



## LOO NIVA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

2010

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## **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

## LOO NIVA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Name of Regulation/Policy :	Loo Niva Child Protection Policy (LNCPP)
Purpose of Regulation/policy :	To inform Loo Niva staff about their responsibilities when working with children
Approval for this regulation given by :	Board members
Regulation applies to :	Loo Niva staff, board members, volunteers
Date of Approval:	1st January 2010

### **1. Introduction**

Loo Niva Child Concern Group is committed to protect children from any type of harm. Staff members and volunteers in this organization recognize and accept their responsibility to develop awareness of the issues that may cause harm to children. This policy is intended to promote and enhance the safety and welfare of children.

Throughout this document:

- 'abuse' refers to all aspects of inappropriate behaviour in relation to children (e.g. neglect, physical, emotional and sexual offenses)
- 'Child' refers to a person under the age of 18.
- 'Staff' refers to all persons employed in Loo Niva on some form of contract.
- 'Board members' refers to Board members of Loo Niva.
- 'Volunteers' refers to those who work in Loo Niva with no expectation of a salary.

### **2. Loo Niva Child Protection Policy**

This policy is based upon the following principles:

- The safety of children is paramount.
- Children are among the most vulnerable group in society.
- All the children, regardless of their age, culture, physical abilities, gender, language, ethnicity, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from any abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will have to be taken seriously to respond to the situation promptly and appropriately.
- Participation of children will be encouraged in designing and implementing the program.

### **3. Policy objective**

The objective of this Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice in:

- Providing children with appropriate safety and protection when they visit or are in the care of the Loo Niva.
- Enabling all board members/ staffs /volunteers to take informed decisions on specific child protection issues.

## **4. Policy Implementation**

Loo Niva Child Protection Policy will be implemented after the approval by the Loo Niva board. The entire staff of Loo Niva must comply with this Policy in conjunction with the Loo Niva's Code of Conduct. The guidelines cover three main areas:

- **Staff recruitment, support and training**
- **Staff behaviour**
- **Child protection procedures**

### **I. Staff recruitment, support and training**

#### ***A. All staff at Loo Niva Child Concern Group will receive orientation on how to work safely and positively with children:***

- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified upon recruitment, and for periodic refreshers.
- Staff members, volunteers and board members sign up to the Loo Niva's Child Protection Policy.
- All staff, volunteers and board members will undergo training so that they are aware of the behaviour and physical indicators that suggest the possibility of abuse.
- All staffs, volunteers and board members will be aware of the procedures to follow in cases of suspected abuse.

#### ***B. Protection Policy***

- Where staff will take significant responsibility for safeguarding children during Loo Niva activities, they are selected on the basis of their suitability for the job and responsibilities and also their ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children.
- All appropriate staff will receive a copy of the Loo Niva Child Protection Policy from their administration.
- Awareness of child protection issues will continue to be addressed through on-going training.
- Child Protection Policy will be placed in the offices of Loo Niva Child Concern Group and at other working places.
- Seminars, interaction programs, workshops and meetings to make people aware about the Child Protection Policy will be organized at least annually.

### **II. Staff behavior**

All staff should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children from harm and themselves from allegations of misconduct. Staff should maintain their standards of behaviour, therefore acting as role models.

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).

- Never make unnecessary physical contact with a child. However, house parents must consider that they are the primary source of love and affection to the child. They should not engage in physical contact, e.g. tickling, if the child objects in any way.
- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Staff should ensure that children are protected from discrimination on any grounds, including ability and they should challenge discriminating comments and behavior.
- Always refer any problems to the child protection lead member of staff.
- Children's inappropriate use of language and/or behavior, especially when targeted at other children, should be challenged.
- It may sometimes be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empowers children to share in the decision-making process. Such trust must never be broken.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Never use physical punishment.

### ***Accommodation***

Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate for staffs or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them during residential activities).

- The authorized staff will accompany any child when they are under Loo Niva's protection.
- If a parent wishes to accompany and stay overnight with their child then Loo Niva will respect their wish.

### ***Transportation***

- When children are being transported on behalf of Loo Niva, they should be accompanied by a parent, guardian or Loo Niva staff.
- Children should always wear helmets on motorbikes.
- Adequate adult supervision must be maintained on trips to ensure the safety of the children.

## **III. Child Protection Procedures**

### ***Loo Niva Child Concern Group will:***

- Ensure we have staffs who have received appropriate training and support.
- Ensure all staff understands their responsibilities in terms of being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the lead staff member. However, staff should remember that they are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Ensure all records are kept securely locked.
- Follow procedures under the staff disciplinary policy where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Adopt a procedure for dealing with concerns about any possible abuse.

## 5. Code of Behavior - for All Staffs, Board Members and Volunteers

### You must not:

- a. Staff, board members and volunteers **should not** spend unnecessary amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Meetings with individual children should be avoided or take place within sight of others. If privacy is needed, the door should remain open and other staff members or volunteers should be aware of the meeting.
- b. Staff and volunteers are **advised not to** make unnecessary physical contact with children. However, **there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable**, such as providing comfort at times of distress, or physical support in sports or a something similar. In all such cases contact should only take place with the consent of the child.
- c. Staff and volunteers **should not** meet children outside of organized activities.
- d. Staff and volunteers should **never** (even in fun) –
  - Initiate or engage in sexually provocative conversations or activity.
  - Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged.
  - Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
  - Make promises to keep any disclosure confidential from relevant authorities.
- e. Staff or volunteers **should not** show favoritism to any one child, nor should they issue or threaten any form of physical punishment.

### You must:

- a. Staff and volunteers **must respect** children's rights to privacy and encourage children and adults to feel comfortable enough to report attitudes or behaviors they do not like.
- b. Staff and volunteers **must refrain** from consuming alcohol and smoking in the presence of children
- c. All staff and volunteers **should be aware** of the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents, and should familiarize themselves with the contact details of the designated persons.
- d. If a member of staff or volunteer finds himself or herself the subject of inappropriate affection or attention from a child, they **should make** others aware of this.
- e. If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns relating to the welfare of a child in their care, be it concerns about actions/behaviors of another staff member or volunteer or concerns based on any conversation with the child, particularly where the child makes an allegation, they **should report** this to a designated person.

## 6. Responding to suspicions of abuse

- Abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, or sexual.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour or in their play.
- We will allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of neglect, we make the appropriate referrals.
- If staff and volunteers are come under suspicion of abuse, disciplinary action will be taken under the Loo Niva Disciplinary Procedure.
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## **7. Confidentiality**

- All allegations and investigations will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.
- Staff members or volunteers under investigation will not be allowed to have any contact with children under Loo Niva's protection.
- Any piece information will be shared only under the guidance of the Child Protection Team.

## Statement of Commitment/Code of Conduct

This code of conduct constitutes a set of standards for appropriate behavior for guiding people who work with Loo Niva, whether on a part time or permanent basis. It also gives guidance to avoid situations that increase chances of risk misbehavior when in the company of children.

The code is applicable to anyone acting as a representative of the organization, whose work requires him/her to be in contact with children.

### Don'ts

- Spend time alone with a child either at the adult's home overnight or any secluded place.
- Carry out personal activities on a child like bathing and dressing.
- Engage in inappropriate touch or physical contact with a child.
- Make sexually provocative gestures towards a child.
- Have a sexual relationship with a child.
- Physically assault or abuse a child.
- Make use of language that causes mental or emotional harm to a child
- Exploit children in any way or form.
- Practice racial, cultural, gender based, religious, political or any other form of discrimination towards children.
- Use of child labour.
- Make pressure to do any kinds of work.

### Does

- Avoid compromising situations that increase vulnerability.
- Listen carefully children's voices.
- Respectfully, positively and equally behave to children.
- Inspire to express their opinion freely.
- Maintain the secrecy of children.
- Meet children in public places as much as possible.
- Avoid actions and language and behaviour of any kind that can be subject to misinterpretation by a third party.
- Get informed written consent from the child, parent or person with primary responsibility over the child before taking photographs or statement from a child.
- Be aware that age difference creates a power imbalance between adults and children and so avoid situations that might result in you taking advantage of children.

### Declaration

I (*Name*).....

have read and understood the guidelines, standards, and code of conduct as stated in the Loo Niva's child protection policy. I agree with principles contained therein and undertake to uphold the policy principles while working with/for the Loo Niva.

**Title/Position:** .....

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....