of Ethics sets out the professional behaviour and good practice expected of Save the Children staff and representatives<sup>1</sup> in relation to children. The Guidelines for Volunteering set out what is expected of all members and volunteers working for Save the Children.

## Philosophy

Save the Children will be a safe and secure organisation for children. We have zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children and do not accept any behaviour that violates this policy. This means that all employees, elected representatives, members, volunteers, interns, partners and other representatives who work for or in any way enter into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden have an obligation to have read the policy, share the basic view and follow the obligations that Save the Children has defined.

Our philosophy is that:

- a child is any person under the age of 18.
- all children are of equal value and have the same rights regardless of the child's or guardian's/parent's colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, religion,

---

<sup>1</sup> All active members, activists and employees including board members of local associations, districts and the national board.

political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or other status.

- All children have the right to be free from all forms of harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Save the Children works to ensure that children know their right to be free from harm, discrimination, violation, sexual abuse and exploitation and we will inform them of that right.
- Save the Children has an obligation to ensure that all employees, elected representatives, members, volunteers, interns, partners and other representatives who work for or in any way enter into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden, regardless of where they are based, apply best practice in relation to behaviour towards children as set out in this policy.

## Scope

Every child in our organisation shall be protected from all forms of intentional or unintentional harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation through compliance with this policy and its annexes.

It is our responsibility to ensure that all children in our organisations and their guardians know and understand the meaning of this policy. Children and carers should be informed and know how to report deviations from the policy and that the reporting channels are available to them.

This policy shall be visible and available to all employees, elected representatives, members, volunteers, interns, partners and other representatives who work for or in any way enter into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden . Compliance with Child Safeguarding/Safer Together is central to all activities within Save the Children, and for corporate activities, requirements for this are regulated in the ownership policy and ownership directive, where this policy or equivalent steering document is a basic requirement. A child-friendly version must also be available.<sup>2</sup>

The contact person(s) for *Safer Together* should be in the National Board, head office and regional offices.

The rights of the child are of primary importance. Every effort must be made to protect the child's right to safety and protection during an investigation. The safety and security of the child comes first.

The policy applies to:

1. All employees, whether full-time or part-time, international or national.
2. Employees employed on short-term contracts, such as consultants, researchers, etc.
3. Representatives, members and volunteers of local associations, districts and the National Board.
4. Trainees at Save the Children.

---

<sup>2</sup> One pager on *Safer Together* for younger children.

5. Employees of, and representatives of, partners and individuals, groups or organisations that have a formal/contractual relationship with Save the Children that involves contact with children - unless it is agreed that partners may apply their own policy on child protection against abuse and exploitation.<sup>3</sup> .
6. Donors, journalists, politicians and other people who visit Save the Children's programmes or offices and may come into contact with children.

## Our promise and responsibility

All employees, elected officials, members, volunteers, interns, partners and other representatives of Save the Children should be aware, prevent, act and report in accordance with this policy.

### Be aware

You as a representative or who works for or in any way enters into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden have an obligation to:

- sign the Safer Together Declaration of Acceptance<sup>4</sup> upon employment or assignment to show that you have read and understood the meaning of the policy and that you will act in accordance with it.
- share the philosophy and fulfil the obligations defined by Save the Children.
- know where to go if you suspect abuse.

### Prevention

You as a representative or who works for or in any way enters into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden have an obligation to:

- undergo Save the Children's compulsory training in Child Safeguarding/Safer Together.<sup>5</sup>
- present an extract from the Police's criminal record *For work with children in other organisations*.<sup>6</sup>
- carry out a risk assessment by identifying, minimising, addressing and, if necessary, avoiding situations that could potentially put children at risk. A risk assessment should also be carried out to identify, minimise, address and avoid situations where the behaviour of employees, members, volunteers and representatives may be misinterpreted.<sup>7</sup>
- based on the risk assessment, organise work and the workplace in such a way as to minimise the risk of children being exposed to harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse, exploitation or other violations of their rights.

---

<sup>3</sup> Partners must apply the policy or have developed their own policy of a similar standard. Cooperation agreements must clearly highlight agreed procedures for reporting and investigating suspected breaches of the policy, including issues of child abuse and exploitation.

<sup>4</sup> Annex 1: *Safer Together - Declaration of approval* or Annex 2: *Safer Together - Declaration of approval for partners*.

<sup>5</sup> All employees and elected representatives, members and volunteers must complete Safer Together training within one month of starting their assignment and then complete the same training every two years. Appropriate online training is available for partners, although not mandatory for partners.

<sup>6</sup> [Forms - children in other organisations | Swedish Police Authority \(polisen.se\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> Annex 3: *Risk assessment for safe and secure operations*.

- ensure that all children in our organisations and their guardians know and understand the meaning of this policy. Children and carers should be informed and know how to report deviations from the policy and that the reporting channels are available to them.
- ensure that all children participating in Save the Children activities are protected by this policy and proactively work to protect children.
- empower children and their families/guardians about their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, what they can expect from co-operation with Save the Children.
- Promote an environment of openness on issues related to the vulnerability of children to discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation where any issue or concern can be raised and discussed.
- in direct contact with children, ensure that there is always at least one other adult employee/representative/carer who can see or hear. We should not work alone with children unless the task requires it (including in transport) and it is agreed in advance in exceptional cases with the responsible manager/chairperson.<sup>8</sup>
- follow the policies, procedures and guidelines for photographing and videotaping children, such as ensuring that consent has been given by the child and guardian and that images are taken with respect.<sup>9</sup>
- make a risk report in cases where a child could have been harmed in our organisation.<sup>10</sup>

## Agera

You as a representative or who works for or in any way enters into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden have an obligation to:

- make every effort to protect children from intentional or unintentional harm, discrimination, abuse, all forms of physical and psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation.
- treat children as individuals and with respect and freedom from discrimination; regardless of the child's or parent/guardian's colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or other status.
- respect a child's privacy and never violate their physical and/or mental health.
- respect children's views and concerns, and give them space to express their views in situations that affect them, appropriate to their age and maturity.<sup>11</sup>
- always treat children fairly and never discriminate against, or favour, certain children to the detriment of others.
- never expose children to situations that they cannot understand, are not ready for and cannot consent to.
- never act with the intention of blaming, humiliating, degrading or dishonouring children or otherwise subjecting them to psychological abuse.

<sup>8</sup> There are currently exceptions for activities under health care legislation and case managers.

<sup>9</sup> Save the Children *Consent for film and photography*.

<sup>10</sup> Annex 4: *Incident and reporting form* or [https:// report.rb.se](https://report.rb.se).

<sup>11</sup> Save the Children *Guidelines for child participation*.

- act respectfully in relationships with children by avoiding talking, touching or making suggestions that could be perceived as inappropriate or offensive.
- never engage in relationships with children that could in any way be considered exploitative or abusive.
- never engage in a relationship or sexual contact with children or young people participating in Save the Children activities.
- never sleep in the same bed or room as children we meet in our organisation.
- only help children with intimate and private tasks if they cannot do these themselves, such as going to the toilet and getting dressed.
- never condone or participate in children's behaviour that is illegal, dangerous or improper.
- not initiate sexual contact as an adult with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of the national age of consent.
- respond to children who may have been subjected to harm, discrimination, violation, psychological or physical violence, sexual abuse or exploitation, in accordance with Save the Children's reporting procedures and in the best interests of the child's safety and protection.
- cooperate fully and confidentially in the investigation of suspicions and allegations.

## Report

You as a representative or who works for or in any way enters into an agreement with Save the Children Sweden have an obligation to immediately and in accordance with Save the Children's reporting procedures<sup>12</sup> report suspicions that a child has been subjected to any form of intentional or unintentional harm, discrimination, violation, physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation.

All incident reporting should be done immediately, within 24 hours. Risk reporting should be done promptly.

### Incident reporting

An incident report is made in and to Save the Children when:

- infringement of Save the Children's Safer Together policy in our own operations
- you see or suspect that a child has been subjected to intentional or unintentional harm, violation, discrimination, any form of physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation in Save the Children's activities.
- a child discloses that he or she has been subjected to intentional or unintentional harm, violation, discrimination, any form of physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation in Save the Children's activities.
- you receive a report that a child has been subjected to intentional or unintentional harm, violation, discrimination, any form of physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation in Save the Children's activities.

---

<sup>12</sup> Annex 4: *Incident and reporting form* or <https://rapportera.rb.se>

## Risk reporting

Risk reporting is an important part of our preventive work to ensure that Save the Children's activities are safe and secure for children, which leads us to continuously strengthen and improve our activities and procedures. Reporting must be done regardless of the degree of risk, i.e. everything that increases the risk of a child being harmed in our organisation must be reported, including risks and deficiencies in our physical environment that may cause children to be harmed.

A risk report is made in and to Save the Children when:

- you identify risks or shortcomings in our activities based on this policy, but where no child has yet been harmed.
- you discover things that, although we have followed the policy, could have caused harm to a child in our organisation.

### You can report incidents and risks in three different ways:

- via direct contact with the President or manager (who in turn makes a notification according to the two following options).
- via the digital reporting channel <https://rapportera.rb.se><sup>13</sup>
- via incident and risk reporting forms emailed to [rapportera@rb.se](mailto:rapportera@rb.se)<sup>14</sup>.

## Notification of concerns

If we become aware of or are concerned that a child is being harmed, even if it is not in our own organisation, we at Save the Children have decided that we **must**, and not only should, report our concerns to the social services in the municipality where the child lives, in accordance with the Social Services Act, to ensure that every child we meet has the right to safety and protection and is protected from the risks they are potentially exposed to<sup>15</sup>. As support, there is Save the Children's *Guideline for reporting concerns when children are harmed* and a *template for reporting concerns*<sup>16</sup>. We do not use the incident and risk reporting route described above.

## Report to the police

If a legal offence is committed in connection with a child being harmed, even if it is not in Save the Children's own activities, this should be reported to the nearest police authority, unless it poses an additional risk to the child. It is important to take the support of the chairman/manager to ensure that there is no risk of children being harmed.

## What happens next?

---

<sup>13</sup> Valfärd AB and our subsidiaries have a separate equivalent reporting channel at <http://rapportera.valfard.rb.se>.

<sup>14</sup> Valfärd AB and our subsidiaries email risk and incident reports to [rapportera.valfard@rb.se](mailto:rapportera.valfard@rb.se).

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 14, section 1c of the Social Services Act.

<sup>16</sup> In addition, Save the Children's *Guide to worrying about a child* is available for all adults who meet children and young people in their work, including those outside Save the Children.

Save the Children will assess and process all reports according to established procedures. All cases of reporting will be handled professionally, confidentially and in the most appropriate way, which means that a limited number of people will manage and follow the reporting process as the responsible manager. The report is received by a centrally responsible official at Save the Children who contacts the Safer Together follow-up officer, which is the Child Safeguarding Director.

If it is suspected that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering harm, the case will also be reported to the social services. If it is suspected that a case is of a criminal nature, the case will be reported to the police, unless this poses a risk to the child.

All reports made in confidence will be treated in the best interests of the child, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

## Consequences of violating the policy

Labour law action may be taken against staff who violate the policy or ethical guidelines. Members may be stripped of their membership.<sup>17</sup>

All employees, elected officials, members, volunteers, interns, partners and other representatives of Save the Children should be aware that all allegations of child abuse or exploitation will be investigated:

- a) By taking into account the legislation on criminal investigation and prosecution in the country where they work.
- b) Through Save the Children's internal investigation in accordance with established reporting procedures for suspected violations of this policy.

## Responsibility for implementation, compliance, measurement & continuous improvement

These positions are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the policy in their areas of work:

- Managers and Presidents
- Safety and security adviser
- Child Safeguarding Director

## Revision of the policy

The Child Safeguarding Director is responsible for revising the policy every two years. Decisions are taken by the National Association Board.

## Definitions of concepts to which the policy relates:

---

<sup>17</sup> § 2 Membership Statutes of Save the Children.



**Discrimination:** when a person is disadvantaged or offended and it is related to a ground of discrimination. Lack of accessibility and sexual harassment also constitute discrimination.<sup>18</sup>

**Abuse:** Means that the child's mental health is harmed or jeopardised, usually over a long period of time, by a person's words or actions that patronise the child or attack the child's personality.<sup>19</sup>

**Physical violence:** Physical violence means that someone causes a child physical injury, illness, pain or renders the child helpless or other similar condition. Any form of corporal punishment is considered physical violence. Sexual abuse often involves physical violence.<sup>20</sup>

**Psychological violence:** Psychological violence means that a child is systematically subjected to degrading judgements, degrading treatment or deliberate emotional suffering. Even a single serious incident can put a child at risk of harm. Being forced to witness violence in their neighbourhood or living in an environment where violence and threats of violence occur can also cause a child to suffer psychological harm.<sup>21</sup>

**Child sexual abuse:** Includes all forms of sexual behaviour forced on a child by another person. It means that

- the person exploits the child's dependency and the act is based on that person's needs
- the act violates the child's integrity
- the act is against the child's will or is an act that the child cannot understand and is not mature.<sup>22</sup>

**Exploitation of children:** includes all forms of exploitation of children that can harm the child in any way, such as physical, psychological, sexual and economic exploitation.<sup>23</sup>

## Supporting & related documents

Documents supporting the policy and its implementation:

- Child Safeguarding Protocol
- Save the Children's ethical guidelines
- Guidelines for volunteering with Save the Children
- Policy Protection against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation
- Procedure - Guidance and support in case of sexual offences
- Procedure Risk assessment for safe and secure operations
- Whistleblowing policy
- Guideline for reporting concerns when children are at risk of harm
- Template for reporting concerns
- Consent for photography and filming
- Guidelines for photography and publication of images

---

<sup>18</sup> The definition of discrimination is taken from the Discrimination Ombudsman.

<sup>19</sup> The definition of victimisation is taken from the WHO.

<sup>20</sup> The definition of physical violence is taken from the WHO.

<sup>21</sup> The definition of psychological violence is taken from the WHO.

<sup>22</sup> The definition of child sexual abuse is taken from the WHO.

<sup>23</sup> The definition of exploitation is taken from the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Guidelines for child participation

## **Annexes**

Annex 1: Safer Together - Declaration of Authorisation

Annex 2: Safer Together - Declaration of authorisation for partners meeting children

Annex 3: Risk assessment for safe and secure operations

Annex 4: Incident and risk reporting form

Annex 5: Responsibilities in the Safer Together organisation