



HAI POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION

Policy Statement

HAI is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom our staff come into contact. Anyone under the age of 18 is a child. HAI has a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse and exploitation.

HAI's policy on child protection is in accordance with the safeguards provided under the Constitution of India, various child-centric legislation, international treaties as well as other existing policies for the protection and wellbeing of children. HAI is committed to promoting the rights of the child to be protected, be listened to and have their own views taken into consideration.

Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive HAI's services from harm. This includes the children or adults who use our services.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection. This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of HAI, including senior managers and the board of trustees, advisors, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff, students and visitors to the HAI operational areas.

Principles underpinning our Safeguarding Policy

1. All children have equal rights to protection and to have their wellbeing and participation promoted.
2. All actions regarding child safeguarding must be taken in the best interest of children. This includes an understanding that in all our programmes and activities we must ensure that we respect children's rights and do not cause harm.
3. Everybody has a responsibility for safeguarding. This policy is mandatory for all those who work for or on behalf of HAI, including Board, advisors, staff, volunteers and others working on behalf of HAI. Although training, advice and support will be provided, everyone should actively participate so that they can carry out their responsibilities towards safeguarding children.

4. We work in a transparent and open way where child safeguarding is made a priority, recognising that situations of abuse and harm are able to flourish when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members do not feel able to raise their concerns.

5. All reports of concern regarding the safety and protection of a child will be taken seriously. Where necessary, appropriate steps will be taken to protect the child and to take action against the alleged perpetrator. This may include referrals to law enforcement and child protection agencies. In relation to allegations against staff, volunteers and partners, action may also include the suspension or termination of engagement or any type of cooperation.

6. No single organisation is able to safeguard children by working in isolation, and therefore we will work with other organisations, agencies (such as state departments and ministries with a mandate to protect children) and groups as necessary and appropriate.

7. We maintain confidentiality and do not disclose personal details of those involved in child protection concerns, including the names of those raising concerns unless it is necessary to pass on information to ensure that a child is protected (for example where a child may need specialist services or where a criminal offence may have been committed).

8. We raise awareness and influence others on the importance of safeguarding children, using our policy and procedures as a way of both highlighting our commitment and also of explaining our values. We will share our policy and procedures with others, and be open to feedback regarding its application and relevance.

9. We work within the framework of international and national laws and policies regarding safeguarding, including the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the Constitution of India, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.

Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents, including:

- » Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- » Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- » Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- » Recording concerns and information sharing
- » Child protection records retention and storage
- » Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- » Code of conduct for camp/site visitors
- » Behaviour codes for children and young people

- » Photography and sharing images guidance.
- » Safer recruitment
- » Online safety
- » Managing complaints
- » Whistleblowing
- » Induction, training, supervision and support

We believe that:

- children deserve a happy childhood and the opportunity to lead a dignified life safe from violence, exploitation, neglect, deprivation, and discrimination.
- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- ❖ the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- ❖ all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- ❖ some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experience
- ❖ their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- ❖ working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- ❖ abuse and exploitation of children are heinous crimes and need to be effectively addressed.

We will never:

- use derogatory language in our written or verbal communication to or about a child or use behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- under any circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with the child and/or his/her relatives, whether such contact is consensual or forced
- sexually harass a child. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- develop or induce or support in any way physical/sexual relationships with children.

- develop or induce or support any form of relationship or arrangement with children which could in any way be deemed to be exploitative or abusive.
- place a child at risk of abuse or exploitation, or be aware of these and not report it or not do anything about it
- kiss, hug, fondle, rub or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- sleep alone with any child.
- use corporal punishment or tolerate corporal punishment by the staff.
- act in any manner that puts children at risk.
- use language that will mentally or emotionally abuse the child.
- threaten a child.
- use abusive language.
- tease/ mock a child or call out nicknames.
- act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate or degrade a child.
- show discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or any other status
- encourage any kind of infatuation.
- provide a child with alcohol or drugs.
- offer or receive cash or gifts to or from individual children and young people.
- do things of a personal nature that a child could do for him/herself, including dressing, bathing, and grooming.
- initiate physical contact unless initiated by the child (e.g. holding hands)
- allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.
- stand aside when they see inappropriate actions inflicted by children on other children because it is frequent and commonplace.
- take children to the residence of any staff member for the night.
- engage children in personal work or employ children at work or at home.
- take any photograph that would or could potentially violate a child 's dignity, or privacy in anyway.
- exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium

*This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. HAI representatives must always avoid actions that could be construed to constitute abusive or exploitative behaviour

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- always treating children with empathy and respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, sexuality, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status

- providing services to the child only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent
- not taking unfair advantage of any professional relationship to further our personal, religious, political, or business interests
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Contact details

NOMINATED CHILD PROTECTION LEAD

Name:

Phone/email:

DEPUTY CHILD PROTECTION LEAD(S):

Name(s):

Phone/email

TRUSTEE/SENIOR LEAD FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION.

Name:

Phone/email:

NATIONAL HELPLINE:

The CHILDLINE 1098

This policy statement came into force on _____(date) We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice **every three years**. This policy statement and accompanying procedures were last reviewed on _____(date)

Signature: _____

[this should be signed by the most senior person with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in your organisation, for example the safeguarding and child protection lead on your board of trustees].

Date:

Declaration by all employees

I, _____ (name and position
of the

employee), from HAI hereby declare that:

- I will always respect all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity;
- I will support their right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse in accordance with HAI's Policy on Child Protection and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012;
- I will not employ any child as defined under Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016;
- I will always report any case of child abuse, exploitation and neglect which comes to my knowledge to appropriate authority and will not harm or abuse any child physically, emotionally, or sexually.

Name of the Employee:

Date:

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