

## **Child Protection Policy-PACE (For the safety and Protection of Children)**

Process of safety and protection of Children analysis by PACE incorporates role, and responsibility of the children under different socio-economic activity. These activities are performed in community, household, workplace to satisfy different needs of the child in consonance with organizational objectives. Moreover, social culture, social setup, social belief and framework affect roles and responsibility of an employee in the organization which get reflected in the form of power, position, and exercise of rights. Assessing the factors of inequality in terms of power, position, and rights, organization felt the immediate need to address the problems of unequal and differential process and present the solution by reflecting back to the policy documents.

Objectives of PACE directs that all the programme and policy should create equal opportunity for Children. It further restricts the blocking factors that promote social difference between girls and boys and hinder their process of self-development. Moreover, PACE accept the gender discrimination as a problem and challenge, which get its way through biased social justice, structural inequity towards education, unemployment, and restricted preference on livelihood opportunity and poor health.

- PACE expects all its staff, volunteers, partner organization and visitors to give respect and dignity to all children associated with the different work of PACE Programme as well as to children within the personal lives of those individuals connected to PACE.
- PACE staff and volunteers with direct contact with project and children must sign a statement to say that they have read the policy, will respect and abide by it and understand that action will be taken in cases where their behavior is not in accordance to the policy. This will lead to disciplinary action and possible job loss for staff and dismissal of volunteers who break these protocols.
- Permission will be required from authorized persons of PACE organization, for volunteers and external visitors to take photographs or video footage of children. Authorization should be sought from the Director/Secretary/Coordinator and strict regulations will be implemented on the nature of the photographs taken. These photographs and /or video will not be used for any other purpose without prior permission. It is advisable to take the consent of the share the pictures with them to the extent possible.
- PACE Staff and volunteers must never be alone with children who are not their own offspring in a private place where they cannot be readily seen by other responsible adults.

- Wherever possible and practical, the 'two-adult.' rule should be followed, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities where minors or children are involved and are present at all times. If this is not possible, PACE Programme staff members are encouraged to look for alternatives such as being accompanied by community members when children are involved.
  - PACE staff and volunteers will not discipline a child in a way that is against the Convention on the Rights of Child. This effectively means no tolerance to any form of violence against the child, either physical, or verbal.
  - PACE staff and volunteers need to be aware that they may work with children who, because of the circumstances and abuses they have experienced, may use a relationship to obtain special attention. Even if a child behaves seductively, the adult is always considered responsible. Adult should avoid being placed in a compromising position.
  - Inappropriate behavior towards children, including failure to follow PACE Behavior norms or sexual abuse of a child is grounds of disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship or board/advisory committee membership.
  - PACE staff and volunteers must be concerned about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with minors and children. All the Programme staff and volunteers should maintain a high standard of behavior / character in the presence of children. (For example, they should not use any unacceptable language in the presence of a child).
  - PACE staff and volunteers should dress appropriately and be culturally sensitive when they visit children, families' communities and programme or work with children.
  - Inexperienced staff and volunteers should not try to handle children with complicated problems. (For example, children who have been sexually abused). These children should be directed to a competent and reliable organization, a team or professionals with the consultation of the responsible persons and authority.
  - PACE staff and volunteers should seek to live up to the PACE Mission statement and core values in all relationship with others in any circumstances.
- ❖ If child/children are going to attend some outstation residential programme/ meeting/consultation, the Staff, who accompanying children, should keep in mind:**

- Each child/children attending a consultation or meeting shall be accompanied by adult who will be responsible to provide protection, care and support to the child/children.
  - The accompanying staff should be someone who is known to the organization and trusted by it.
  - Gender balance must also be considered. If there are any girl children in the delegation, a lady staff must accompany them.
  - If the child and accompanying staff belong to opposite sexes they must have separate accommodation, toilets and bathrooms.
  - If there is more than one child and they belong to opposite sexes they must have separate accommodation, toilets and bathrooms.
- 1. The accompanying Staff shall abide by the Consultation's Child Protection Code and Child Protection Guidelines presented here. In addition, he or she should be able to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the accompanying adult listed below.**

It is important that the responsibilities of the accompanying adult are fully explained and agreed upon by the accompanying adult, the organization, the concerned child/children (wherever possible) and their guardians. Responsibilities of the accompanying staff include:

- Facilitating the child/children's travel to the meeting and back home, this will include all support during the travel.
- Facilitating the movement of the child/children from one place to another during the time of the meeting.
- Providing medical assistance to the child/children if required. This should include the accompanying staff having the child/children's medical and emergency information in their possession at all times, with written permission from the child/children's guardians to act on their behalf during medical emergencies.
- Being aware of the child/children's whereabouts at all times.
- Providing information, advice and support to the child/children when needed.
- Providing encouragement and support for the child/children's participation in the meeting.
- Ensuring that the children are able to communicate with other groups of children through interpreters and the extra provision of translation support, whenever possible.

- Ensuring that the children can relax and participate in the discussions.
- Being aware of the physical and emotional needs of the child/children in their care and assisting in meeting these needs as appropriate.
- Informing the organizers of any difficulties that the children under their care may be experiencing and finding ways to overcome them.

## **2. Documents to be carried by the accompanying staff:**

- Written approval by parents or guardians
- Written approval by head of institution
- Written/signed consent of the child
- Medical history (including allergy information) and blood group of the child
- List of special requirements of the child/children if any

## **3. General guidelines for PACE staff for organizing Meeting/Consultations/ for children:**

They shall

- Make sure that accompanying adults are fully briefed on their role and responsibilities (establish a code of conduct and ground rules).
- Ensure that children and young people are briefed about child protection issues.
- Assign child protection focal point(s) who are responsible for the children's security and support needs during the consultation and in the evenings at any accommodation venues.
- Focal persons shall ensure that the children and young people know the name(s) of the person(s) they can report any concerns to.
- Children should be made aware that they are also free to contact other adults on the organiser's team should they have any questions or if their accompanying adult is not available or responding appropriately.
- Create a database with all information regarding participants' emergency contacts, medical needs, food preferences, travels plans etc.
- Provide each young participant with an 'emergency number card' containing key numbers and addresses.
- Ensure that a nurse/doctor are available on-site or on-call during the consultation. Make available medical supplies or a first aid kit on-site.
- Set aside a space where young participants can rest if they are feeling ill.

**3. Guidelines for PACE staff regarding accommodation arrangements for children and their accompanying adults:**

- Preferably, no adult shall be permitted to sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working.
- Consult the children to find out if they have a preference with whom they would like to share a room.
- Plan separate rooms for boys and girls.
- If appropriate, consider grouping children who are close in age/ who speak the same language together.
- Be aware of possible conflicts and arrange accommodation to minimize these, wherever possible or appropriate.

**4. CHILD PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**

**It is important for all staff members and others in contact with children to:**

- Create an environment where children are respected and listened to.
- Ensure that children are encouraged to express their own opinions even when they differ from the opinions held by the adults/others.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination against children based on gender, age, caste, class and abilities.
- Ensure that preferential treatment is not provided to some children while excluding others.
- Respect the decision of the child regarding whether or not she/he wishes to share experiences with the others in the group facilitate children to learn from failures as from successes.
- Ensure that the 'process' of children's participation gets as much attention and care as the 'output'.

**Do not:**

- Prompt children either through words or actions to express thoughts and feelings that are not their own.
- Force children to share any experience/s they do not wish to.