

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY



# Child Safeguarding Policy of the Carpathian Foundation

*Our vision includes eastern Slovakia as a place where people and organizations have accepted responsibility for their actions and operation, where they work to improve their lives and the world around them and where they respect each other, work together, help each other and form their own future jointly.*



*Children and vulnerable groups are very important for the Carpathian Foundation. Therefore, the Carpathian Foundation undertakes to protect children from any actions that could have detrimental effects on them or violate their rights.*

## Background

Child Safeguarding Policy of the Carpathian Foundation (hereinafter referred to as the 'Policy') is based on the Child safeguarding policy designed by Eurochild, inspired by the Child safeguarding policy of Keeping Children Safe Coalition and consulted with child safeguarding experts from Children of Slovakia Foundation. The Carpathian Foundation's work is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter referred to as the 'Convention'). We believe that child safeguarding

is crucial to ensuring that children under the age of 18 have the rights, information and space in which they can express their views and communicate effectively with other children and adults. Children can only become empowered adults and agents of change to improve their lives and that of their families and communities if they are safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind (physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect.

## 1 CARPATHIAN FOUNDATION'S CORE CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

This Policy deals with the safeguarding of children and adolescents as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Foundation respects the Convention as a holistic document providing a comprehensive framework for the safeguarding, provision and participation of all children. All children and adolescents involved in the activities implemented and/or supported by the Carpathian Foundation have the right:

- to have their health, safety, well-being, and their best interests considered as top priority;
- to have their development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential;
- to be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity;
- to be listened to and to have their views given careful consideration;
- to be able and allowed to participate in decisions which affect them (including rights of the child protection).

The Carpathian Foundation believes that non-governmental organizations working for children's rights have an absolute duty to protect children and young people from abuse, mistreatment and exploitation. This duty is imperative and indisputable.

Without adequate safeguarding standards and mechanisms in place, an organization is not only failing in its primary duty of care, but may also be negligently or recklessly fostering an environment of abuse.

### Therefore, the Carpathian Foundation:

- strives to create an environment children and adults discuss issues of child safeguarding freely and openly,
- strives to promote open lines of communication both internally and externally (with its partners) to raise awareness and improve implementation of child safeguarding policies and practices,
- strives to create a framework ensuring that any allegations of abuse are handled openly, consistently and fairly.

### 1.1 Child Safeguarding Policy Implementation and Accountability in the Carpathian Foundation

This Policy has been drafted to ensure the highest standards of professional conduct and practice, aiming to prevent any form of abuse of children and young people involved in the activities, projects and programs implemented and/or supported by the Carpathian Foundation (hereinafter referred to as 'CF') at any time of their involvement. Therefore, the Policy includes measures that apply to the recruitment and hiring of new personnel; to management structures review; to the forming of atmosphere where children and young people feel free to speak openly about their problems; to staff training and to transparent protocols development. The Policy also includes clear procedures that the organizations working with the Carpathian Foundation are required to abide by in the course of joint activities, projects and programs. These processes and checklists form a part of this Policy, as do the notification procedures and follow-up steps to be taken in a case of child safeguarding standards violation. The abovementioned principles underpin the standards and procedures set out hereinafter.

### 1.2 Definitions

#### Child

Pursuant to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

## **Child Safeguarding**

Child safeguarding is a broad term to describe philosophies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies to CF's duty to ensure that its staff, operations and programs pose no harm for children, and thus that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse. Should any concerns about children's safety within the activities and programs they are involved in arise, the Carpathian Foundation will report these to relevant authorities.

### **Direct Contact With Children**

A situation when one is in the physical presence of a child/children in the context of CF's activities, regardless whether such contact is occasional, regular, short or long-term. This could involve various activities of formal, non-formal and informal education nature, leisure time activities with children, meetings and conferences where children are present or working with child and youth volunteers.

### **Indirect Contact With Children**

Indirect contact with children shall mean:

- a) Having access to information about children involved in the CF's activities, such as children's names, locations, photographs and case studies;
- b) Providing funding for organizations that work with children 'directly'. Although such contact between the Carpathian Foundation and children is deemed indirect, it nevertheless confers responsibility of child safeguarding issues upon the donor organization.

### **Policy**

A statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all that is required in relation to the safeguarding of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that the organization is taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously.

## **1.3 What is child abuse and exploitation?**

According to the World Health Organisation, '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. Our understanding of child abuse and exploitation includes, but it is not limited to:

**Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. A specific form of abuse, commonly described as 'fictitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy' may occur when a parent makes up or intentionally feigns symptoms of a child's health problem causing the child to be examined and treated repeatedly, excessively and/or painfully.

**Emotional abuse**, includes emotional ill-treatment of a child which has a detrimental effect on the child's mental and emotional development and his/her behavior. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve age- or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur in isolation.

**Sexual abuse and exploitation**, is defined as contacts or interactions between a child and an older or more knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling or person in a position of authority, such as a parent or caretaker) when the child is being used as an object of gratification for an older child's or adult's sexual needs. These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, trickery, bribes, threats or pressure. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional. It may involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Commercial sexual exploitation of children comprises sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or to a third person or persons. The child is treated as sexual object and as a commercial object. The commercial sexual exploitation of children constitutes a form of coercion and violence against children, and amounts to forced labor and a contemporary form of slavery. Child pornography shall mean any representation, by any means, of a child, or a person with childlike appearance, engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child or of a person with childlike appearance for primarily sexual purposes. This can include photographs, negatives, slides, magazines, books, drawings, movies, videotapes and computer disks or files. Generally speaking there are two categories of pornography: soft-core (which is not sexually explicit but involves naked and seductive images of children) and hard core which relates to images of children engaged in a sexual activity.

**Neglect** is defined as the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's physical or cognitive development.

**Bullying** may be defined as a deliberately hurtful behavior, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those who are being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking,

theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group) bullying.

**Commercial exploitation** means exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of a person responsible/caring for the child and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labor.

A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of violence. Other forms of abuse which can include discrimination, harassment, or bullying are also abusive and can harm a child and his/her development physically and emotionally.

## **2 IMPORTANCE OF THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

All organizations and professionals working or in contact with children are obliged to ensure their operations are 'child safe' and therefore need to have a Child Safeguarding Policy.

CF needs a child safeguarding policy to ensure that:

**Organization staff are protected:** Pursuant to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have the right to be protected against all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. It is therefore the responsibility of CF to ensure that all its activities, policies, projects and programs are 'child safe'. This means that CF staff do not represent a risk to children and that programs and projects are designed and developed in ways that promote safeguarding of children.

**Children are protected:** Some children are particularly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and ill-treatment at the hands of their carers and those with access to their personal information. Many children growing up in vulnerable circumstances have already experienced violation of their right to protection as well as ruptured relationships of trust or abuse of an adult-child relationship.

**The organization and its reputation is protected:** Organizations working with vulnerable children have been and will continue to be at risk of being accused of abuse. Therefore, it is essential that they have a Child Safeguarding Policy and relevant mechanisms to avoid such abuse and accusations in place, as it is more difficult for an organization without a proper Policy to fight malicious or false accusations and its reputation may suffer. Moreover, such allegations may have serious detrimental effects on fundraising efforts of the organization as well as on the reputation of the NGO sector as a whole.

## **3 THE SCOPE OF THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

This CF'S Child Safeguarding Policy applies to:

- a)** All members of staff (employees and core staff members working for the Foundation under different than the occupational scheme), members of the Board and other advisory bodies, interns and volunteers;
- b)** All those working with or acting on behalf of CF (e.g. trainers and consultants);
- c)** All the adults accompanying children to/during the events and activities organized by CF;
- d)** All those who participate in CF's events and meetings involving children (e.g. journalists, sponsors, donors, etc.).

All of these individuals are obliged to read the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy and sign a statutory declaration in which they pledge to adhere to its principles and procedures.

### **3.1 Awareness Raising**

For effective implementation of the Policy it is essential that all staff members, interns, volunteers, consultants, trainers, etc. are familiar with this Policy, understand it and adhere to all its provisions and measures ensuring no harm is done to any of the children who may come into contact with them within or outside the scope of their work.

A copy of this Policy will be sent to all relevant adults involved in CF's activities as well as to all organizations preparing events on behalf of CF and all persons accompanying children to such events. These organizations are required to brief their staff, parents and carers of the children on this Policy and to inform the children about their rights for safeguarding and about the reporting procedures and mechanisms to be used should any violations of these rights or of the Policy occur.

### **3.2 The Carpathian Foundation's Child Safeguarding Policy and External Partners**

The Policy applies to all organizations and external partners participating in the activities involving children in any way. If these organizations do not have their own Child Safeguarding Policy in place, they are obliged to abide by the principles and measures set out in the CF's Policy and they are also encouraged to draft their own Policy that would reflect the local context and legal framework they operate in. In case of several minor violations or in the event of a single severe violation of the principles and rules set out herein or in the event a child's safety is endangered, CF reserves the right to terminate cooperation with the organization or institution accountable for said violation.

### **3.3 Risk Assessment and Safe Programs**

The CF is committed to designing and delivering programs that are safe for children. Therefore, the Foundation undertakes to carry out risk assessment and implement safety strategies when designing said programs. At the same time, the Foundation will develop risk mitigation strategies to minimize the risks to children, which will be incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programs, projects and activities involving or impacting children. An organization without a proper Policy in place may find it more challenging to fight malicious or false accusations and its reputation may suffer. Moreover, such allegations may have serious detrimental effects on fundraising efforts of the organization as well as on the reputation of the NGO sector as a whole.

## **4 CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY OF THE CARPATHIAN FOUNDATION**

This Policy has been drafted to ensure the highest standards of professional conduct and practice to ensure no child involved in the activities organized by CF is harmed or endangered at any time of their involvement.

### **4.1 Staff Members and Other Personnel**

Each and every person (staff members, Board members, interns and volunteers, consultants, or trainers) wishing to work for or with CF are required to:

**a)** sign the binding statement in which he/she commits to adhere to the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy principles and conditions and abide by them.

Apart from the usual procedures, a recruitment interview will also include:

- clear information on the position and relevant responsibilities assigned to said position with regard to the Child Safeguarding Policy;
- a discussion on child safeguarding and safety, making sure the candidate is familiar with these principles, understands them fully and commits to abide by them;
- a pledge to adhere to the Child Safeguarding Policy principles, which forms a part of any employment, mandate or any other type of contract.

**b)** sign a statutory declaration stating the details of any criminal conviction, including any rehabilitated conviction. Employment or mandate contracts with CF include consent with the right of the Foundation to request a copy of the criminal record if/when necessary, which has to be signed by the applicant.

### **4.2 Training**

To ensure a successful implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy, CF will take following measures:

**a)** A staff member or a volunteer will be informed of the Policy and all relevant procedures and processes resulting from said Policy within the first three weeks after they start their job with CF. Those directly involved in working with children will also receive a training on apt conduct and behavior in the course of activities involving children and on acceptable and unacceptable sharing of information about the children. The training will also provide staff members with information about sources of support and help for children and their families.

**b)** CF will provide relevant training to all staff members, volunteers and interns appropriate for their position and responsibilities resulting from them.

### **4.3 Conduct Protocol**

Any staff member, Board member, volunteer, intern, trainer or consultant who has a direct contact with children participating in the CF's activities will receive a Code of Conduct (as set out in Section 5 below). CF's management will appoint a **Child Safeguarding Policy Manager** (hereinafter referred to as the 'Policy Manager') responsible for the following:

- promoting of awareness and implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy throughout the organization;
- monitoring of the Policy implementation and reporting both the team members and Board members on relevant developments;
- Child Safeguarding Policy training materials development;
- gathering and management of information on statutory requirements, best practices, etc.;
- providing support and assistance in the field of child safeguarding to all staff members.

The name and contact details of the Policy Manager will be displayed at a visible place in the CF's office.

Any disclosure of information about children, including in legal cases, will be limited to the persons directly involved in the matter. In general, in CF the responsibility for Child Safeguarding Policy implementation lies with the Board of Directors.

Specific procedures and checklists describing concrete strategy implementation actions and monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes, form a part of this Child Safeguarding Policy. Child safeguarding shall be included in all CF's programs and projects and their development.

## **5 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Carpathian Foundation is committed to protecting children from abuse and exploitation. The CF will take all necessary actions to prevent any form of abuse and respond to any information from children in such situations. The CF will also respond to any and all reports of actual or alleged abuse irrespective of the nature of the referral, whom the allegations concern, who the referrer is or where she/he is from. This Code of Conduct includes guidance on ethical and proper standards of conduct and behavior of adults towards children as well as that of children among themselves. It has been developed with the best interests of a child as the primary consideration and should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense. CF's aim is to ensure everyone, children and adults alike, is participating in any CF's activity in a safe and secure way.

The concerned should:

- Be aware of what constitutes child abuse and exploitation (as set out in this Policy) and understand relevant statutory provisions;
- Be able to recognize signs of abuse and report any suspicion immediately to the Policy Manager;
- Ensure that they know who is the Child Safeguarding Policy Manager in the Carpathian Foundation;
- Know who the persons responsible for child safeguarding are and respect lines of authority and reporting procedures;
- Respect the basic rights of others, act fairly, honestly, and tactfully, and treat people with dignity and respect;
- Treat all children equally, be inclusive and involve all children in any activities without discrimination;
- Work actively to ensure the highest levels of respect towards each human being;
- Maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct both personally and in others;
- Protect the health, safety and well-being of himself/herself and of others;
- Be aware of high-risk peer situations such as unsupervised mixing of older and younger children and possibilities of discrimination against minors they pose;
- Be aware of a possibility of peer abuse;
- Be aware of the way their language, actions and relationships could be perceived by children;
- Develop special measures/supervision system to ensure younger and, in particular, vulnerable children are safe from peer and adult abuse;
- Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development;
- Encourage children and young people to express their views and opinions and respect their voice;
- Limit access to and/or not expose children to any inappropriate electronic material;
- Respect confidentiality of children's personal information at all times;
- Obtain written consent from the child or his/her parent/carer when photographing, filming or processing personal information as a part of any activity.

The concerned should not:

- Engage in any form of sexual activity with children;
- Act or behave in a way that could be construed as a provocative, poor or potentially abusive practice;
- Have a child stay overnight in the adult's room or sleep in the same bed (unless a prior consent is given by the child's parent/guardian);
- Perform activities for children that they can do themselves, including dressing, bathing and grooming;
- Discriminate, shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children or do anything that may be considered emotional abuse (e.g. use language that could mentally or emotionally harm a child or tell a story/show pictures that could mentally or emotionally abuse a child);
- Hit or physically assault a child in any other way;
- Act in a way which may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse;
- Promote or condone violations of this code by other adults (members of staff, volunteers, trainers, etc.);
- Be alone with a child in any circumstances that might be questioned by others or give rise to false accusations;
- Allow children to engage in games with sexual undertone
- Act in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way in relation to a child (such as kissing, hugging, fondling, rubbing or touching a child);
- Seek physical contact with a child (such as holding hands) unless such contact is initiated by the child or unless the child has expressed his/her consent with such contact;
- Suggest inappropriate behavior or relations of any kind or encourage any crushes by a child;
- Take photos, film or request personal information if not approved and required for CF's activities;
- Use private information about children inappropriately (e.g. on social media) if not approved and required for CF's activities.

Any suspicion of a Child Safeguarding Policy violation should be immediately reported to the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy Manager.

## **6 IMPLEMENTATION**

### **6.1 Implementation Strategy: Reporting Procedures**

All staff members, volunteers and interns should be alert to signs that may suggest a child is in need of help (see Annex 1). Deciding whether to report such signs can be very difficult. Therefore, reporting procedures are listed further to ensure

everyone is clear what steps to take in order to ensure safety of children and/or other witnesses. All violations of this Policy (regardless of whether they are suspected, alleged or witnessed) are to be immediately reported to the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy Manager using the Safeguarding Report Form (Annex 3). The guiding principle here is that the safety of the child and his/her best interest should always be the most important consideration. All records and reports will be stored at a secured place with access limited to the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy Manager or Foundation's administrator. A nominated Board member should be notified of any and all such reports. and any the Executive director a report must be made to the nominated Board member. In the event someone reports a child safeguarding concern, it is essential to ACT immediately (and the ACT method can be helpful here):

**Act** – in case a suspicion or concern a violation of the Policy or of the Code occurred, it needs to be reported immediately.

**Child-Centered** – the best interest of a child should always be a primary consideration.

**Time Counts** – it is important to ensure the most appropriate and effective response to child safeguarding issues is implemented in a timely matter.

In the next stage it needs to be defined whether the concern is internal or external.

**If the concern is internal** – if an accusation concerns a member of staff, a volunteer or an intern, consideration needs to be given to whether CF will inform relevant local and/or national authorities. If not, the internal safeguarding procedures set out in the Child Safeguarding Policy needs to be applied. If yes, relevant local and/or national authorities should be notified and further steps should be taken in accordance with the predefined processes.

**If the concern is external** – i.e. if the accusation concerns persons outside of CF, consideration needs to be given to the extent to which this concern may disrupt the operation of CF and the follow-up steps should be planned accordingly. The Carpathian Foundation undertakes to treat any information on concerns or allegations as confidential, adhere to all relevant procedures and act in the best interest of the child, irrespective of who the allegations are about, who the referrer is or where he/she is from.

The Carpathian Foundation pledges to take appropriate actions to protect the child/children in question from further harm during and/or following an incident or allegation. Having considered impact the event has on the child/children in question, CF will assist in getting specific help and support, which may include arranging for a medical assessment to be done. Relevant contact details for the Police, Emergency Medical Service, child safeguarding services, social workers, helplines and other organizations or persons will be made available and accessible (Annex 5). The Carpathian Foundation will also contact the child's/children's family members or guardians and inform them about the incident and assistance provided. Afterwards, a Safeguarding Report Form (Annex 3) must be compiled. The Carpathian Foundation maintains that it will always treat the best interest of the child as its priority.

At meetings and activities where children are directly involved, children will be informed about the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct. Moreover, they will also be informed who the Child Safeguarding Policy Manager is and notified of the complaints mechanism. All the information will be provided in a child-friendly manner.

## **6.2 Implementation Strategy: Internal Safeguarding Procedures**

The Carpathian Foundation will immediately suspend any staff member, volunteer, intern, Board member, consultant, adviser or trainer alleged to have violated the Child Safeguarding Policy, pending the outcome of the investigation. CF reserves the right to take any disciplinary action against any of the above who have been proven guilty in an investigation, which may include reporting the incident to the Police.

The investigation completed by CF's administrator will be submitted to the nominated Board member who will take a decision regarding action(s) to be taken. Decisions from any investigation(s) will be delivered to the individual concerned in writing.

Criminal offences and acts will be referred to the Police.

## **7 COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA GUIDELINES**

This part of the Child Safeguarding Policy sets out the principles for CF's staff members regarding communication with the public and media about the work carried out by the Foundation or its partners. It includes underlying principles for ensuring children are kept safe at all times, as well as specific guidelines which must be followed by all members of CF's staff as well as photographers, film crews, journalists and others visiting CF's events and activities. All guidelines in this Child Safeguarding Policy are equally applicable to and relevant for all forms of communication and media activities, including the use of social media.

In order to make sure that all children are safeguarded in all situations it is important to obtain a written Informed Consent of a child's parent or legal guardian in which they clearly state that they give their consent for the photos or statements of children to be used publicly or used in media and/or in publications (Annex 4).

### **7.1 Principles**

The Carpathian Foundation undertakes to ensure rights and dignity of each and every child are respected at all times and that the best interest of the child is maintained as the paramount concern at any time. CF will never use discriminatory or degrading language.

This section contains guidelines on the use of images, films and stories of children for media and communication purposes. Said guidelines must be abided by to ensure data protection and children themselves are safeguarded at all times, as there have been cases when abusers targeted children whose pictures they had seen in media and promotional materials.

Following principles will apply to any CF's communications:

**Dignity** – A child's dignity must be preserved at all times. Language must not degrade, victimize or shame a child at any time. In images, children should always be dressed appropriately and should never be depicted in any poses which could be interpreted as sexually provocative.

**Accuracy** – A portrayal of children must not be manipulated, distorted or sensationalized in any way. Images and stories should provide a balanced depiction of the children's life and circumstances, balancing negatives with empowering images or showing the progress that the children are making. Communication should avoid generalizing statements which do not accurately reflect the nature a particular situation and pictures should not be taken and used out of context.

**Privacy** – No information that could be used to identify a child, violate their privacy or put them at risk will be used.

CF pledges to ensure that:

**a)** Only the first name(s) of a child are used and care is taken not to reveal the child's address, the name and address of their school and/or other information that could lead to their place of residence, unless agreed otherwise with the child's parent or guardian. If necessary, a child's name will be changed to ensure the child is protected.

**b)** Information about children, their lives and photographs of children (including information stored on computers) is kept in secure files. Access to this information will be limited to those directly involved in the particular program, project or activity.

**c)** The publications prepared by CF feature varied groups of children including boys, girls, children of various ages, ethnicities, nationalities and abilities. Moreover, CF will ensure its publications feature children from various groups and countries Carpathian Foundation operates in.

## **7.2 Informed Consent**

Informed consent must always be sought before taking any photos, videos, or requesting personal information about children's lives that may later be used in CF's materials and publications. Informed consent means that children are told how CF will use the information or image/film and that they are under no obligation to agree to its use. They should also be re-assured that locations and other identifying information that might lead to the identification of the location of residence of children will be changed or withheld. Consent of a child or his/her parent/guardian is also needed for sharing of the child's first name.

Consent is only valid if it is obtained by completing and signing the Informed Consent form (Annex 4). Such consent must be signed by the child and countersigned by his/her parent or guardian. If this is not possible, the consent may be signed by a representative of the organization representing the child. It is advisable that the organizations working directly with the children ask for consent of children and parents/guardians, as they may feel more comfortable to refuse such consent when asked by someone they already know and trust.

The Informed Consent form and other forms will be kept on the child's file stored safely by CF. Having obtained a prior written consent does not mean that there is no requirement to obtain verbal consent at the time of taking photographs/video/ interviews, etc.

## **7.3 Interviewing Children**

Interviewing children requires specific skills. Moreover, certain basic principles should be followed to ensure children's dignity is maintained and children's rights are respected.

**Informed Consent** – apart from the basic information and the actual consent, an Informed Consent should also explaining what subjects are likely to be covered in the interview and clarify that the child has the right to withdraw their consent and discontinue the interview at any point. The interviewer should make sure the child understands the interview conditions and their rights at the beginning of the interview.

**Provision of support** – An interview should be conducted in the presence of a person the child is familiar with. Wherever possible, the child should be given a choice regarding who supports him/her during the interview.

**Respecting the right to say NO** – Before the start of an interview, the interviewer should let the child know that he/she only has to talk if they are comfortable doing so, and they can stop and withdraw their consent at any point.

**Gender** – It needs to be remembered that boys and girls have different needs and, therefore, it is important to consider whether the child would feel more comfortable talking to a man or a woman. Moreover, gender must be considered when deciding what topics may be discussed.

**Respecting the right to information** – If notes need to be taken during the interview or the interview needs to be recorded, this needs to be explained to the child and his/her consent should be sought.

#### **7.4 Visits by Photographers, Films Crews, Journalists and Other Persons**

Special care must be taken when organizing visits of external photographers, filming crews, journalists or visitors within the scope of CF's projects, activities and publications:

- a)** Journalists and photographers/film crews must be fully briefed about the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy prior to their meeting the children who will be interviewed, photographed or filmed. They are also required to sign a Statutory Declaration stating they will adhere to said Policy and its principles.
- b)** It is important to make sure that photographers and filmmakers are not allowed to spend time with or have access to children without supervision. They have to be accompanied by a CF's staff member at all times.
- c)** Children, parents and guardians must be informed about how the film, photograph or story will be used and their consent must be obtained by CF.
- d)** Copies of images, film and/or stories should be sent to the organizations cooperating with CF to be passed on to the children.
- e)** In order to ensure confidentiality and privacy of children, journalists and photographers are required to notify CF as to how they intend to use the images or stories. CF reserves the right to refuse to authorize the use of such material if it is in violation of this Child Safeguarding Policy and its provisions.
- f)** If an image or any material is to be used by another organization, it must be credited to CF/Photographer's Name © with an appropriate caption.

#### **8 ACCOUNTABILITY: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The aim of monitoring and evaluating the Child Safeguarding Policy is to learn from practical experience and provide information to those who will review the Policy and/or amend it if need be.

CF will monitor the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Policy and the procedures set out therein regularly. At the same time, a Child Safeguarding Policy Manager will report on the progress, performance and lessons learned to the Board annually. Monitoring and evaluation will be done on a regular basis by checking whether the standards defined in the Child Safeguarding Policy are implemented and whether child safeguards are working. This will be done by carrying out a survey among the CF's staff members, interns and volunteers on how the standards defined in the Child Safeguarding Policy are being met, how effective they are and what needs to be improved.

Next to the overall monitoring and evaluation of the Child Safeguarding Policy, reactive monitoring will take place, too, in case the Policy principles are violated. This will contribute to the learning process for CF and, if necessary, will result in changes to the Child Safeguarding Policy or relevant reporting procedures.

Every three years an internal review of the Policy will be carried out and its results will be subject to approval of Board of Directors of the Foundation.



## ***Annex 2: Recognizing Signs of Abuse***

Recognizing signs of potential abuse is complex and there is no simple checklist that allows easy recognition. There are, however, potential warning signs that you can be alert to, which need to be assessed with care. It should not be automatically assumed that abuse is occurring. If such signs are observed, they should be reported to the Policy Manager without delay to allow for appropriate measures in line with the Policy to be taken if abuse is confirmed.

### **Possible signs of physical abuse:**

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts;
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries;
- Refusal to discuss injuries;
- Withdrawal from physical contact;
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather;
- Unwillingness to participate in physical activities (such as sports) that may involve undressing;
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted;
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults;
- Self-destructive tendencies;
- Aggression aimed at others;
- Passivity and frequent complaints;
- Running away (repeatedly).

### **Possible signs of emotional abuse:**

- Delayed physical, cognitive or emotional development;
- Anxiousness;
- Delayed speech development or sudden speech disorders;
- Fear of new situations;
- Low self-esteem;
- Inappropriate emotional responses to situations;
- Extreme passivity and/or aggression;
- Drug or alcohol abuse;
- Running away (repeatedly);
- Compulsive stealing.

### **Possible signs of neglect:**

- Frequent hunger;
- Taking scraps of food from bins or plates, stealing and/or hiding of food;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Constant tiredness;
- Inappropriate clothing (such as summer clothes in winter);
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- Untreated medical problems;
- Low self-esteem;
- Poor social relationships;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Drug or alcohol abuse.

### **Possible signs of sexual abuse:**

- Age inappropriate sexualized behavior or highly sexualized language;
- Bed wetting or soiling;
- Anal or genital soreness;
- Sleep problems;
- Fear of being alone with adults;
- Promiscuity;
- Extreme risk taking in adolescents.

### **Possible signs of concern regarding adult behavior:**

- A person in whose presence the behavior of a child changes significantly – e.g. a child becomes withdrawn, fearful, distressed or agitated;
- A person asking a child to lie or keep secrets;
- A person violating any of the principles of the organization's Child Safeguarding Policy and/or Code of conduct;
- A person proposing a child to have a private communications via e-mails, by phone or in person.

### Annex 3: Safeguarding Report Form

If you know a child might be at risk, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child safeguarding concerns must be reported (orally or in writing) directly to the Child Safeguarding Policy Manager within the same working day. Depending on the urgency of the case, you may wish to complete this form before contacting the CF's Policy Manager or you may wish to complete the report afterwards. Please also use this form to report an accident or incident. An accident is an unplanned event that resulted in an injury or could have resulted in an injury, damage to equipment or property or harm to the environment. An incident is an unpleasant or unusual event.

This report should be written and signed only by you to guarantee confidentiality. It should only be delivered to the CF's Child Safeguarding Policy Manager who will hold it in a safe and secure place and treat it with the strictest confidentiality.

#### 1. Information about you:

Name: .....

Job title/role: .....

Organization you are working for: .....

Nature of your contact with the child: .....

Contact: .....

Telephone: .....

E-mail: .....

#### 2. Information about the child:

Name: .....

Sex: .....

Age: .....

Address: .....

Child's parent/guardian: .....

Has any treatment been given to the child? By whom? .....

Has the child been admitted to the hospital?

YES  NO

If so, which hospital?: .....

#### 3. Details of the concern/incident:

Is it:

- a child safeguarding/safety concern?
- an incident you witnessed?
- an incident disclosed by a third person?

If you were informed by another person, please indicate the relationship between said person and the child:  
What happened? Please describe the circumstances (where/when/who) and causes (why/how) of the incident.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Please make a clear distinction between the facts and your assumptions, observations, etc. (e.g. child's emotional state, his/her injuries, etc.).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

If relevant, please state whether the child or another person has told you anything else about the case and, if so, what was your reaction (please do not lead the child, make sure you only record the actual statement of the child).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Date, time and place of the alleged incident: .....

Name of the alleged perpetrator (if applicable): .....

Have there been other children or persons present during or involved in the incident? .....

Are any other children at risk of harm?.....

What was your reaction and what have you done?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

**To be filled in by the Carpathian Foundation's Child Safeguarding Policy Manager:**

Was the accident/incident investigated?:      YES       NO

Is the written investigation report necessary:      YES       NO

In order to determine the cause of the accident/incident, it may be appropriate to interview parties who were involved. Please, provide information about witnesses, their statements and any other additional information:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



**Annex 4: Informed Consent**

**Personal information and information to be used in case of an emergency**

Name and age: .....

Phone no. (mobile): .....

E-mail: .....

Are you taking part in ..... (activity) voluntarily?

YES  NO  (Please, indicate your answer)

Do you have any allergies?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

Do you have any other needs we can help you with in the course of this activity/event (physical disability/mental illness/communication problems/low self-confidence, etc.)?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

Is there anything we can do to help you come along at participate fully in the activity?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

Are you taking any medication we should know about?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

Do you have any special dietary requirements or needs?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

In case of an emergency, we need to contact relevant persons. Therefore, it is important that you fill in the following part with care .

**Person 1**

**Person 2**

Name: ..... Name: .....

Relationship to you: ..... Relationship to you: .....

Phone no. (mobile): ..... Phone no. (mobile): .....

In the event of an emergency, do you give your consent to be given help (hospital care, dental treatment, administration of anaesthetics)?

YES  NO

Further Information: .....

Consent: .....

Signature: .....

Place: .....

Date: .....

If you are younger than 18 years of age, the form needs to be filled in and signed by your parents/guardians.

A child/young person (under 18):

- is allowed to participate in (activity/event/meeting etc.);
- is allowed to take part in media activities;
- has been informed about the objectives of the activity/event, the voluntary nature of this participation and anonymity in an age-appropriate way;
- has been informed they can refuse to discontinue their participation at any time with no consequences;
- is allowed to receive appropriate medical treatment provided by a registered practitioner during the activity/event.

Name and Surname: .....

Place: .....

Signature: .....

Relationship to a child /young person: .....

Date: .....

### Media Informed Consent of the Child

We want to make sure you are comfortable with having your data, photos and statements used in media

The Carpathian Foundation is currently actively promoting ..... (activity/program).  
Your photos and/or statements will be used publicly.

We use this way to inform the public about ..... (activity).

Is it OK if:

- we publish your pictures and audiovisual recordings you appear in, your art works and/or your statements on our website, on our social media, in leaflets, publications and/or other forms of materials presenting our work and work of other organizations supporting children and young people?

Please, indicate (circle) your answer: YES NO

- we record your statements and use them to promote our programs, projects and activities?

Please, indicate (circle) your answer: YES NO

- we use your name when sharing the abovementioned content (you can take part in this activity regardless of whether you agree with your name being used or not)?

Please, indicate (circle) your answer: YES NO

- you are approached by press and is it OK for journalists to interview you during ..... (activity) and use photos and/or audiovisual coverage you appear in? (All media interviews will be conducted in the presence of your accompanying adult and a CF's staff member. You have the right to choose not to respond to any questions you disagree with or those you do not want to answer).

Please, indicate (circle) your answer: YES NO

Signature: .....

Place: .....

Date: .....

## **Annex 5: Important Contact Information**

### **Carpathian Foundation**

Letná 27  
040 01 Košice  
Tel: 055 622 1152  
E-mail: [info@karpatskanadacia.sk](mailto:info@karpatskanadacia.sk)  
[www.karpatskanadacia.sk](http://www.karpatskanadacia.sk)



#### **Child Safeguarding Policy Manager**

Mgr. Tomáš Török, [tomas.torok@karpatskanadacia.sk](mailto:tomas.torok@karpatskanadacia.sk), 0907 027 833

#### **Foundation Administrator**

Laura Dittel, [laura.dittel@karpatskanadacia.sk](mailto:laura.dittel@karpatskanadacia.sk)

#### **Nominated Board Member**

Ing. Zuzana Želinská



**Child Helpline:** 116 111 (toll-free, anonymous, non-stop for all of Slovakia)

**On-line Counseling Service IPčko:** [www.ipecko.sk](http://www.ipecko.sk) (toll-free, anonymous, non-stop for all of Slovakia)

#### **National Coordination Centre for Resolving the Issues of Violence against Children:**

**Detstvo bez násilia (Childhood Without Violence) -** [www.detstvobeznasilia.gov.sk](http://www.detstvobeznasilia.gov.sk)

Website for finding specific types of assistance by region:

- Social and Legal Protection of Children Authorities
  - Centers for mothers with children
  - Shelters for children
- Counseling – Diagnostics – Therapy

**Emergency Medical Service, Fire & Rescue Service, Police: 112**

**Emergency Medical Service: 150, 112**

**Police: 158, 112**

**Fire & Rescue Service: 155, 112**

**Mountain Rescue Service: 18 300**