

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## SARVAHITKARI SEWASHRAM



Admin :Z-7, Kharaiya Pokhara, Bholajipuram, Basharatpur, Gorakhpur-273004

Regd. : Partawal Bazar Kaptanganj Road, Near Post Office, Maharajganj

Ph. No. 9450884457 | Email - shsa.india@gmail.com

Website : [www.shsaindia.org](http://www.shsaindia.org)

# **Child Protection Policy**

SHSA

## The Child Protection Policy of SHSA

### Synopsis

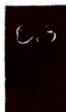
The policy aims at outlining and presenting its views and plans for the protection of children as an important segment of the society. The Policy is an outcome of the significance given to children in the vision/ mission and programmatic interventions of the organization. Principle of 'thinking globally and act locally' is the guiding factor of this policy. This is reflected through a reference of the internationally accepted UNCRC to organization's perspective on children and its interventions for them.

### Children, an important segment of society

'Child is the father of man', this view of William Wordsworth, the well-known English poet clearly indicates towards the significance of children in a family, a society and a nation. They form the face of tomorrow and build a nation. That is why, investment in children is considered as one of the most fruitful investments of a country. This realization is reflected right from the United Nations to the grassroots level.

The twentieth century witnessed the emergence of the concept of 'children's rights'. The rights perspective is embodied in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**), 1989, which is a landmark in international human rights legislation. It is a comprehensive, internationally binding agreement on the rights of children, adopted by the UN General Assembly in **1989**. It incorporates children's civil and political rights (like their treatment under the law), social, economic and cultural rights (like an adequate standard of living); and protection rights (from abuse and exploitation). These are:

- **Survival rights:** include the child's right to life and the needs that are most basic to existence, such as nutrition, shelter, an adequate living standard, and access to medical services.
- **Development rights:** include the right to education, play, leisure, cultural activities, and access to information, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- **Protection rights:** ensure children are safeguarded against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including special care for refugee children; safeguards for children in the criminal justice system; protection for children in employment; protection and rehabilitation for children who have suffered exploitation or abuse of any kind.
- **Participation rights:** encompass children's freedom to express opinions, to have a say in matters affecting their own lives, to join





associations and to assemble peacefully. As their abilities develop, children are to have increasing opportunities to participate in the activities of their society, in preparation for responsible adulthood.

### **An Integrated Approach to Children's Rights**

The UNCRC has adopted an integrated and holistic approach to the rights of the child, not least because economic, social and cultural rights are dealt together with civil and political rights.  
<http://www.childrensrights.ie/index.php?q=childrens-rights-ireland/un-convention-rights-child>

### **The 1990 World Summit on Children**

In 1990 a big international meeting called "The World Summit for Children" held in New York. The main goal of the meeting was to agree to promises and commitments to improve the lives of children. At this meeting they promised to always put the best interest of children first, in both good times and bad times. They made 27 promises for children which they said they would achieve by the year 2000 and which they put in a document called the "World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action".

### **National Programmes of Action**

After the 1990 World Summit for Children, many countries developed what is called, "A National Programme of Action". These Programmes of Action explained how governments would achieve the goals and promises they had made. In order to do so, many said that they would work together with non-governmental organizations, other levels of government, the business community and civil society groups.

Today, nearly all cultures share the view that the younger the child the more vulnerable she/he is physically and psychologically and the less able to fend for herself/himself. Age limits are a formal reflection of society's judgement about the evolution of children's capacities and responsibilities. Almost everywhere, age limits formally regulate children's activities: when they can leave school; when they can marry; when they can vote; when they can be treated as adults by the criminal justice system; when they can join the armed forces; and when they can work. But age limits differ from activity to activity, and from country to country.

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### **The Indian Scenario**

As per 1991 census, India has around 150 million children, constituting 17.5% of India's population, who are below the age of 6 years. If Children in the age group of 0-18 constitute even 1/3 of the population; they constitutes country's 'tomorrow'. There have been sincere efforts in our country to facilitate emergence of happy childhood. There are several legislations to protect children's rights. Several policies and programs have been formulated by government, gigantic budgetary allocation have been made in our five year plans to promote children's issues. The most important being the adoption of National Policy for Children. The National Policy for Children was adopted by the Government of India in 1974. This Policy declares that children are a "**Supremely important asset**" of the Nation and that their "nurture and solicitude" are the responsibility of the nation. The National Policy for Children states that it shall be the state to provide adequate services for children both before and after birth and during the period of growth to ensure their full physical, mental and social development.

### **Who is a child**

According to Article 1 of the UNCRC, "a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier"

### **The voluntary efforts**

Significance of the role of voluntary sector was clearly highlighted in the National Program of Action for Children in 1990 when several participating countries spoke of ensuring a participation of voluntary organisation for implementing the National Program of Action for Children.

## **Child Protection Policy of SHSA: Moving Towards Children Friendly Society**

### **Vision of the organization**

We visualize a society based on justice, gender equity and fullness of life for all.

### **Mission of the organization**

Empowerment of the marginalized people of the Society, especially the Dalits, Women and Children through a process of awareness, organization collective actions and advocacy for raising their Socio-Political, Educational, Economic, Health Status and Promotion of Environment

### **Strategy of the organization**

A continuous process of animation and advocacy among men and women to become aware, form and organize into groups and federation to take actions for integrated, participatory and sustainable development.

**Goal** Emergence of a child-friendly society

### **Objectives**

1. To protect the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of children.
2. To protect and maintain the dignity of children as human beings
3. To create and promote an environment suitable for the fearless growth of children
4. To ensure children's smooth access to their rights due from society, government and other stakeholders
5. To ensure the integration of children in the mainstream of the society

### **Thrust Areas**

- Setting up and maintaining best practices concerning children
- Advocacy and lobbying for a 'child-friendly environment
- Programs related to children's development/protection
- Replication of best practices
- Capacity building of partners, members, staff and stake holders.
- Information dissemination and resource mobilization.
- Research and documentation.

### **Guiding Principles**

- Dignity
- Safety
- Participation
- Development

### **Who is a child in the eyes of the organization**

As per UNCRC and law of our land, the organization considers any human being below 18 years of age as a 'child'.

### **What is child protection in the eyes of the organization**

The organization considers removal of all sorts of harms having an effect on children's mental, physical, emotional and intellectual well being under its purview of children's protection.

### **What is child abuse in the eyes of the organization**

All sorts of exploitation with the children either physical, mental or social is- child abuse under organization's purview of child abuse.

### **Scope of the policy**

The policy is applicable to the following groups:

1. Management members
2. Staff and volunteers
3. Network partners
4. Focus community
5. Visitors
6. Any other stakeholder

### **Application of the Child Protection Policy**

All stakeholders named under scope of the protection policy:

1. Will always respect the UNCRC
2. Will cooperate in the effective implementation of the policy of the organization
3. Will treat all children with grace and dignity. This will be applicable in terms of language, dress, behavior and attitude.
4. Will report the case of child abuse to concerned authorities
5. Will come forward to raise a voice against child abuse/exploitation

6. Will cooperate with the cause of creation of a child-friendly environment
7. Will provide the children with all sorts of possible safety during transit/rehabilitation/repatriation
8. Will not misuse the information concerning children coming to the organization
9. Will always take permission of children/their guardians before engaging them in any activity of the organization
10. Will always take permission of children/their guardians before taking/recording any information from them/their image/photographs/views

### **Declaration**

The organization will take every possible measure to protect the children from any sort of abuse/exploitation and ensure that the child protection policy is implemented effectively and respected by all the named groups.







### Vision

Development of inclusive community, irrespective of caste, creed or religion for an empowered human society

### Mission

To establish an empowered, thoughtful and inclusive community having a clear understanding of domestic development and social & economic equity for all

**Administrative Office:**  
Z-7, Kharaiya Pokhara  
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Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh  
273004

**Registered Office:**  
Partawal Bazar, Kaptainganj  
Road, Near Post office  
Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh  
273301