

Integrated Palliative Care

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Standards for Child Safeguarding

POLICY ON CHILD SAFEGUARDING

saranam India is committed to safeguarding all children, irrespective of ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and culture. This policy also recognizes that types of risk may vary according to the child and that the means of addressing risks may also vary. Preventing harm to children is a commitment that our staff and associates make whilst at work and outside of work. Our Staff and associates understand that they represent, or are identified with, the organization at all times – and thus will hold themselves to the highest standards of professional behaviour at all times. This policy is reflective of saranam’s overarching commitment to preventing harm to children.

WHO DOES THIS APPLY TO

This policy applies to all of saranam’s staff, volunteers, partners and trustees. Everyone connected to the organization has an obligation to know what constitutes harm to children, how to keep children safe and have appropriate learning opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to keep children safe. Partners, including implementing partners, funding partners or those organizations that contribute to our business operations, should understand child safeguarding measures, which are consistent with our standards. The Children and the families who we serve are ultimately the recipient of our commitment to their safety and should understand our commitments to child safeguarding and what to do if any concerns arise.

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RESPONSIBILITY

The ultimate responsibility and accountability for the definition and implementation of the Child Safety standards and norms rests with the senior management of the Foundation. This includes the Founder, the senior management representatives and the Board of Trustees of saranam.

Definition of Harm & What Constitutes Potential Harm to Children: Given saranam's scope of work, the following definitions will be used as a guide:

- **Physical Abuse** : actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve hitting, or shaking a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a facilitator or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** : forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation** : a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol.
- **Neglect and Negligent treatment** : this refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions.

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- Emotional Abuse : persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

A child safeguarding allegation may be defined as a complaint involving one or more perpetrators and one or more children. In all investigations of a child safeguarding allegation, it is essential that staff involved maintain a high level of confidentiality in relation to the information in their possession, without jeopardizing the investigation or the welfare of the children involved. Subsequent information generated throughout the investigation will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. This usually means only the designated saranam management representative who commissioned the investigation, and any member of the investigation team (if any), should have full access to all information. All other potentially involved co-workers should receive only anonymized reports.

Complaints/allegations can come from a variety of sources including:

- Past or present staff, volunteers, contractors, associates, consultants
- Children and young people
- Via social media
- Other partners, NGOs, agencies
- Supporters, donors, government officials
- Anonymously via letters, emails or telephone calls
- Inspections, audit activity.

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MANAGING THE INVESTIGATION

If the organization decides to conduct an internal investigation, senior management will appoint an investigation team. It is usually made up of an Investigating Manager and investigators and, in some cases, observers, interpreters and outside experts. It is highly likely that the lead investigating manager will either be the CEO, or a senior management representative or one of the Trustees – unless there is a direct conflict of interest involved. Investigators conduct the investigation, review all collected information and write an investigation report. The team should be chosen on the basis of their integrity, understanding of child safeguarding, knowledge of human resource practice and ability to negotiate conflicting interpersonal and institutional interests.

When conducting the investigation, the following core principles should be upheld. All investigations should be child focused to ensure that children's best interests and safety are of paramount importance. It is the Investigating Manager's role to oversee that the principles of best practice are applied. The key principle is that the safety and wellbeing of children must be the most important factor in any investigation. It is essential that the risk to them, or their families, be considered alongside other risks to witnesses, suspected perpetrators or other staff or consultants, including the investigators.

CHECKLIST FOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

saranam will also ensure adequate care and safeguards at the time of recruitment and selection of staff members. More specifically, saranam shall:

1. When you are designing the job description, analyze the role and think about the issues of child safeguarding and risk in that job.
2. Develop clear job descriptions, terms of reference/role briefs for all posts including where short-term contracts, consultants are being recruited.

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3. Make sure that the selection-criteria outlines the relevant experience needed if the post involves direct work with children.
4. Make sure that the commitment to keeping children safe is included in details of any post sent to prospective job candidates.
5. Ask for documentation to confirm identity and proof of relevant qualifications.
6. Make sure we have a well-planned interview process and ensure the interviewers have the relevant experience of and knowledge about child safeguarding and best practice.
7. Include some specific questions in the interview that draw out people's attitudes and values in relation to the protection of children.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Education and training are very powerful ways to improve practice. saranam is committed to ensuring that there will be regular dialogues with its staff about the importance of child safety and the norms & guidelines that need to be adhered by all.

REPORTING

Any allegation or complaint shall be duly investigated, and the report – without any information that might potentially identify the victim – shall be presented to the Board of Trustees, along with key recommendations and actions to be taken to avoid any recurrence.