



## Shishur Sevay “Empowering the Most Vulnerable”

### Child Protection Policy at Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay (December 2017)

The girls are safe at Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay – a fundamental reason why this home was established. The children need to FEEL safe. This is done by constant vigilance.

- We have ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse of the children, whether from outside our home or within the family. A Child Protection Policy is in place.
- CCTV cameras are installed throughout Shishur Sevay.
- Security guards are posted 24X7.
- Everyone entering and leaving Shishur Sevay must sign in and out.
- Fire extinguishers and shock proof electrical systems with circuit breakers are installed.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide a guideline to ensure the physical and emotional safety and security of each child.

#### Definitions under the Child Protection Policy (As per Study on Child Abuse 2007 by Govt. of India)

**Child Abuse:** All forms of physical and mental maltreatment of a child. It can be a deliberate act or it may be failing to act to prevent harm. It can be classified under 4 different categories:

**Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse is the inflicting of physical injury upon a child. This may include burning, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating or otherwise harming a child, whether intentionally or not.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse is inappropriate sexual behaviour with a child. It includes fondling a child's genitals, making the child fondle the adult's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism and sexual exploitation and other similar actions. We recognize that some sexual play may occur among children living together. But in some circumstances children need to be protected from sexual assault by other children older or younger.

**Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse can be defined as an incident where a child's social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or threatened. It can include emotional deprivation due to persistent rejection, hostility, teasing /bullying, yelling, criticism, exposure of a child to domestic and family violence. The bullying is a particularly destructive component in children's lives and often extremely difficult to stop. The children at Shishur Sevay must be protected from bullies and bullying.

**Neglect:** The failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Neglect can be physical, educational and emotional.

**Child Protection:** The responsibilities, measures and activities that Shishur Sevay undertakes to safeguard children from both intentional and unintentional harm.

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Holding 80G in Perpetuity and FCRA



**Reg. West Bengal Societies Act XXVI of 1961 Reg. #S/IL/37263 of 2006-2007  
Awarded Guidestar India Gold Seal 2017**

## **Scope of Child Protection Policy**

The child protection policy applies to everyone working for or associated with Shishur Sevay. This includes staff, visitors, contractors, consultants, laborers, anyone on the premises or having contact with the children outside the premises. It also includes our children.

## **Responsibilities under Child Protection Policy**

Shishur Sevay is responsible for giving them copies of this policy. Any time there is an incident or alleged incident, all employees will meet to discuss the problem.

1. Shishur Sevay staff, associates or visitors must:
  - a. Never abuse and/or exploit a child or act/ behave in any way that places a child at risk of harm.
  - b. Report any child abuse and protection concerns they have in accordance with the policy. Act to protect a child who they see being abused by another child or adult and report all such incidents to the Executive Director. Failure to report will be considered grounds for suspension or dismissal.
  - c. Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and allegations.
  - d. Picture taking is only with permission of the Director or delegate.

The children will not be left unsupervised with male staff or visitors. This is done to protect the children from possible abuse and the male persons from unwarranted accusations.

2. Shishur Sevay staff must not disclose information about the children/girls or make it available to the general public without permission of the Director or delegate.
3. The management has the right to conduct a background check of the candidate applying for a job at Shishur Sevay or any employees.

## **Communications about Children**

All publications and the website that include images and text related to children will not contain the following:

- a. Manipulated or sensationalised text and/or images
- b. Discriminatory and degrading language
- c. Images in which children are inappropriately clothed

## **Management**

Dr. Michelle Harrison, as government appointed Superintendent, is the designated person responsible for the day-to-day implementation, supervision and monitoring of the Child Protection Policy in Shishur Sevay.

## **Code of Conduct**

This section will provide guidance on appropriate and expected standards of behaviour of all in contact with the children towards children, and also of children towards other children keeping in mind Shishur Sevay resolutions of **ZERO TOLERANCE** for abuse of the children, whether from outside the home or within the family. It has been developed with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration and should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense.

## **The Do's: Appropriate Behaviour**

- ✓ Be inclusive and involve all children without selection or exclusion on the basis of disability, ethnicity, religion or any other status.
- ✓ Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.
- ✓ Encourage and respect children's voices and views.
- ✓ Be aware of the potential for peer abuse (e.g. children bullying, discriminating against, victimizing or abusing children).
- ✓ Develop special measures (supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children from peer and adult abuse).
- ✓ Develop clear rules to address specific physical safety issues relative to the local physical environment of a project (e.g. for projects based near water, heavy road traffic, railway lines).
- ✓ Mandatory reporting of all suspected or alleged abuse to the concerned Authority.
- ✓ Ask questions if you are uncertain of any behaviors of staff or children.
- ✓ Report concerns immediately so that more serious behaviors can be prevented.
- ✓ Staff is not expected to tolerate rude and abusive behavior on the part of the children.

## **The Don'ts: Inappropriate Behaviour**

- ⊘ Hit or otherwise physically assault a child. In case of violent and destructive behavior of a child you may physically restrain the child and act to discourage more such violent or destructive behavior
- ⊘ Use of language that will mentally or emotionally abuse any child.
- ⊘ Act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate, or degrade a child.
- ⊘ Show discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, political persuasion or any other status.
- ⊘ Engage in any sexual or suggestive activity with a child. Kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate way.
- ⊘ Suggest inappropriate behavior or relations of any kind.
- ⊘ 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
- ⊘ Deny food as punishment or put children in isolation.