



Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat:

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Children who come into contact with projects and activities organised by the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat must be protected and safeguarded to the maximum possible extent from actions that place them at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury and any other harm.

This responsibility falls upon all staff and representatives of the CBSS Secretariat and representatives of project partners and experts involved in CBSS related activities.

The Policy requires:

- CBSS Secretariat to recruit staff that are suited to apply strict child safeguarding practices.
- That everyone associated with CBSS is aware of their obligations and responds appropriately to issues of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury or other harm against children.
- That anyone representing or acting on behalf of the CBSS Secretariat behaves appropriately towards children and never abuses the position of trust that comes with being associated with the CBSS Secretariat.
- That everyone representing CBSS take part in creating a safe environment for children who come into contact with the organisation.
- That representatives organising child participation events sign the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

This Policy applies to:

- The CBSS Secretariat staff, whether national, international, full time, part time or engaged on short-term contracts, e.g. interns, consultants, researchers etc.
- Project partners, representatives from external agencies and volunteers cooperating with CBSS Secretariat, when child participation is involved
- Donors, journalists, celebrities, politicians and other people who take part in activities organised by CBSS Secretariat involving child participation

The CBSS Secretariat commits to regularly informing all staff members about the child safeguarding policy, including reporting mechanisms and appropriate behaviour.

Breaches in the policy will lead to reporting to the CBSS Director General and/or appropriate national authority. It can lead to possible dismissal. For partners/contractors breaches can include termination of relation including contractual & partnership agreement.

Principles

The Child Safeguarding Policy is guided by the principles of:

- *Personal responsibility.* All staff of the CBSS Secretariat must demonstrate high standards of behaviour towards children both in their private and professional lives. They must do all that they can to prevent, report and respond to any concerns of the policy.
- *Accountability to children and their communities.* Through internal systems, standards and practice the CBSS Secretariat will be accountable to the people we aim to serve.
- *Children participation and non-discrimination.* Children should be empowered to understand their rights and what they can do if there is a problem or a concern.
- *The Best Interest of any children involved.* When dealing with a Child Safeguarding concern, the CBSS Secretariat will strive to ensure children's safety, health and well-being.
- *Confidentiality.* All Child Safeguarding concerns/reports/ investigations will be dealt with on a need to know basis and all records will be held securely.
- *Timeliness.* Given the potential for increased or repeated abuse, timely responses are essential on reporting and responding to concerns.
- *Partnership.* The CBSS Secretariat will work together with other agencies and partners to promote Child Safeguarding within organisations and Child Protection in the community.

Definitions

- *Child* is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years
- *Child Safeguarding* refers to the set of policies, procedures and practice that CBSS Secretariat have in place to protect children from harm. CBSS Secretariat has a zero tolerance to harmful behaviour against children and pursues policies to prevent and respond to these issues. We aim to ensure that everyone associated with the organisation is aware of and responds appropriately to issues of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury and any other harm against children.

Reporting

It is not the responsibility of the CBSS Secretariat to investigate child abuse. It is, however, an **obligation for each staff, partners and relevant others to report concerns or incidents.**

If a person who works for, or on behalf of, the CBSS Secretariat is concerned about the possible abuse of a child, including concerns that relate to the behaviour of a person working for, or on behalf of, the CBSS Secretariat, it must be reported.

Suspicious are to be reported to the police or relevant local authority without undue delay - and to the Director General of the CBSS Secretariat and/or the Designated Safeguarding Officer of the CBSS Secretariat.

Director General: Mr Grzegorz M. Poznański, +46 73 721 09 93 grzegorz.poznanski@cbss.org

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Ms Olivia Lind Haldorsson, +46 (0)730 564592, Olivia.lind.haldorsson@cbss.org

In case of ongoing crime or an emergency: Call 112

In other cases:

In Sweden: Contact the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) in the municipality where the child lives. This site provides an overview of contact details for all municipalities in Sweden. <https://skr.se/tjanster/kommunerlandsting/adressuppgifterkommuner.1246.html>

Abroad: Consult with the Designated Safeguarding Officer

The information should include as far as possible:

- The name & contact of the person who has given the report
- The child's details
- The alleged perpetrators details (where identified)
- Details of the concern – please note that you should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification
- Whether the child is currently safe and his/her current location
- Whether emergency medical intervention is necessary
- Who else knows of the potential abuse
- What actions have been taken to date
- The name, position and location of the person receiving the referral

WHAT TO DO:

- Take concerns seriously
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of concerns
- Support the child, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively and co-operate in the process of investigation
- Be guided through all processes by the principle of the best interest of the child
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of the child
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals to ensure the protection of the child
- Report according to the local procedures

DON'T:

- Investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations;
- Ensure the child that the information given will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Review

The CBSS monitors and reviews the safeguarding policy and measures regularly. The next review will take place in 2022.

Stockholm, 15 January 2022

Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Staff, partners and other representatives must never:

1. Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children.
2. Engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years regardless of the age of majority/consent or custom locally.
3. Develop relationships with children which could be deemed exploitative or abusive
4. Act in ways that may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse.
5. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate or abusive
6. Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
7. Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
8. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
9. Discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment or favour to particular children to the exclusion of others.
10. Spend excessive time alone with children away from others in a manner which could be interpreted as inappropriate
11. Expose a child to inappropriate images, films and websites including pornography and extreme violence
12. Place themselves in a position where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct
13. Take photos, audio or audio-visually record or otherwise depict children without their and their caregivers' explicit consent.
14. Collect, store or disseminate data about individual children

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Staff, partners and other representatives should avoid actions or behaviour, which may allow behaviour to be misrepresented, constitutes poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

Stockholm, 15 January 2022

Annex I. CBSS Guidance on photos of children

Annex II. CBSS Strategy 2020-25