

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

National Association of Man for Mankind
(NAMM)



ABOUT NAMM:

NAMM (National Association of Man for Mankind) is a registered voluntary organization started its journey in the year of 1994. The organization was established by few youth volunteers who had an interest to serve the society. Since the beginning the organization engaged with and brought many new young volunteers to its fold and mobilized them to work for the community. The organization is currently working in the state of West Bengal and Odisha. NAMM evolved with the intuitive vision to serve the marginalized and down trodden communities, vulnerable women and children and weaker sections of the society. The organization believes and works towards integrated social development, ensuring sustainable livelihood options and emphasizes on the need of socio-economic reconstruction while focusing on community Health and Education.

VISION of NAMM:

We visualize an equitable society where men, women and children, especially from the marginalized sections can freely realize their full potential, fulfill their rights and perform their responsibilities, where everyone is leading their life with dignity and self-respect.

MISSION:

Our mission is to work towards integrated social development, ensuring sustainable livelihood options, exploring the areas of alternative livelihood and emphasizing on the need of socio-economic reconstruction while focusing on community health and education and other basic services.

CORE VALUES:

- Non Violence
- Transparency and accountability
- Democratic and participatory decision making
- Secularism
- Gender Equity

SCOPE OF NAMM'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY:

The policy applies to all staffs, executive and general body members, consultants, volunteers and interns. This also applies to the vendors, suppliers and associates during their association with NAMM in any form.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- ✚ The best interest of the Child is at the core of each organizational decision.
- ✚ Treating the child as an entity. Respect for dignity, liberty and freedom of the child
- ✚ Recognizing the Child's right to expression, privacy and confidentiality
- ✚ Ensuring child rights and child protection is everyone's responsibility
- ✚ No tolerance of any form abuse against children, may it be direct or indirect

OBJECTIVES:

The main objectives of NAMM's Child Protection policy are;

- To create awareness among all staffs, volunteers, organization members as well as the external associates on child protection and to have a basic minimum standard on this adhered by all
- To have a well-defined reporting mechanism for any form violation of child protection and a clear redressal system within the organization
- To assess and address child protection risks in a regular basis

DEFINATION:

For the Purpose of this policy, the definitions are as follows.

Child: - According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) a child is every human being below the age of 18 years.

Child Protection: - Child protection refers to protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. It is integrally linked to other rights of the child. Every child has a right to protection. This not only includes children who are in difficult circumstances and those who have suffered violence, abuse and exploitation but also those who are not in any of these adverse situations and yet need to be protected in order to ensure that they remain within the social security and protective net.

In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of the organization and individuals associated with the organization towards children in their care.

Child Abuse:- 'Child abuse' or 'maltreatment' constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.'(WHO, 1999)

Types of Abuse and Violence:

- **Self-harm** : - deliberate cutting or harming oneself; suicidal thoughts; attempted and actual suicide
- **Peer abuse** : - bullying (physical and/or s psychological); physical and sexual abuse; gang violence

- **Abuse by adults:** - domestic violence (physical, psychological and sexual); corporal punishment in schools and organisations; sexual abuse and exploitation.
- **Societal abuse:** - a social. Political. Economic and cultural environment which actively encourages or tacitly condones violence against children, e.g. political campaigns which encourage 'clearances' of street children; religions and cultures which encourage physical and humiliating punishment of children as acceptable childrearing practices; harmful traditional practices; cultural attitudes which condone violence against women in the home/which promote ideas of women and children being the 'property' of men / parents rather than as human beings deserving of equal rights.

Impact of Child Abuse:

Child abuse can have dire consequences, both during childhood and adulthood. Child abuse may result in:

- **Impaired social behaviour**, antisocial behaviour, and difficulty establishing intimate personal relationships
- **Alienation** and withdrawal
- **Depression**, anxiety, low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness
- **Self-injury**
- **Suicidal tendencies**
- **Substance abuse** and high levels of **medical illness**
- **Eating disorders** or drastic changes in appetite
- **Problems in school or work**
- **Impaired psychological development**; personality disorders
- **Abusive parenting or care giving**
- **Prostitution** (in the case of sexual abuse)
- **Alcoholism**
- **Cognitive disorders**
- **A distorted view of sex**, and difficulty relating to others except on sexual terms (in the case of sexual abuse)
- **Nightmares** and **bed wetting**
- **Death of a child; or death of the abuser, if the child eventually fights back**
- **Unwanted pregnancies**
- **Abortion**
- **HIV/AIDS/STIs**
- **Difficulty in having normal adult relationships with the opposite sex**

The effects of being abused as a child vary according to the severity of the abuse and the surrounding environment of the child. If the family or school environment is nurturing and supportive and the child receives psychological help, s/he might be able to cope with the trauma.

Child Protection Policy:-"A statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of

children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that the organisation is taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously". (Child Protection Toolkit, Child Hope)

POLICY FRAMEWORK:

The Context of this Child Protection Policy:

This policy calls for mandatory reporting of all child protection violations. All members within the scope of this policy should report as they witness, suspect or come to know of any form of child protection violation. The policy will apply to;

- Any act or behavior that puts a child at risk or abuse
- Any act of behavior that could potentially increase the risk of abuse
- A failure to act in a situation where a child is being abused
- Failure to follow the code of conduct or any other prescribed protocol without suitable jurisdiction

Guidelines:

Recruitment and Hiring: - While doing new recruitment, efforts will be made to assess the sensibility of the candidate/agency/associates/volunteers etc. towards children and child rights. Reference check will be a must for all. All staffs/new joiners will be given the copy of the child protection policy which they must go through, build conviction, sign and adhere to the guidelines.

Staff development and capacity building: - Orientation on Child protection will be done in a regular basis. It will be part of the induction process for new joiners. While conducting orientation and staff capacity building, focus must be given on specific roles to be played by a staff member, in violation cases. The management and senior staffs of the organization will be responsible to gather information on recent developments in the areas of child protection and share the same with staffs of other levels in a regular basis.

All staffs/volunteers and associates of NAMM should follow the following guidelines:-

The following are basic guidelines that each one who are with the organization should practice at all levels while planning, implementing programmes and in any type of organizational works.

- Respect the dignity of every child
- Respect the right to privacy of every child. Uphold privacy of the child by not disclosing identity of the child to anyone who may put the child at risk.
- Promote participation of children. Built an environment where children are free to express their views without any discrimination. Encourage and respect Children's views and voice.
- Make efforts to ensure children's participation in decisions that affects their lives
- Educate children about their rights, issues of abuse, neglect and exploitation

- Do not engage children in personal work, employ children at work or at home
- Do not use language or expressions that is found inappropriate to the child
- Do not use corporal punishment or any form of physical and psychological pressure on the child
- Do not develop any relationship with children which could be assumed as exploitative or abusive
- No discrimination on the basis of sex, caste, religion, language, disability etc.
- The child should not be humiliated in any manner

Organizational Practice:

The following practices will be done by NAMM as an organization.

- NAMM will not associate with any individual/agency/organization/company which engages child labour in any form
- It will not associate with any agency/organization/company which patronize services that are exploitative to children

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL/RESPONSE MECHANISM:-

NAMM is committed to rights of the child and therefore ensure a prompt and fair action in each case of child protection violation. The best interest of the child will be considered while addressing grievances. The organization will follow a zero tolerance policy for all its staffs, volunteers, associates, general and executive body members in case of them being part of any form of violation of child protection. The organization will encourage reporting of such cases and protect the whistle blowers.

- Allegation of abuse/any form of violation must be reported to immediate team leader/project coordinator/supervisor
- It can also be reported directly to the management team or secretary
- This can be done through writing in plain paper, email etc.
- On reporting, the management team must be informed. It will form a grievance redressal committee with 3-5 members. The committee will investigate the matter and take appropriate action
- While the matter is under investigation the individual who is suspected of having committed child protection violation must be removed from direct contact with children
- The inappropriate behavior or any disciplinary action taken against the person must be recorded in his/her personal file/record.
- The issue would be addressed and brought to the closure within one month which starts from the day of grievance submission
- If the abuse falls under IPC or any other relevant law, FIR must be filed with the local police. In such case the staff must be removed from the position till the time s/he is free from the charge. In case of such removal s/he will not be given any salary/remuneration or financial benefits.

- In case there is confusion on any of the points of this policy, the management team can constitute a team to review of experts to review and come up with clarity.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing board of NAMM time to time

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