



Association **NAIA**

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



TARGOVISHTE

2016

CONTENTS

| GENERAL PROVISIONS | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Policy objectives | 3 |
| Principles | 4 |
| Terms and definitions | 5 |
| Scope | 7 |
| CHILD PROTECTION POLICY | |
| Child Protection Standards | 8 |
| Recruitment | 10 |
| Ethic code | 11 |
| Training | 12 |
| Communication strategy | 13 |
| Reporting concerns | 14 |
| Partners | 16 |
| Responsibilities | 17 |
| Review and monitoring | 18 |
| APPLICATIONS | |
| Ethic code | |
| Procedure for recruitment and training of the staff | |
| Procedures for reporting suspicions or evidence of abuse /violence against children/Forms | |
| Communication politics/ Declaration | |
| Procedure for Risk assessment | |
| Rules for access control | |
| Partner declaration | |
| Declaration for Policy introduction | |
| Parent declaration for involving the child in activities | |
| Declaration form for parent consent for picturing the child | |

GENERAL PROVISIONS

INTRODUCTION

"**ASSOCIATION NAIA**" is a non-profit organization with public benefit, working for children's right protection. The team of our organization is fully dedicated to the vision of creating society of equal citizens, with tolerance-based relationships, understanding and respect for human dignity.

Our Mission is to provide psycho-social support, help and counseling of vulnerable groups from the society for achieving equality.

In its work the team of "Association NAIA" is guided by the principle that every child has the right to be protected from harming abuse/violence and exploitation, as it is regulated in the United Nations Convention on the Children Rights. The welfare of the children is always the highest priority factor for people who work in the organization. We understand that it is our responsibility to create an environment where children are valued and respected, their needs are paramount and adults encourage their participation.

We recognize the importance of the parents, families and other caregivers in children's lives. We engage ourselves to implement approaches that encourage supportive environment around children, to develop its resources and to attract as a partner in providing the best care for children.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy is developed to ensure that "Association NAIA" takes all possible measures to prevent abuse/violence against children. The presumption the staff members, hired experts, volunteers and partners of the organization commit acts of abuse/violence against children is taken seriously by our organization, so we are committed to the idea for working for prevention the possible risks for children.

Child protection is both team and personal responsibility. All the employees will be familiar with the need for integrating child protection into all our activities. The policy will be disseminated among all our volunteers and partners and will become part of the written agreements and contracts of the organization with external contractors.

The connections with anyone for who is established that performs relationships associated with abuse/violence and exploitation of children will be terminated.

The main objectives of this Policy are:

- Effective protection of children we work with, from abuses, including such from the staff, volunteers and partners of the organization.
- Minimizing the risk for child abuse by establishing clear standards and procedures for children treatment.
- Creation of best practices and abolition the bad ones, so that we can all work for an environment that has been proven safe and positive for children.

PRINCIPLES

The Principles we believe in:

- ❖ **Responsibility** - We believe that all the children have an equal right for protection from violence and exploitation, and each one of us has a responsibility to support the protection of children. As a non-profit organization working with children, we admit as our duty to take care of children and their representatives. When working with external individuals and organizations we take the responsibility the Policy for child protection to be integral part of our relationship.
- ❖ **Respect** - In all our activities for implementing this Policy and all the accompanying procedures, the organization will be guided by the understanding that the child interests are the most important. The team who works with children will respect their individual abilities, responsibilities, the rights and the responsibilities of parents, considering their cultural, religious and ethnic specifics. Organization's engagement is to provide an environment where children feel safe and are free to talk about anything that excites them without being discriminated or being ashamed of.
- ❖ **Participation** - Children have the right to receive information, to ask questions, to make choices and take decisions. They will be encouraged to fully express their talents by offering equal start at all. At all stages of the working process with children, they and their families will be involved fully in the evaluations, decisions and their implementation.
- ❖ **Dialog** - An environment will be created in which the issues for child protection will be discussed openly, both among adults and among children and adults. The organization will work to enable open

communication, both inside the team members and also between the organization and its partners for implementation of common policies and practices for child protection.



Transparency – Each new team member will be introduced to the Child Protection Policy. This is applied to the organization's employees and to volunteers and partners. The Policy will be published on the website of the organization.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Child – any person under the age of 18, under the United Nations Convention on the Children's Rights and the Law for Child Protection of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Child abuse - any act of physical, mental or sexual abuse, neglect, trade or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm for the health, life, development or dignity of the child, which can be exerted in a family, school and social environment/Regulations to the Law for Child Protection/.

- **Physical abuse** - causing physical damage, including infliction of pain or suffering without health disorder - hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or flaming, drowning, strangling, or any other physical injury to a child, including deliberately health aggravation of the child.
- **Mental abuse** - all actions that might affect the mental health and development of the child, as underestimating, mocking attitude, threats, discrimination, rejection or other forms of negative attitudes or inability of the parent, guardian, or person taking care of the child, to provide appropriate and supportive environment.
- **Sexual violence** – using the child for sexual satisfaction.
- **Sexual exploitation** - forcing or tempting a child into sexual activities, whether the child is familiar or not with what is happening. These actions may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative actions. They can also include involvement of children in the

watching or producing of pornography or encouraging them to inappropriate behavior.

- **Neglect** - failure of the parent, guardian or the caregiver person to ensure the child's development in the following areas: health, education, emotional development, feeding, provision of home and safety, when he is able to do it. Except in respect of the basic physical needs of the child, such as not providing enough food, shelter and clothing, is possible also bad attitude towards the emotions of the child – showing the children that are worthless, that are unloved and incapable, exist only because of the need of someone else, frighten or corruption.

Internal-organizational Child Protection - a term describing the philosophy, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures for child protection, which ensure that the employees of the organization, its activities and programmes do not affect children, do not expose them to risk of abuse and that all concerns of organizations regarding the safety of children in communities, where we work are reported to the relevant departments.

Partners - all organizations, "Association NAIA" implement activities with, regarding jointly activities for providing services and/or projects implementation.

SCOPE

This Policy is approved and signed by the Management Board of "Association NAIA" and presents the organization's position on child protection. It is applied to all employees, board members, volunteers, interns, external experts, mediators, guests, visitors, suppliers and partners.

The present Policy will be integrated in all other internal organizational rules and procedures. Its violation will enable the organization to take further actions.

This Policy will be disseminated among the staff and customers of "Association NAIA." Future partnership agreements will include this policy as part of them.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years and/or when it is necessary.

Children Safe Policy

Standards for Child protection

1. Policy

The organization has prepared in a clear and accessible language Child Protection Policy.

The Policy was approved and adopted by the Management Board of "Association NAIA."

The Policy for child protection concerns all spheres of activity of the organization.

All employees of the organization, without exception, are obliged to sign a declaration for becoming aware and that they accept the Policy for child protection.

2. People

The organization has clear rules for child protection, describing the steps that should be taken when there are doubts concerning the safety of a child.

At every level of the organization there is a person who is directly responsible for implementing the rules for child protection.

There is a Methodology for selection of employees, volunteers, external experts and assessment of their suitability for working with children.

The organization has developed an Ethic code that contains clear guidelines what is and what is not acceptable behavior for the staff, employed or engaged by the organization against children.

The Ethic code is an unaltered part of the job description of the staff and when they start working, they agree with it.

An employee who does not apply the standards adopted by the organization, rules and procedures for child protection, and does not comply with the Ethic code is a subject to disciplinary sanctions.

All employees, volunteers, internships, trainees, experts and other collaborators of "Association NAIA" go through instruction and/or training for child protection when start working.

Each training organized by "Association NAIA," which is aimed at working with children and young people, includes the topic for child protection from abuse and violence.

The person responsible for implementing the Policy for child protection is trained annually by a specialist/consultant.

In all services and activities of the organization involving external individuals and organizations are developed coordinated approaches to child protection.

The partners are familiar with the existing Child protection Policy and the accompanying procedures.

Policies and procedures for child protection are an element of the agreements between partners and the organization.

3. Procedures

The organization has written documents which show what are the procedures and mechanisms in implementing Child protection policy.

All signals and cases of violence against children is documented and subject to monitoring and control.

The organization has developed a Risk assessment in providing counseling services for children. On the basis of this assessment a plan for overcoming the risk factors has been made.

During the implementation of each activity, which involves children, a risk assessment is made through mapping, and strategies for safety are developed.

4. Responsibilities

The Policy is monitored and evaluated for securing its proper implementation. For this purpose, once a year the organization collect information from children, parents and staff through using standard questionnaires and interviews.

Once a year a training of the employees about the basic concepts for Child Protection and the procedures of the organization has been conducted.

Once a year, the person responsible for the implementation of the Policy prepares a report and submit it to the Management Board.

The Policy and procedures for Child protection are reviewed every two years and updated, if necessary.

STAFF RECRUITMENT

"Association NAIA" is trying to provide the highest standards and best practices for the internal Child protection when hiring staff. The applicants are being checked whether they are suitable for working with children and whether they share the organizational understanding of Child protection.

All future employees, volunteers and board members will be kept informed for the organization's policy in relation with child protection.

For all applicants will be required a criminal record certificate from the Court and at least two written recommendations, from previous employers and will be paid special attention to any areas of concern in relation to child protection. It will be required their experience in working with children, their relationships with children and colleagues, solving conflict situations with children.

During the procedure for interviewing the applicants will be asked questions regarding their previous work with children.

Each new member of the staff will go through a training, which necessarily involves informing about the Policy and procedures for child protection. Each employee will receive initial and ongoing training on how to recognize and respond to concerns about child abuse. The new employee will receive copy of the Policy and will have to sign declaration certifying that he has received, read and understood the Policy.

Volunteers, interns and employees on civil contracts will receive a copy of the Policy for child protection and will have to sign a declaration certifying that they received it, read and understood.

ETHIC CODE

All "Association NAIA" employees have to be polite and respectful to every member of the society, customer or other staff. Open and honest communication based on tolerance, equality and respect for the values of others is accepted as a model of behavior within the team and in relations with customers and partners.

The Ethic code of "Association NAIA" is a set of rules for appropriate and correct behavior, developed to ensure the protection of children, but also designed to

protect adults from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse/violence.

This code refers to employees, interns, volunteers, board members, contractors, contract executors and all visitors/guests to the activities or projects implemented by the organization.

All the staff, including interns and volunteers must agree with the Ethic code when they are employed and/or start working.

The Ethic Code contains clear guidelines what is and what is not acceptable behavior for staff, employees or engaged by the organization against children.

"Association NAIA" employees must have an appropriate behavior and report concerns about the safety of children, not only in the workplace but also outside it.

If the Ethic Code is violated or not followed correctly, the organization imposes disciplinary sanctions.

TRAINING

"Association NAIA" employees will be trained in a way so that they understand why it is necessary to protect children. The staff will receive knowledge for the basic concepts for child protection and will be familiar with the Policy and procedures of the organization.

For the entire staff of the organization will be provided minimum one training for child protection every year. Additionally to the role of every individual member of the team will be organized specialized training. Their organization and conducting is a commitment of the person in the organization responsible for the Child protection Policy.

Each new employee will go through training according to previously developed programme, for becoming aware of the policy and procedures for child protection. The employee will receive a copy of the Policy and will have to sign a declaration certifying that he has received, read and understood it.

Each new employee will receive initial and ongoing training on how to recognize and respond to concerns about child abuse.

The persons employed as experts through contracts will receive a copy of the organization's policy for child protection and will have to sign a declaration in which certifies that they have received, read and understood it.

The volunteers of the organization will be trained by the coordinators of the programmes they are involved in, to child protection and will be monitored by them to ensure they do not misuse with confidential information which concerns children.

When concerns arise, the coordinators of the programmes should inform the Chairperson of the Board, who will undertake further investigation.

The whole information about the inner child protection, including Policy and its procedures available in separate binders and is available to all staff members.

The policy for Child protection in the form of comics/through pictures and with simple language/will be provided to children.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Our main principle when using visual images and videos is to show respect for the dignity of children, families and communities.

Commitment of "Association NAIA" is to manage its communications in a way which is safe for children. For this purpose, the organization has an established special communication policy. The main points in it are:

- When shooting videos and photographic images of children, we will always ask for permission. Informed consent from the parents and/or caregivers, as well as directly from the children.
- We will inform the children and their parents and/or caregivers where and when will be used materials.
- Never will take pictures of people who do not want to be photographed.
- Never will manipulate the subject and distort the real situation.
- We will avoid images that are stereotyped.
- We will not use an image of something to describe something else (for example we will not use the pictures taken on a certain project to illustrate the work of another project).

- We will not use images that can intentionally misinterpret the true situation.
- We will not use erotic, pornographic or obscene images.
- We will cooperate with media to raise public response, but we will not allow external or internal requests for publicity prevail.
- When editing photo and video materials we will not distort in a misleading way truthfulness of the situation.
- All images will be properly stored and documented. Access to them is only permitted by the person responsible for child protection.

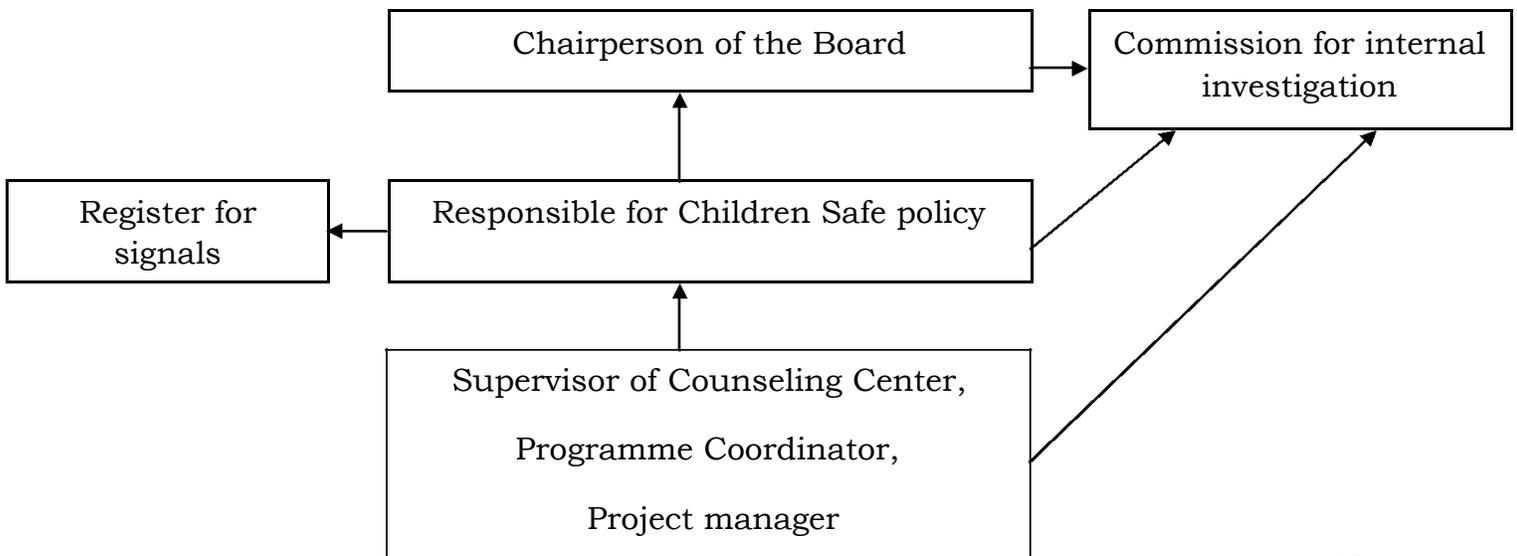
REPORTING CONCERNS

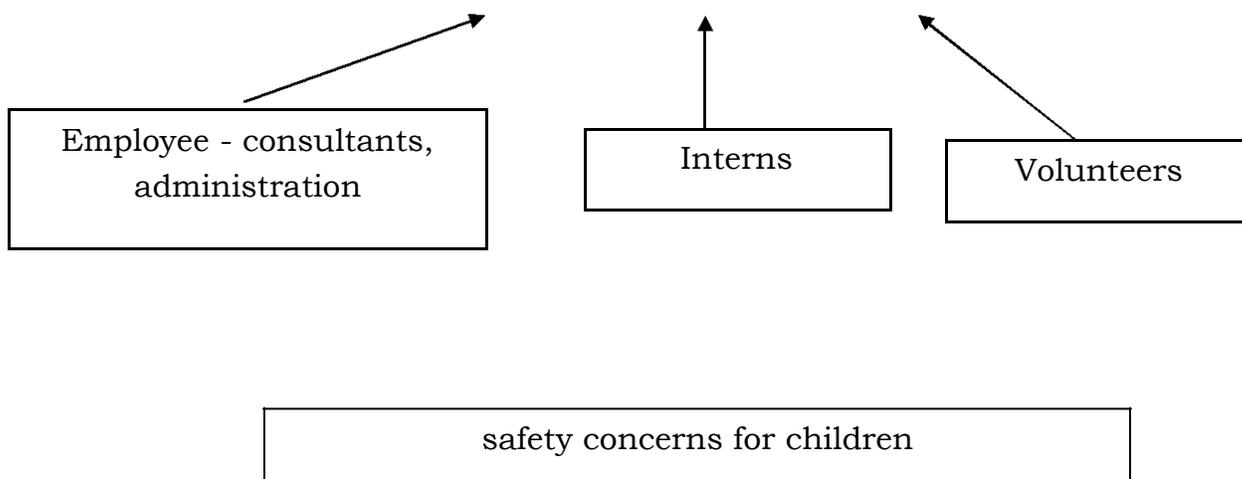
All employees, interns and volunteers of "Association NAIA" are obliged to report all concerns that relate to the safety of children.

The organization has developed procedures for reporting suspicions or evidence of abuse/violence against children and other accompanying forms.

Each signal is reported and taken seriously, as the priority is always the safety and the best interest of the child.

The following diagram shows the process of reporting to employees who receive and manage reports and alerts in the organization.





Any information relating to abuse must be documented in the standard form and be kept by the employee, responsible for the Child protection Policy.

When reporting concerns about the safety of children an internal investigation is held. It involves special commission consisted from the Chairperson of the Board, the supervisor of the person who has been reported and the responsible for the Policy for child protection. The investigation aims at finding whether all procedures for the Child protection Policy are followed - the recruiting of the person who is accused, his training, implementation, supervision, introduction to the Policy, signed declaration etc. The investigation includes interviews with all parties, including witnesses, to gather all related to the charge details.

It is assumed that any employee who report bad practice makes it from pure motives and interests of children. The person who has signaled is supported as far as possible protected from behavior diminishing his authority.

The object of the signal (alleged perpetrator) and all witnesses must cooperate fully to the internal investigation.

During the investigation, all contacts with the children are temporarily suspended with the object of the signal.

If the charges proves to be true disciplinary action are taken.

If the charges proves to be wrong steps are taken for minimizing the harmful impact on the reputation of the accused person.

When a child abuse is established, the Child protection Departments/Police Department is informed.

PARTNERS

Child Protection Policy of "Association NAIA" is an integral part of any agreement between the organization and external parties and/or organizations.

When planning joint activities and projects with partner organizations who work with children /NGOs, schools, social services and others/ will be required guarantees that they have policies and procedures for child protection, taking into account the fact that the lack of such policies may put children and organization at risk.

If there is an absence of such policies and procedures the partner organizations will be supported to develop and implement such, as a condition for future joint actions.

When assigning activities to outsourcing, the organization will require guarantees that they will not put the children at risk and will comply with the highest standards and best practices in the field of child protection.

The organization will not enter into partnerships and will not assign activities to the persons and organizations suspected in violation of the rights of the child in any way.

Before signing partnership agreements and procurement contracts, the person, responsible for the programme for child protection of "Association NAIA" carries out a study on the other side in the field of child safety.

When signing partnership agreements and procurement contracts, "Association NAIA" will require inclusion a clause related to common principles and standards for child protection.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Child Protection Policy is approved by the Management Board of "Association NAIA." Heads of departments, projects and programmes of the organization will ensure the implementation of this Policy.

The organization has a certain person responsible for the implementation of the Policy.

All employees are aware of this Policy, as well as with the opportunity to share their ideas for Child Protection.

Each consultant is committed to provide the Policy for child protection to the children he work with and their families in clear, understandable language and using visual and printed materials.

All customers of "Association NAIA" including the children, should be aware of their rights for protection from abuse. For this purpose, in addition to the information provided by the consultants materials as brochures, leaflets, posters and more are also used.

All the staff members, interns and volunteers should be informed that they can signalize their concerns about child protection.

When accepting its annual budgets "Association NAIA" undertakes planning resources for ensuring the activities related to the safety of children, incl. supervision and training of the employees.

REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Policy will be monitored and evaluated in order to test the security and whether it is properly implemented. This includes discussion of case studies, review of the procedures and reports, regularly review the register for signals, various forms work.

After introducing the procedures every six months will be collected feedback from the employees and customers, including children, as part of the evaluation.

Every six months, an expert on child protection from the organization will submit a report on implementation of the Policy to the Management Board of "Association NAIA."

The Child Protection Policy will be overviewed two years after its introduction or when the need for introducing additional circumstances in the document arise.