

PROTOCOL AND WORK POLICY WITH CHILDREN OF THE
CARPE DIEM ASSOCIATION

At the moment of working with children through the activities of the Carpe Diem Association, parents expect and assume that their child is safe and protected, and that adequate care is provided to them.

All employees, collaborators, and volunteers of the Carpe Diem Association are responsible for the safety of the child during the implementation of the association's activities. Therefore, the intention of these Protocols is to clarify and raise awareness of the roles of all mentioned parties in ensuring a safe environment for the child's development. The Protocol contains principles and values that should be evident in working with children, and it specifies desirable and acceptable forms of behavior, as well as those that are absolutely undesirable and unacceptable.

The objectives of these protocols are:

- Protection of the safety and health of children and promotion of responsible behavior and conscious avoidance of risks, and empowerment of children for safe behavior;
- Affirmation of the child's potential and the development of a person who respects human rights and humane values;
- Children's safety during their stay in the premises of the Association is a professional obligation of employees, collaborators, and volunteers, and will be regulated by security measures in accordance with legal regulations, institution-specific characteristics, and program framework.
- Essential tasks of educational work will be planned, implemented, and valorized in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Values and principles in working with children:

- Ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of the child,
- Respect for children's rights prescribed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and work on their promotion, protection, and improvement,
- Protection of children from any form of exploitation and abuse,
- Listening to and taking into account children's opinions,
- Participation and contribution of children who are users of any service or target group of a project carried out within the Association,
- Safeguarding and improving the interests of the child,
- Prevention of discrimination, exclusion, or marginalization of children on any basis,
- Ensuring that partners with whom the Association works and cooperates respect and meet minimum standards of child protection in their programs,
- Respecting the child's privacy and confidentiality of all data,
- All activities, actions must be guided by the principle of the best interests of the child.

Ways of achieving values and principles:

- Always work in the child's best interest, respecting their individuality and diversity and looking at them from a positive perspective,
- Treat the child with respect and consideration for their needs at every opportunity,
- Work on the protection and improvement of children's rights prescribed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- Value and respect their opinions and views,
- Work with children with the aim of meeting their needs and strengthening their capacities and abilities, and developing their potentials,
- Understand children in the context in which they live,
- Act in partnership with parents/guardians, professionals, and volunteers to ensure protection.

Protocol and Policy objectives of the Association for Child Protection will be achieved in four areas:

1. Organizational Policy

The Association develops a policy that describes commitment to prevention and appropriate response to harm to children.

The Association is committed to the safety of all children regardless of abilities, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality, and culture.

All projects and programs that children come into contact with or which affect them directly or indirectly must be designed and implemented in a way that minimizes the risk of harm to children.

A child-safe project must ensure that consideration is given to the environment, context, and impact on children, and the community they are connected to.

The policy relates to the rights of children to protection from abuse and exploitation as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Child Protection Policy has been approved by the Association's Executive Committee and applies to all employees, volunteers, and external collaborators of the organization.

The Child Protection Policy and Protocol are published on the Association's website.

The President of the Association has a special responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the policy.

Gender equality is assured and implemented in all activities through:

- Equal Opportunities:
 - Providing equal opportunities for boys and girls to participate in all activities and programs organized by the Carpe Diem Association, regardless of their gender.

- **Gender-Neutral Practices:**
 - Avoiding stereotypes in all communications, materials, and interactions with children. Encouraging activities and games that challenge traditional gender roles and norms.
- **Promoting Gender Balance:**
 - Ensuring that leadership positions within the organization are equally accessible to individuals of all genders. Encouraging balanced representation of both sexes in the organization, implementation and participation in activities.
- **Inclusive Programming:**
 - Developing programs and activities that take into account the diverse interests and needs of both boys and girls. Making sure that all children feel included and valued, regardless of their gender identity or expression.
- **Positive Role Modeling:**
 - Positive role modeling by staff and volunteers, demonstrating respectful treatment of all children, regardless of their gender. Fostering an environment where children can express themselves freely, without fear of judgment or discrimination.

2. Personnel

The Association defines clear responsibilities and expectations of its employees, volunteers, and external collaborators in working with children.

Employees, volunteers, and external collaborators must:

- Respect the Ethical Code of their profession,
- Be aware of situations that may lead to risks and manage them accordingly,
- Plan and organize the workplace and work itself to minimize risks as much as possible,
- Be transparent in working with children,
- Ensure an open and comfortable atmosphere so that contentious issues or concerns can be raised and discussed,
- Ensure an atmosphere of openness among staff, volunteers, and external collaborators so that potentially abusive behavior does not go unnoticed,
- Talk to children about their contacts with staff, volunteers, and external collaborators and encourage them to express their concerns,
- Empower children: talk to them about their rights and obligations, acceptable and unacceptable behavior, and what they can do to solve a problem,
- Carefully ensure the protection of children's and their families' privacy in storing and keeping documentation,

- Respect the Data Confidentiality Statement and the Association's Child Protection Policy, except in cases where the protection of children's rights is necessary, which is communicated to children and families in accordance with the law.

Employees, volunteers, and external collaborators must never:

- Hit or in any way physically assault or abuse children,
- Develop physical or sexual relationships with children,
- Develop relationships with children that could be considered offensive or exploitative in any way,
- Act in any way that could be considered abusive or could expose children to abuse,
- Use inappropriate language, give suggestions, or offer advice that is inappropriate, uncomfortable, or offensive,
- Behave physically in a manner that is rude or sexually provocative,
- Host children with whom they work overnight in their homes unsupervised,
- Perform personal tasks for children that they could do themselves,
- Engage in children's behaviors that are considered illegal, unsafe, or abusive,
- Act with the intention of shaming, humiliating, belittling, or degrading children or otherwise commit any form of emotional abuse,
- Discriminate, exclude, or marginalize, show different treatment or favoritism towards any individual,
- Sleep in the same room or bed with children they work with unless it is in the best interest of the child or cannot be otherwise organized.

3. Procedures

The Association creates a safe environment for children and young people through the implementation of child safety procedures applied in the Association. The guiding principle is that the safety of children is always the top concern. Every claim or concern regarding child abuse must be taken seriously.

Respecting the rules of conduct will be enabled by:

- Child safety measures being an integral part of existing processes and systems (strategic planning, budgeting, hiring, program cycle management, performance management, procurement, agreements with partners and collaborators, management system, etc.),
- Information for children and parents about legal protection methods, social care, institutions, and associations being available in one place,
- Employees, volunteers, and external collaborators signing a Data Confidentiality Statement,

- Employees, volunteers, external collaborators, and partners being familiar with and signing the Child Protection Policy, and before starting work, familiarizing themselves with regulations relevant to work in the Association, as well as its acts and the way activities are carried out,
- Employment and volunteering procedures also including suitability checks for working with children, part of which will be checking data from the criminal records at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia,
- Employees, volunteers, and external collaborators receiving instructions and information on where and how they can report possible child abuse and exploitation,
- Act in partnership with parents/guardians, professionals, and partners to ensure protection.

4. Accountability

The Association monitors, reviews, and evaluates its security measures in a way that the implementation of child protection policies and procedures is regularly monitored.

Progress, performance, and lessons learned are communicated to key stakeholders (executive board and external or independent bodies where relevant) and included in the organization's annual reports.

Learning from practical cases/experiences influences policy control and changes in child safety measures.

The Association's Executive Board periodically reviews and officially assesses the Regulation and Child Protection Policy every three years.

The purpose of the Association in terms of child protection is to:

- Ensure effective, timely, and well-coordinated support for traumatized children and their families,
- Ensure respect for the best interests of the child,
- Promotion of children's rights,
- Ensure protective measures against abuse, through recognition, education, and response to child abuse and neglect, as well as prevention of violence against children, in accordance with the law.

The activities of the Association with children are carried out based on existing legal regulations and professional standards, experience and practice, and cooperation with other system institutions, based on which each child is provided with an individualized approach in the most effective and humane resolution of their difficulties.

The applicable legal regulations in the Republic of Croatia on which the Association's work with children is based are as follows:

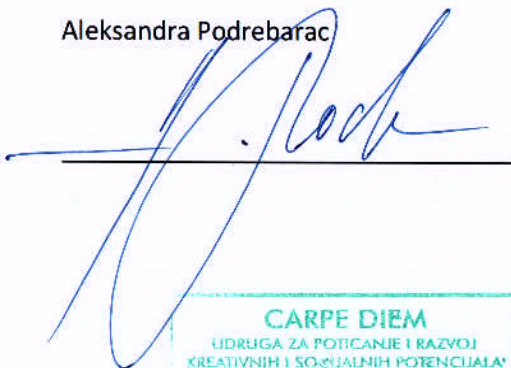
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other regulations and protocols establishing procedures for dealing with children, as well as positive experiences of other organizations and institutions in working with children,
- Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights,
- Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, and a series of laws dealing with this area (Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, Family Law, Criminal Law, Law on Psychological Activities, Law on Personal Data Protection),
- Law on Associations and the Statute of the Association,
- Protocol on procedures in case of sexual violence, which determines standardized procedures for the protection of victims of sexual abuse for all professionals of various profiles from various institutions,
- Protocol of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on procedures in case of child abuse and neglect,
- Protocol of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on procedures in case of family violence.

In order to better implement the protocols and improve the safety of children, all important telephone numbers (police, emergency medical services, firefighters) are available to all groups and are displayed in a visible place. After each risky situation in which the provisions of the Protocol were applied, all participants are obliged to compile a report on the event and submit it to the President of the Association or the Secretary.

For the Carpe Diem Association

President

Aleksandra Podrebarac



CARPE DIEM
UDRUGA ZA POTICANJE I RAZVOJ
KREATIVNIH I SOCIJALNIH POTENCIJALA
DJECE, MLADIH I ODRASLIH
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