

## **La Ligue de l'enseignement**

### **Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

#### **Purposes**

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that all children have a right to protection, la Ligue de l'enseignement believes that it has a duty of care and obligation to protect those children for whom we are given responsibility.

In particular, the purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to:

- take into account, in all of our planning and activities, the interests and wellbeing of children;
- respect the rights, wishes and feelings of the children with whom we are working;
- take all reasonable steps to protect children from neglect and physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse;
- treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- empower children: discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

Our responsibility to children extends to any contact we have with them, be it direct, by phone, text, chat, social network sites etc.

In the use and production of images, pictures and films we are committed to:

- before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images;
- before photographing or filming a child, obtain consent from the child or a parent or guardian of the child. As part of this we must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

In particular, when addressing to minors both in research or training activity, parents/guardians and the minors themselves will be asked to sign a specific informed consent declaration where all aspects of children's involvement will be clarified. Parent/guardian written permission is required for the publication of a picture of a minor.

#### **Recruitment and Application of the Policy**

This policy ensures that all the staff of la Ligue de l'enseignement as well as stakeholders involved in the project are aware of this 'Child Protection Policy and Procedures'.

Recruitment procedures include checks on suitability for working with young people. Concerning youth workers, the recruitment procedure includes the verification of the criminal record and the CV. In



particular, we ensure that the staff of la Ligue de l'enseignement is clear on what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

At the beginning of all projects, the management team is committed to brief partners' representatives and staff on the Child Protection Policy, on how to reduce risks and create child safe environments, on how to promote child safe practices which keep children safe during the project and in their own community, and provide information about child protection to the children and communities in which we work, especially for the staff working directly with children.

This information will also concern how to report child abuse if they have concerns about a staff member of la Ligue de l'enseignement and information on state, provincial and local laws regarding what individuals must do when aware of youth in potentially harmful situations.

This Child Protection Policy applies to all part-time and full-time employees as well as to independent contractors, freelance and other experts, interns and volunteers, associate firms and sub-contractors working with la Ligue de l'enseignement on the implementation of the project.

### **Contrasting and reporting child abuse**

La Ligue de l'enseignement is committed to providing a management strategy to prevent child abuse and protect children in the course of its work, delivering to the staff clear information on what to do in the case of suspected child abuse in order to respond to all suspicions and allegations of abuse swiftly and appropriately.

In the case of suspected or actual child abuse, our first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the child and that no child is ever left in an un-safe situation.

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure or when the concern arises.

Where it is suspected that any form of criminal behaviour is taking place at a programme, the appropriate local authorities should be informed immediately and their advice followed.

### **Guidelines for adults working with children within the projects of la Ligue de l'enseignement**

Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Adults acting in the projects of la Ligue de l'enseignement are called to treat each minor with respect and care, ensuring that minors are properly supervised at all times, thus providing them a safe environment.

The same professional standards should always be applied and should be sensitive to differences expressed through culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

Adults should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children and young people is not acceptable in any situation.

All adults who work with, and on behalf of children are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard children and young people.



Adults, should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way. Whenever possible, we try to have another adult present when it needs to work with minors in an unsupervised setting. Meetings with children and young people outside agreed working arrangements should not take place without the agreement of senior managers and parents or carers.

Adults are expected to refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products in the presence of youth.

All documents bearing personal information, including registration forms, medical information forms, permission to treat forms, etc., are be treated as being confidential, minimizing the number of people who have access to any such documents and securing the documents at all times.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential. Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should treat their interaction with youth on social networking sites as though the interaction were occurring in public, in front of other adults and young people. In other words, if it would not be appropriate to say to a young person in public, it should not be said as a comment on a social networking site either.

Every partner organization of the projects of la Ligue de l'enseignement will inform and educate its members on these guidelines, providing a copy of the guidelines to each staff member.

