

# STANDARDS FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Tool 1



Produced by the Keeping Children Safe Coalition



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# Statement of commitment to child protection

**Organisations committed to child protection must aim to achieve the highest level of protection for children with whom they come into contact and to work towards achieving the standards outlined in this document.**

We affirm our belief in the right of all children to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, as set out in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* 1989.

We recognise that all organisations coming into contact with children have a fundamental duty of care towards them, and we acknowledge our responsibilities to keep children safe in both relief and development interventions.

The standards which follow are based on organisations' own experience of working in the field of relief and development and draw upon the principles outlined in international and regional child rights instruments and commitments. Though the achievement of the standards may often be influenced by factors beyond our control, we commit ourselves to consistently work towards achieving them and we expect to be held to account accordingly.

**We invite other organisations and agencies to adopt these standards and join us in working towards their achievement.**

Keeping Children Safe

More than fifteen years after the almost universal ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, there is much to be done to ensure the full respect and protection of children's rights. Often invisibly, children are until today very vulnerable to violence in different contexts in every region of the world. The establishment of clear international norms is a crucial achievement but must always be followed by action. Those who work with and care for children naturally play an important role in this process as they clearly face the challenges of making the principles and ideas contained in the international norms, part of daily reality.

Humanitarian and development efforts require a very clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities towards the care and protection of children. As the most vulnerable group, especially in situations of poverty, humanitarian crisis or conflict, children deserve higher standards of protection. To achieve successful results, staff and other representatives of aid and development agencies need to be aware of the roles they play and the responsibilities they take while interacting with children directly and indirectly.

This document provides the necessary standards and means of meeting them for agencies and organisations working with and for children. It provides a good basis for the development of effective measures to prevent and respond to violence: from awareness raising strategies to safeguarding measures. It offers an excellent opportunity not only for the improvement of the quality and professionalism of those working with children, but most importantly, it will help to achieve a greater impact for children.

Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro

The Independent Expert for the UN Study on Violence Against Children

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States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

#### **Article 19 – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

Humanitarian agencies have a duty of care to beneficiaries and a responsibility to ensure that beneficiaries are treated with dignity and respect and that certain minimum standards of behaviour are observed. The goal is to create an environment free of sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian crises, through integrating the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse into the protection and assistance functions of all humanitarian workers.

**UN IASC Task Force on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises 2002**

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Over recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the global nature of child abuse, and growing acceptance of the potential risks to children of adults working in positions of trust. Greater attention, therefore, has been paid to how aid and development agencies ensure that children they are in contact with are kept safe from harm. As a result, many agencies are now putting in place policies and procedures designed to protect children and keep them safe from harm.

However, many agencies are still not sufficiently aware of the importance of building protection measures into their work. Even agencies that have taken steps to address this are discovering the real challenges of making their agencies 'child safe'. All are looking for practical guidance, tools and support materials to assist them in overcoming a host of obstacles that confront them in tackling child protection issues in their work.

For aid and development agencies that have contact with children, some of the key issues and challenges include the fact that:

- Protection systems in many countries are often weak, and leave agencies and staff facing complex child protection dilemmas.
- Children in emergencies are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.
- There is little common understanding across agencies of child protection issues, standards of practice, or the organisational implications of these.
- There are huge difficulties in operating child protection policies in the many different legal, social and cultural contexts in which agencies work.
- Children may be at risk of abuse and exploitation, not only from individuals in the communities where they live, but also from agency staff, volunteers or other representatives.

For these organisations, and for the sector as a whole, there is a need to develop a common understanding of child protection issues, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which they operate and thereby increase accountability in this crucial aspect of their work. There are simple policies and procedures which, if put in place, will significantly strengthen child protection. The standards below describe the steps agencies can take to become effective in keeping children safe.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 2001, a number of aid and development agencies based in the UK and Switzerland, along with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), have been working together on these issues, in order to share experience and knowledge and to identify a common approach to child protection. These agencies make up the Keeping Children Safe Coalition.

This initiative has developed an approach based on agreed standards that offers very practical help to agencies in addressing the issues identified above. Developing ways of keeping children safe is a crucial part of operating ethically and making sure that children are protected. It also ensures that staff and other representatives are protected. This aspect of good governance is also critical in maintaining the reputation and credibility of individual agencies and of the sector as a whole.

In 2010 Keeping Children Safe responded to the demands of its members for a resource that engages children in child protection initiatives. Keeping Children Safe and The Child-to-Child Trust developed new materials that form an addition to tool 3 and a new tool 4.

The following standards will help any agency to meet their duty to protect children. The Keeping Children Safe Toolkit of which this standards document is a part will also assist in making them a practical reality for staff, volunteers and partners by supporting training and guidance on implementation.

## WHO ARE THE STANDARDS FOR?

The standards are aimed at:

International NGOs, with or without a specific child focus, International Organisations, the NGO partners of INGOs and IOs, other NGOs (national and local), government partners and any other agencies that require child protection measures to be in place.

This document will refer throughout to ‘agency’ or ‘agencies’ or organisations and this should be taken to include the range of organisations described above.



*“All organisations that work directly or indirectly with people under the age of 18 should have a written policy on keeping children safe.”*

## WHY STANDARDS?

Standards are used in many different areas of life. They describe the basic level of performance or ability that is required for a product or service to be effective and do the job it was designed to do.

In this case, we are defining what needs to be in place in agencies to keep children safe. The standards also list criteria – indicators that will help you decide whether this standard has been met. The criteria give details of the steps that an agency needs to take to meet the standard in each area.

## APPLYING THE STANDARDS LOCALLY

The standards have been written in a way that makes them relevant and achievable. At the same time, it should be recognised that they may be more difficult or challenging to apply in some countries and local contexts than in others. There is enormous variation in local practice and circumstances and so it is important that agencies adapt the standards and guidelines to fit the local context in which they will be applied.

However, the principles that support these standards (below) should always be adhered to and the standards should not be changed so much that children are not protected as a result.

### General principles

The standards document is based on the following set of principles:

1. All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
2. All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged.
3. Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
4. NGOs have a duty of care to children with whom they work and with whom their representatives work.
5. If agencies work through partners they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for the children in their partners' programmes.

## ADVANTAGES OF IMPLEMENTING CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS

### 1. Children are protected

No standards can offer complete protection for children, but following these standards minimises the risk to children of abuse and exploitation.

### 2. Agency representatives are protected

By implementing these standards, all representatives will be clear about how they are expected to behave with children and what to do if there are concerns about the safety of a child.

### 3. The organisation is protected

By implementing these standards organisations make clear their commitment to keeping children safe. The standards will help them to move towards best practice in this area and deter potential abusers from joining the organisation.

## SUMMARY

These standards can ensure that agencies develop practices that keep children safe from harm. They offer practical guidance to agencies on what they need to put in place to meet their responsibilities to protect children. They also provide a basis for determining local standards and how these will be met and measured.

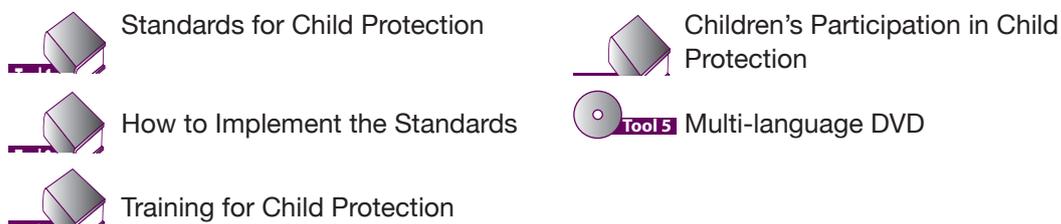
At the end of this document there is a useful tool for assessing and monitoring performance against the standards.

These standards are Tool 1 of the Keeping Children Safe: Toolkit for Child Protection. The other supporting tools include a training pack, a guide on how to implement the standards and a DVD.

- The standards describe what agencies need to do to keep children safe (Tool 1). 
- The How to Implement the Standards guide describes how agencies can go about putting these child protection measures in place (Tool 2). 
- The training pack and DVD provide exercises and suggested workshops that support agencies in raising the level of awareness, skills and knowledge of staff and other representatives, so they can better meet their protection responsibilities (Tools 3, 4 and 5).



## KEY



Taken together, the standards and supporting materials represent a comprehensive set of tools for protection, which should help a wide range of agencies address the challenges of keeping children safe in developing countries.



keeping children safe

# Standards 1 to 11



# Standard 1: A written policy on keeping children safe

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

All agencies that work directly or indirectly with people under the age of 18 have a written policy on keeping children safe.

This is generally known as a child protection policy.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

The policy communicates that the agency is committed to keeping children safe. It makes clear to everyone that children must be protected, helps to create a safe and positive environment for children, and shows that the organisation is taking its duty of care seriously.

Criteria	
1.1	The organisation has a child protection policy.
1.2	The policy is written in a clear and easily understandable way.
1.3	The policy is publicised, promoted and distributed widely.
1.4	The policy is approved and signed by the relevant management body (eg Senior Management Board, Executive, Committee).
1.5	All staff or other representatives are required to comply with the policy – there are no exceptions.
1.6	The policy is reviewed as a minimum every three years and is adapted whenever there is a significant change in the agency or if there are any legal changes.
1.7	The policy covers child protection in the different types of work undertaken: emergency relief; development work; working with partners; child sponsorship; advocacy, and so on.
1.8	The policy clearly describes the agency's understanding and definitions of abuse.

## YOU SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY:

- All children have a right to protection.
- The welfare of children is always the most important consideration.
- It is made clear which individuals or groups the policy applies to.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a copy of the policy
- policy translated into local languages
- a list of names to show who the policy has been sent to
- examples of ways the policy has been promoted, including to communities and to children
- a copy of the policy signed by the management board or minutes of the meeting where the policy was signed by the management board
- written evidence of how abuse is dealt with in the organisation, and a timetable for review.



# Standard 2: Putting the policy into practice

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

There is clear guidance on what to do when a child protection incident or concern arises.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Clear procedures and guidance will help to make sure there is a prompt response to concerns about a child's safety or welfare. They also help an organisation to meet any legal or practice guidance requirements.

Criteria	
2.1	There are clear child protection procedures in place that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
2.2	The child protection procedures are available to everyone (including children, parents/carers and consultants) and actively promoted. Consideration should be given to language, different ways of communicating and making sure that everyone can find the information easily.
2.3	The child protection procedures are consistent with international standards and good practice in the protection of children. They should also take account of issues that arise as a result of different country contexts.
2.4	There is a person or person(s) with clearly defined responsibilities for child protection, at each level of the agency.
2.5	There is a process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely, so that confidential information is locked away.
2.6	There is a process for dealing with complaints by parents/carers and by young people about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint.
2.7	There is guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration.

## **YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

- how to respond to a child who says they, or another child, are experiencing abuse
- how to respond to allegations against a member of staff/volunteer or another young person
- how to respond to concerns about a child's welfare where there are concerns but no specific allegation has been made
- contact details for local child protection services – where they exist
- information on the people who are involved, i.e., which children and families and which representatives
- definitions of abuse
- how some groups of children are particularly vulnerable, including disabled children.

## **WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE**

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a copy of written procedures and guidance
- a flow chart that describes steps in the child protection process
- name and duties of those people with special responsibility for child protection in the agency
- examples of forms for recording details of child protection incidents.

# Standard 3: Preventing harm to children

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Processes exist to help minimise the possibility of children being abused by those in positions of trust.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Some people who work in, or who seek to work in agencies (whether it is paid or voluntary work) pose a risk to children. It is possible to minimise the dangers and to prevent abuse by putting certain measures in place.

Criteria	
3.1	There are agreed ways of recruiting staff, volunteers, consultants and assessing their suitability to work with children.
3.2	All those who have the opportunity for regular contact with children, or who are in positions of trust, complete a form declaring any previous court convictions and are required to have other checks made on them where possible.
3.3	There are clear ways both inside and outside the agency for representatives to raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour towards children by other representatives.
3.4	There is guidance on assessing all possible risks in working with children – especially in activities that involve time spent away from home.
3.5	Projects and programmes make sure that children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.
3.6	Where agencies are involved in placing children in the care of other families, checks should be made that families are suitable.
3.7	Guidelines exist for appropriate use of information technology (such as email, digital cameras, websites, internet) to make sure that children are not put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- at least two suitable references are taken up for all representatives who have regular contact with children and evidence of identity and any relevant qualifications are seen
- a policy on recruitment that applies to everyone who has contact with children, even if the contact is not direct or a part of their job
- prevention strategies that reflect the fact that abuse may not necessarily be planned in advance
- basic guidelines on setting up websites, the use of videos and photography of children.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a copy of agreed methods for recruiting
- examples of application, reference and declaration forms
- a copy of the document explaining how representatives can confidentially discuss their concerns about children with senior staff (whistle-blowing scheme) and information about this procedure
- use of tools that can help determine dangers (risks) to children in planning activities with children and development of guidelines for keeping children safe
- example of plan for transporting children or taking them on trips
- evidence of written proof of contact with, or identification of, agencies that are in a position to provide details of an applicant's past behaviour, such as criminal records information.

# Standard 4: Written guidelines on behaviour towards children

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Written guidelines exist that describe what is appropriate behaviour, such as codes of conduct or codes of practice, towards children.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Children should experience a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Written standards of behaviour for everyone should define what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards children is. These guidelines can help minimise opportunities for abuse and help prevent false allegations being made against staff and other representatives.

Criteria	
4.1	There are written guidelines for behaviour.
4.2	The organisation provides guidance on appropriate/expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children, especially for those adults who are responsible for children in residential care and caring for disabled children.
4.3	There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children.
4.4	There are alternative, positive ways of managing the behaviour of children that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment.
4.5	Managers and senior staff promote a culture that ensures children are listened to and respected as individuals.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- written guidelines that describe what is appropriate behaviour of adults with children, both at work and in the community
- information that makes it clear that discrimination, prejudice, or oppressive behaviour or language in relation to any of the following are not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views
- where relevant, there are guidelines on intimate care of disabled children or young people, including advice on the proper ways of touching
- guidelines for residential care workers and carers of disabled children.



*“Many children are resilient to abuse and have a huge capacity to survive even the most difficult events.”*

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- guidelines for adult-to-child behaviour and for child-to-child behaviour
- guidance on physical contact.

# Standard 5: Meeting the standards in different locations

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Clear guidance exists on how the organisation's guidelines will be adapted in different locations to fit with local circumstances.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

NGOs and other agencies work in a variety of settings with great variations in understandings and arrangements for child protection. There are sometimes different understandings of what child abuse means. The agency needs to give clear guidance to staff, partners and other organisations (including funding organisations) on how the child protection policy will be adapted and applied practically in these different circumstances. The guidelines must be applied in ways that are sensitive to different cultures but without condoning practices that are harmful to children.

Criteria	
5.1	The agency requires local mapping exercises to be carried out that analyse the legal, social welfare and child protection arrangements in the contexts in which it works.
5.2	Guidance covers the distinction between children generally in need of protection and those in need of protection from specific acts of maltreatment.
5.3	The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or regional equivalent is clearly identified as the basis for child protection.
5.4	There is a participatory process of dialogue and discussion through which differences between what is acceptable behaviour locally and what is acceptable under the child protection policy can be resolved.
5.5	There is an appropriate process for reporting and responding to child protection incidents and concerns that fits with the local systems for dealing with incidents of child abuse (as identified in the mapping exercise).
5.6	Guidance exists on establishing a reporting procedure based on local child protection systems and resources.

**YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:**

- advice on how to establish local understanding and definitions of abuse and child protection
- a document that makes clear that a child is someone under the age of 18.

**WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE**

The following document can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a document describing practices used.

# Standard 6: Equal rights of all children to protection

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Steps are taken to address the needs of all children to be protected from abuse.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Abuse happens to male and female children of all ages, race, gender, age, religion or disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture. Some children, such as disabled children, are particularly vulnerable. Prejudice and discrimination can prevent some children getting the help they need and agencies should take steps to ensure that all children are protected and receive the support they require.

Criteria	
6.1	The child protection policy makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection.
6.2	Child protection procedures, guidance and training help representatives to recognise the particular risks faced by some children and the extra difficulties they face getting help, because of their race, gender, age, religion or disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture.
6.3	Codes of conduct/behaviour include statements about the responsibility of adults and children to treat one another with dignity, respect, sensitivity and fairness.
6.4	Codes of conduct/behaviour make it clear that all behaviour that discriminates, offends or is violent is unacceptable and that complaints will be acted on.
6.5	Processes for dealing with complaints are fair and transparent and include a right of appeal.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- a written statement saying that the organisation is committed to the protection of all children.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- copies of sections from relevant, agreed guidelines
- examples of how training programmes include issues of equality and child protection
- a copy of a complaints form and document explaining the system of questioning decisions.



Alexandra Stock / Terre des Hommes

# Standard 7: Communicating the ‘keep children safe’ message

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Systems and processes are put in place to ensure that everyone in the agency knows how to keep children safe, are asked their opinion on keeping children safe and have their opinions listened to.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Policies and procedures put in place by organisations to keep children safe are only effective if people are aware of them, can contribute to their development and have the opportunity to express their views on how they are working.

Criteria	
7.1	Information about the agency’s commitment to keeping children safe is openly displayed and available to everyone.
7.2	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse.
7.3	Information for children parents/carers is made available about where to go for help in relation to child abuse.
7.4	Information provided is in a format and language that can be easily understood by everyone, including children.
7.5	Everyone in the agency knows who has responsibility for child protection and how to contact them.
7.6	Contact details are readily available for local child protection services, such as safe houses, advocacy services, national authorities, emergency medical help and local telephone helplines.
7.7	Steps are taken to find out the views of children on policies and procedures and how they are working.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- a process to ensure that children are consulted and listened to, to ensure their voices are heard and that their views inform and influence the development of protection measures in the organisation.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- examples of resources and materials that encourage listening to and participation of, children, including those with different communication methods
- information about who and where the focal points are for children to go to when they have a worry or a concern and how to contact them, these focal points should be different from the ones dealing with complaints from adults
- education programmes which include guidance on keeping safe and information on rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.

# Standard 8: Education and training for keeping children safe

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

There are learning opportunities for staff to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to keep children safe.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Everyone in contact with children has a role to play in their protection. They can only carry out this role confidently and effectively if they have the right attitude towards children, are sufficiently aware of child protection issues and have the necessary knowledge and skills to keep children safe. Agencies working with children have a responsibility to provide training and development opportunities for their staff and to ensure that children are also included in programmes to learn more about keeping children safe.

There should be learning opportunities for staff to develop and maintain the necessary skills and understanding to keep children safe.

Criteria	
8.1	All members of staff, volunteers and other associates have training on child protection when they join the agency which includes an introduction to the organisation's child protection policy and procedures.
8.2	All members of staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse.
8.3	Children are provided with advice and support on keeping themselves safe.
8.4	Staff members and volunteers with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have relevant training and regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.
8.5	Training is provided to those responsible for dealing with complaints and disciplinary procedures in relation to child abuse and inappropriate behaviour towards children.
8.6	Training and written guidance on safer recruitment practice is provided for those responsible for recruiting and selecting staff.
8.7	Opportunities exist for learning from practical case experience to be fed back into organisational training and development programmes.

**YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:**

- a way of identifying staff training needs
- a budget for training staff on child protection
- a list of people who are experienced in child protection and can provide training.

**WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE**

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a copy of training plans and/or programmes
- records of course attendance
- induction documentation/guidance
- course evaluations.

# Standard 9: Access to advice and support

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Arrangements are made to provide essential information and support to those responsible for keeping children safe. Children who are being abused are assisted to get help.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

Child abuse is a serious violation of a child's rights and often has long term consequences on the emotional and physical development of the child. In addition, it is distressing and can be difficult to deal with. Organisations have a duty to ensure advice and support is available to help people to play their part in protecting children. Children need someone to turn to when they are being abused. Often they do not know where to go for help.

Criteria	
9.1	Children are provided with information on where to go to for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying.
9.2	Staff members with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.
9.3	Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies that can provide information, support and assistance to children and staff.
9.4	Arrangements are in place to provide support to individuals – both the people the agency works with and staff members, during and following an incident or allegation of abuse or a complaint.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- named staff who can provide advice and guidance
- effective working relationships with local staff and other organisations that may offer support to children.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- copies of information for children about sources of support
- information (leaflets, information sheets etc) about training, advice and support – for staff, adults outside the organisation, and children
- lists of contacts for specialist advice and information, including on reporting.



Barbara Mair / SOS Kinderdorf

*“Children need someone to turn to when they are being abused.”*



Alexandra Stock / Terre des Hommes

# Standard 10: Implementing and monitoring of the standards

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

A plan of action is developed to monitor the effectiveness of the steps being taken to keep children safe.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

To keep children safe, policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across all parts of the organisation. Checks are needed to ensure this is happening consistently. The views of those involved inside and outside the organisation can help to improve the effectiveness of any measures taken.

Criteria	
10.1	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing these measures and when these will be completed.
10.2	The human or financial resources necessary for implementing the plan are made available.
10.3	Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals, ideally at least every three years, and revised based on changes in needs, legislation, guidance, practice experience changes within the organisation, and so on.
10.4	Processes are in place to ask children and parents/carers about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe.
10.5	All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored.
10.6	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- regular management meetings such as supervision and appraisal sessions and team meetings to provide an opportunity for ongoing monitoring of policy implementation
- ways of consulting with children on how safe they feel in an organisation and what they would do if they had a complaint.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- a written copy of a child protection policy
- a record of a date planned for review and who is responsible
- a summary of the number of incidents of abuse and number of complaints.

# Standard 11: Working with partners to meet the standards

## WHAT IS THE STANDARD?

Where agencies work with or through partners that are in contact with children, those partners have or develop child protection policies and procedures, which are consistent with these standards.

## WHY SHOULD AGENCIES MEET THIS STANDARD?

When working in partnership with others, organisations have a responsibility to make sure that children are kept safe by the partner organisation as well. Most partners working with children will already be concerned for child protection and may have good policies and procedures in place. A discussion between partners based on these standards should allow for mutual learning and development of agreed good practice.

Criteria	
11.1	There is a process of engagement with partners on child protection issues to ensure common agreements, mutual learning and development of good practice.
11.2	A written agreement provides minimum standards for an agency's work with and through partners.
11.3	The existence or development of a child protection policy and procedures form an essential part of partnership agreements.
11.4	Agencies consider capacity-building work or grants for the purpose of developing child protection policies and procedures in partner agencies.

## YOU SHOULD ENSURE YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- on going training, discussions and monitoring.

## WAYS OF PROVIDING EVIDENCE

The following documents can be used to provide evidence that the standard has been met:

- partnership agreements should reflect a commitment to child protection and to putting protection measures in place in line with these standards
- partner's own child protection policy.



Benno Nieteman / SOS Kinderdorp

*“Prevention is a crucial part of keeping children safe from abuse.”*



keeping children safe



children safe

# The self-audit tool



# The self-audit tool

This self-audit tool is an ideal way to measure how far (or near!) your organisation is from meeting the standards on making children safe, and where you need to improve.

The approach is based on the work of George Varnava with the former Forum on Children and Violence, NCB (National Children's Bureau). With permission from the authors, the NSPCC has adapted the material for use as an audit tool for child protection.

## USING CHECKPOINTS

The checkpoint questions below are designed to draw out the minimum requirements (criteria) that all agencies committed to protecting children should be striving to meet. However, depending on the nature of your organisation's work with children and the context, environment and conditions you work in, some of the checkpoints may seem more relevant than others. This self-audit tool will be a useful guide and you may wish to delete or add criteria to ensure relevance to your particular activity (the self-audit web allows for additional criteria).

Before you start, take a copy of the questionnaire, date the copy and then follow the steps outlined below. You can then keep a record in order to review your progress at a later date.

The self-audit tool asks you to think about six different areas of your organisation:

1. children and the organisation
2. policies and procedures
3. preventing harm to children
4. implementation and training
5. information and communication
6. monitoring and review.

There are six statements/standards within each area. Read each statement and decide whether each statement is:

- A: in place
- B: partially done
- C: not in place

Tick the A, B or C box as appropriate.

Children and the organisation		A	B	C
1.	The agency is very clear about its responsibility to protect children and makes this known to all who come into contact with it.			
2.	The way staff and other representatives behave towards children suggests that they are committed to protecting children from abuse.			
3.	There is good awareness of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or other children's rights instruments and this is seen as a basis for child protection in the organisation.			
4.	Managers and senior staff ensure that children are listened to and consulted and that their rights are met.			
5.	The agency makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection.			
6.	The agency manages children's behaviour in ways which are non-violent and do not degrade or humiliate children.			

Policies and procedures that help keep children safe		A	B	C
1.	The agency has a written child protection policy or has some clear arrangements to make sure that children are kept safe from harm.			
2.	The policy or arrangements are approved and endorsed by the relevant management body (eg, senior management board, executive, committee).			
3.	The policy or arrangements have to be followed by everyone.			
4.	There are clear child protection procedures in place that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.			
5.	There is a named child protection person/s with clearly defined role and responsibilities.			
6.	The child protection procedures also take account of local circumstances.			

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Preventing harm to children		A	B	C
1.	There are policies and procedures or agreed ways of recruiting representatives and for assessing their suitability to work with children, including where possible police and reference checks.			
2.	There are written guidelines for behaviour or some way of describing to staff and other representatives what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable especially when it comes to contact with children.			
3.	The consequences of breaking the guidelines on behaviour are clear and linked to organisational disciplinary procedures.			
4.	Guidance exists on appropriate use of information technology such as the internet, websites, digital cameras etc to ensure that children are not put at risk.			
5.	Where there is direct responsibility for running/ providing activities, including residential care, children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.			
6.	There are well-publicised ways in which staff/ representatives can raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour by other staff or representatives.			

Implementation and training		A	B	C
1.	There is clear guidance to staff, partners and other organisations (including funding organisations) on how children will be kept safe.			
2.	Child protection must be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts that are harmful to children.			
3.	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe.			
4.	All members of staff and volunteers have training on child protection when they join the organisation which includes an introduction to the organisation's child protection policy and procedures where these exist.			
5.	All members of staff and other representatives are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse.			
6.	Work has been undertaken with all partners to agree good practice expectations based on these standards.			

Information and communication		A	B	C
1.	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse.			
2.	Everyone in the organisation knows which named staff member has special responsibilities for keeping children safe and how to contact them.			
3.	Contact details are readily available for local child protection resources, safe places, national authorities and emergency medical help.			
4.	Children are provided with information on where to go to for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying.			
5.	Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies as appropriate.			
6.	Staff members with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information.			

Monitoring and review		A	B	C
1.	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection measures put in place by the organisation.			
2.	Steps are taken to regularly ask children and parents/carers their views on policies and practices aimed at keeping children safe and the effectiveness of these.			
3.	The organisation uses the experience of operating child protection systems to influence policy and practice development.			
4.	All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored.			
5.	Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals, ideally at least every three years.			
6.	Children and parents/carers are consulted as part of a review of safeguarding policies and practices.			

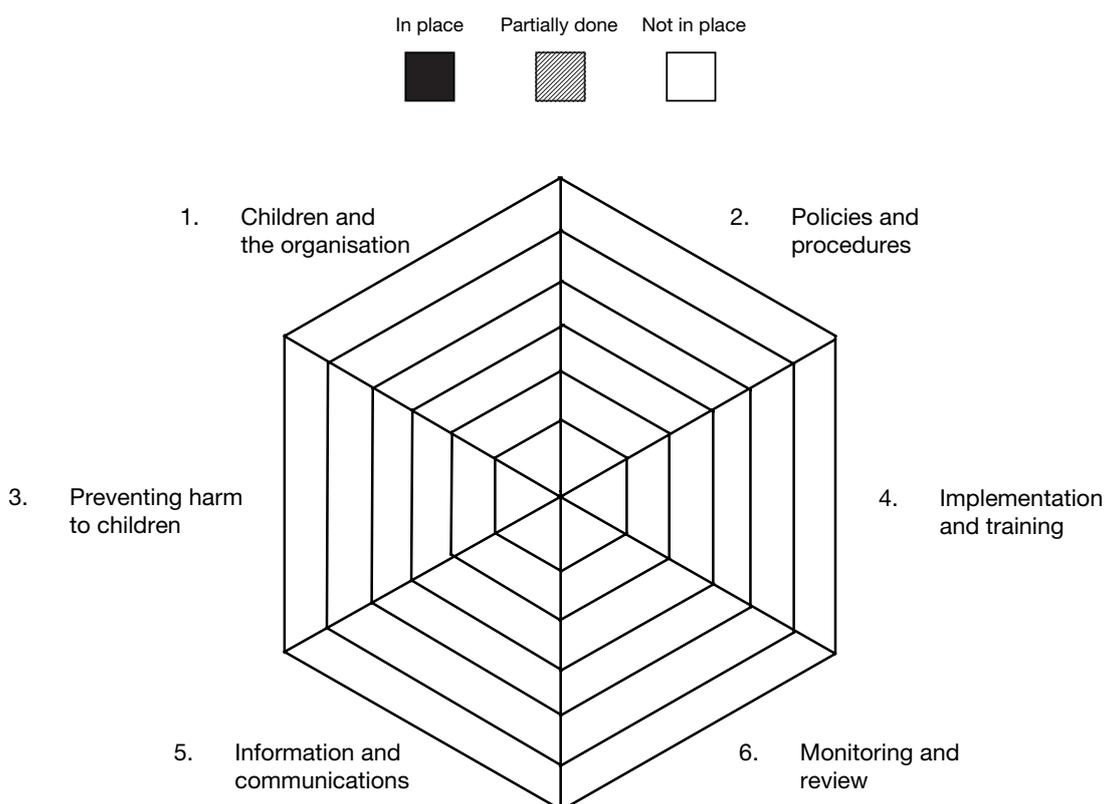
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## THE SELF-AUDIT WEB

When you have finished the self-audit tool, transfer your answers to the web using different coloured pens or three different kinds of shading. The self-audit web lets you make a diagram of your organisation, showing how well your organisation is doing in making children safe, and where you need to take further action. Use a different colour, or different kind of shading for A, B and C.

Please note that this web reflects the Keeping Children Safe standards. They have been grouped into six categories to make it easier. The aim of this exercise is to map out any gaps in each of the six sections.

Once the key criteria above have been read and ticked as either: in place, partially done or not in place, transfer the results to the web using the shading key below. The web illustrates visually the stage reached by the organisation in safeguarding children and highlights where further action needs to be taken. Please note that there is no intended hierarchical progression from 1 – 6, the aim of this exercise is to reveal any gaps.



# Acknowledgements

The standards set out in this document were developed by the Keeping Children Safe Coalition members in 2002:

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