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Viva Equip PEOPLE



CELEBRATING CHILDREN WORKBOOKS

Six: Child Protection

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Series editors: Kerstin Bowsher and Glenn Miles

Guest editors: Jane Travis

Thanks also to Jennifer Orona for all the hard work that went into bringing this project to life.

These workbooks have been written by a number of authors who have generously donated their time and expertise. Viva is pleased for you to use these workbooks to equip people caring for children at risk. Please do acknowledge authors and Viva if using these workbooks for training. Knowing how Viva's publications are used helps us to improve the quality of future publications. Please do give feedback on this through the registration and evaluation forms.

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Introduction

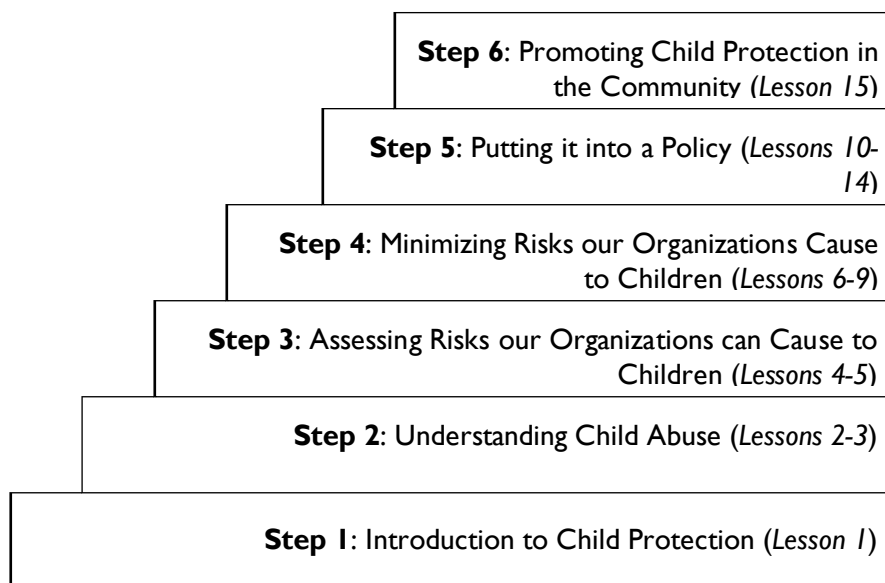
The following 15 lessons will introduce the student to the fundamental information necessary for organizations to meet their responsibilities for the protection of children. The lessons cover basic principles and processes, but for a full understanding of any lesson, the reader is encouraged to study the resources listed in the bibliography, especially the Keeping Children Safe training resources which can be found at <http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/>.

Who is this workbook for?

This workbook has been developed primarily for staff, volunteers and managers in Christian organizations or ministries that have any direct contact with children, or that impact children's lives. Some lessons are focused on basic concepts and applicable to all staff, volunteers and managers in organizations; other lessons introduce some of the systems and policies that organizations or ministries need to put in place to keep children safe. While some of these lessons focus more on the responsibilities of managers, it is helpful for staff and volunteers to understand all the lessons so that they can protect children in their own work responsibilities, while also supporting the overall organization or ministry in its child protection efforts.

Structure of the workbook

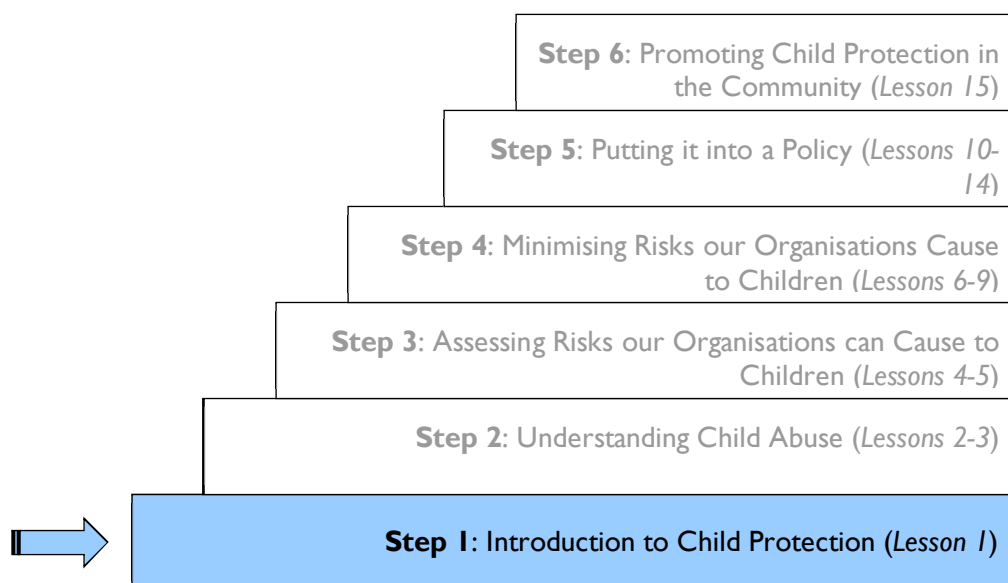
The lessons have been grouped into six steps, which build upon each other:



After studying this workbook, the student should be able to practice child protection principles in their own work. The student will also be prepared to study and implement more in-depth materials, such as the Keeping Children Safe training course which is referenced throughout this workbook, in order to promote and improve child protection across their organization or ministry.¹

¹ Keeping Children Safe is an international coalition of organizations committed to increasing the safeguards offered to children through improved child protection policies and practice within the agencies and authorities that work with children. Readers who want to deepen their knowledge and skills in child protection are encouraged to utilize the Keeping Children Safe training materials after completing this workbook. These materials can be found at <http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/resources.htm>

Step 1: Introduction to child protection



In this step, you will receive an introduction to child protection, focusing on defining child protection and establishing its importance.

Lesson 1: Why is protecting children important?

Summary

- Biblical basis for child protection
- Understanding child protection
- What are the responsibilities of organizations and ministries?
- Basic principles for child protection

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. It is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind.²

Child-focused organizations and ministries exist to help children develop, enjoy the fullness of life, and reach their God-given potential within families and communities that nurture and protect children.

The Bible provides numerous images of children growing up in safe and nurturing environments: for example, “Never again will there be in an infant who lives but a few days... They will not toil and bear children doomed to misfortune” (Isaiah 65:20, 23). Christians have a vision of children living and growing in safe homes and neighborhoods, with no fears of insecurity or displacement.

However, as anyone working with children is aware, many children do not grow up in safe places. They are often the first to suffer or die as a result of war, famine, deceit, or sin. Desperately sad images of suffering children are found throughout the Old Testament (see Psalm 106; Jeremiah 31; Lamentations 1, 2 and 4; Joel 3; Amos 3, Zephaniah 1). Children in every community suffer violence and exploitation. Neglect and abuse in the family, discrimination within the community, and injustice in government systems all cause great harm to children. This abuse hinders children from reaching their potential, and interferes with their moral and spiritual development. Yet, Jesus warned that “if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matthew 18:6).

Organizations and Ministries have the responsibility to make every effort to achieve the highest level of protection for children with whom they come into contact. However, many ministries and organizations are not sufficiently aware of the risks and threats to these children, nor of steps which can be taken to help protect them from harm.

“Child abuse occurs every minute of every day, and it occurs in every community. Child abuse occurs in every economic, racial, ethnic, religious, or other demographic group. No segment of our society is immune. As Christians, we are called to be vigilant in protecting the children in our midst”³

What is Child Protection?

While many organizations and ministries talk about child protection, few have taken the time to define it. Keeping Children Safe describes child protection as “the actions that individuals, organizations, countries and communities take to protect children from intentional and unintentional harm.” This includes protection of children from violence and discrimination within

² Viva www.viva.org

³ Thomburg Melton, quoted in “Plan to Protect: A Protection Plan for Children and Youth A Protection Plan for Churches.” Carol Wiebe, Melodie Bissell, and Jane Cates, The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, 2007, p. 14.

families and communities; but it also includes protection from threats caused by the staff of organizations and ministries.

“Child protection is all measures taken to prevent and respond to exploitation, neglect, abuse, and all other forms of violence affecting children.”⁴

What must organizations and ministries do?

- First, organizations must ensure that they **provide safe environments**, and do not unintentionally put children at risk of harm through poor practices.
- Next, organizations and ministries that work with children have a high responsibility to **keep children safe while they are participating in activities of the organization.**

This is because organizations are responsible for the behaviors of their staff. Parents and children place their trust in the staff of child-focused organizations.

There are sadly many instances where staff from secular and faith-based organizations, churches, and other religious ministries have committed violence against children. In a recent study by Save the Children UK, over 300 program beneficiaries (mostly children) of various organizations were interviewed regarding abuse by humanitarian and aid workers. Nearly two-thirds of participants recalled incidents of verbal sexual abuse. More than half of the research participants identified incidents of sexual touching and coerced sex. Of these, 18% and 23% respectively were able to recall ten or more of such incidents.⁵

Basic principles

Keeping Children Safe Coalition has identified five principles which must underlie all efforts to promote the protection of children:

1. All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
2. All children should be encouraged to fulfill their potential and inequalities should be challenged.
3. Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
4. NGOs have a duty of care to children with whom they work and with whom their representatives work.
5. If agencies work through partners they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for the children in their partners' programs.⁶

The remainder of this workbook will help the reader understand these principles, and begin to explore how their organization or ministry can implement them.

The central message of the first comprehensive, global study on violence against children is that no violence against children is justifiable, and all violence against children is preventable.⁷

⁴ World Vision International

⁵ “No One to Turn To: The Under-reporting of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Aid Workers and Peacekeepers.” Corinna Csaky, Save the Children, 2008.

⁶ *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection.* Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, Powerpoint

⁷ *World Report on Violence Against Children.* Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations (2006).

Case Study

THE VOICES OF CHILDREN

Children’s voices can provide some of the most compelling challenges for organizations and staff to take their responsibility for child protection seriously. The quotes from children below can help your organization reflect on the importance of child protection. Discuss the ideas behind each quote, and the implications for your community or ministry.

“Youth have more understanding about issues that affect them – kids understand how other kids are hurt and can help adults find the solutions.” (Young person from Thailand)

“Treat all children equally so all children can feel loved and not vulnerable.” (Young person from Vietnam)

“Protect the children of the world; fight for their right to a better life; make sure that their future is one that we can all be proud of.” (Young person from Romania⁸)

“The protection of children involves major financial resources but the life and well-being of millions of children depend on the willingness of governments to put in place the necessary measures. In our view, violence committed against a single child is one instance of violence too many.” (Children from West and Central Africa.⁹)

“To avoid violence we need to be listened to, we need economic, work and educational opportunities. We need the chance to improve our quality of life and have the right to live in a violence free environment.” (Adolescent boys, Latin America.)

“I used to think that being a girl, I don’t have the right to protest when boys and men misbehave with me. But after joining the child club I came to know that I have all the right to feel safe all the time. I can protect and protest whenever someone tries to harass or abuse me. My body is mine and I have the right to protect it.” (Girl, 13, South Asia.)

“The way to decrease violence is to work together with all our leaders in our village.” (Boy, Solomon Islands.)

“You were not there to protect me as a child and I’ll live with that damage for the rest of my life. But I vow, as a young person in this society, to put an end to this violence for the next generation. You can stand by me or you can turn your back.” (Survivor and street involved youth, North America.)

“I hate being a child, I hate being hit and I hate being taken for granted. I have feelings and emotions. I need love, care, protection and attention.” (Girl, 13, South Asia.)

“How is it that Africa, a continent so rich in resources, cultures and values, today fails to protect its own children, its present and future resource?” (Young refugee, Eastern and Southern Africa.)

⁸ All quotes above taken from “Kids Understand How Other Kids Hurt: Children and Adolescents Speak Out about Sexual Exploitation.” World Vision International (2008).

⁹ The remaining quotes are taken from World Report on Violence Against Children. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations (2006): pp. 268, p111, 320, 324, 335, 12, 23.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Organizations and ministries have the responsibility to make every effort to achieve the highest level of _____ for children with whom they come into contact. Child protection includes all actions and measures taken to keep children from intentional and unintentional _____. Children face threats to safety from their families, communities, and even sometimes from _____. No violence against children is _____, and all violence against children is _____.

Discussion questions:

1. What types of violence do children experience in your community?
2. Why do you think child protection should be an important part of your ministry?
3. What has your organization done to help you understand child protection?
4. What steps might your organization take to be a safer place for children?

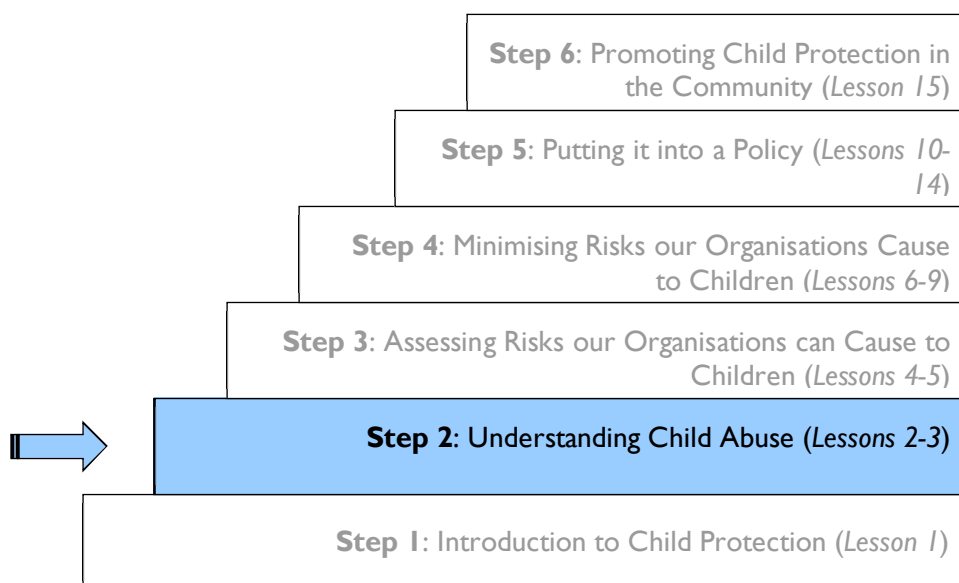
Discussion questions for managers:

5. How does child protection fit within the purpose or mission of your organization?
6. What steps has your organization taken to meet its responsibilities for the protection of children?
7. What additional steps do you think your organization could take to meet its responsibilities for the protection of children?
8. How aware and committed are staff and volunteers in your organization to the child protection risks and responsibilities?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Three, Exercises 3.1 and 3.2

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Step 2: Understanding child abuse



In this step, you will explore definitions of child abuse, what types of children are vulnerable to abuse, who abuses children and what child abuse means in your country.

Lesson 2: What is child abuse?

Summary

- Understanding what child abuse is (definitions and examples)
- Understanding what sorts of children are vulnerable to abuse

All managers, staff and volunteers in child-focused organizations and ministries need to understand child abuse so they are able to take effective steps to protect children. While we may think that we understand child abuse, we might not be aware of all the different forms of abuse that happen to children.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse can generally be described as any intentional act by an adult to harm a child. However, it takes many different forms.

Examples of child abuse ¹⁰		
Shouting at a child	Not sending girls to school	Unfairly criticizing a child
Treating child with contempt	Leaving a child unsupervised	Hitting or smacking
Expecting sexual favors	Sexually abusing a child	Ignoring a child
Making a child stand on bench	Ignoring a disabled child	Sending children to beg
Marrying a child	Sending children to work	

“With these two hands my mother holds me, cares for me, this I love. But with these two hands, my mother hits me – this I hate.”¹¹

The following categories are helpful in expanding our understanding of child abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** Intentional physical harm to a child by an adult.
- **Sexual Abuse:** When a child is involved in sexual activity with an adult or an older child. This includes sexual intercourse, exposing a child’s private areas, fondling for sexual pleasure, or showing a child pornography.
- **Emotional Abuse:** “Behavior that attacks a child’s emotional development and sense of self worth. Emotional abuse includes constant criticizing, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring or isolating the child. It also includes failure by the parent or caregiver to provide their children with love, emotional support and guidance.”¹²
- **Neglect:** Depriving a child of her or his basic needs when the adult has the means to provide for those needs. Basic needs include health, education, emotional development, nutrition, clothing, medical and dental care, supervision, shelter and safe living conditions.

¹⁰ Adapted from Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006,

¹¹ Girl, East Asia and the Pacific

¹² “Plan to Protect: A Protection Plan for Children and Youth A Protection Plan for Churches.” Carol Wiebe, Melodie Bissell, and Jane Cates, The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, 2007, p. 19.

- **Sexual exploitation:** The abuse of power or trust for sexual purposes. Sexual exploitation includes profiting economically, socially or politically from the sexual abuse of a child. Examples include child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual abuse.
- **Commercial exploitation:** The use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labor. Commercial exploitation hurts the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development.¹³
- **Spiritual Abuse:** “The misuse of power, authority and trust by a spiritual leader, or someone in a position of spiritual power or authority...with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating, or dominating a child.”¹⁴ This includes labelling children as child witches or trying to force them to have certain beliefs.
- **Social Abuse:** When a child is prevented from enjoying social resources, such as developing close friendships, joining social groups, or benefiting from social services (such as public health services, public day care, insurance, or counseling services).

What children are vulnerable to abuse?

All children are vulnerable to abuse, although some are in situations which increase the likelihood of being abused. The reasons for this increased vulnerability differ by context. Also, the experience of abused children will vary, as some are more resilient (able to recover more quickly) or able to protect themselves in difficult situations.¹⁵

Some of those children who are often particularly vulnerable to abuse are:

Children with disabilities	Children in institutions	Child laborers
Orphans	Children living and working on the street	Children affected by emergencies (especially unaccompanied or separated children)

73 million boys and 150 million girls have experienced forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual violence involving physical contact

In a recent study of 16 developing countries, the percentage of school-aged children that reported having been verbally or physically bullied at school in the previous 30 days ranged from 20 per cent in some countries to as high as 65 per cent in others

Each year, as many as 275 million children worldwide are estimated to witness domestic violence.

Of the estimated 218 million child labourers in 2004, 126 million were engaged in hazardous work.

In 2000 5.7 million children were in forced or bonded labour, 1.8 million in prostitution and pornography, and an estimated 1.2 million children were victims of trafficking.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt and Sudan, 3 million women and girls worldwide undergo female genital mutilation/cutting every year. Almost 53,000 children aged 0-17 years died in 2002 as a result of homicide.¹⁶

¹³ WHO, 1999, p. 16.

¹⁴ Save the Children UK, 2006, p. 145. Also, please see Lesson 10 for more explanation of spiritual abuse.

¹⁵ For more on this topic, see the third workbook in this series, “Risk and Resilience.” For a good list of the short and long term effects of abuse on children, see pp. 15-16 of **World Report on Violence Against Children. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006.**

¹⁶ United Nations Secretary General’s Study on Violence Against Children Press Kit: Study Findings. United Nations, 2006.

Case study

Sexual abuse¹⁷

Vichet and Douen, both 15 years old, were abused by the same foreigner (James) when they were 12 years old. James approached each of them near Central Market in Phnom Penh and offered to buy them food. This started a relationship during which James bought them food and clothing, allowed them to sleep in his hotel room, and took them on holidays all over the country. Neither Vichet nor Douen were aware that James was grooming them in order to have a sexual relationship with them. They simply thought he was a good 'godfather'. Vichet was first abused by James approximately 6 months after meeting him. For Douen, the abuse occurred after a relationship of approximately 12 months.

Both times, James used the same technique to ensure the children complied with his advances. After taking them on a holiday outside of Phnom Penh to a remote province, James told the boys that if they did not have sex with him, he would leave them in the province without money to return to Phnom Penh and they would remain stranded there. Both boys were frightened and complied with his wishes. They were each paid \$10 per sexual encounter. When James was subsequently arrested for debauchery, three other boys testified alongside Vichet and Douen to similar use of grooming methods by James.

Physical and emotional abuse and neglect¹⁸

"I underwent so many problems. For example, when I excreted near the home, I would be thoroughly beaten. All people would leave me home alone with no one to help me with even water to drink. My stepfather would abuse my crippledness saying, 'You are crippled, am I the one who crippled you?'"

My stepfather would hurl many abuses over me and my crippledness, and when he would buy something good like fish or meat and people are eating, I would not be given. For example, one day my stepfather bought fish and my other sisters cooked, and while I was still eating beans, he started beating me, without any fault, saying to me that my father died without feeding any of his children. He collected millet from the compound into a big saucepan, placed it on my head, then the saucepan fell down and I also fell down, then he continued to beat me until blood started flowing from my head. My mother came back and went to the local council leader, and they said he should be imprisoned, but he asked for forgiveness saying he did it because he was drunk, yet he used to beat me daily. Then he was told to take me to hospital, which he did twice and stopped even before the wound healed. From then on whenever I would see him I would crawl to the bush near home, and when he goes away or sleeps in the night my mother would come and carry me and bring me in the house.

My elder sisters and brothers who were normal would abuse me and refuse to bathe me. They only used to call me the 'lame one who is crippled and cannot walk.' The final blow was when someone had set the grass-thatched house on fire while I was sleeping inside. One of the neighbors came and braved the fire and carried me out of the house, and after that I was brought to the mission where I started studying up to P7 in 2002, and now am a store keeper with the school, and I do not miss home because here I am loved and taken care of."

¹⁷ All names have been changed. *Street-Based Child Sexual Exploitation in Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville: A Profile of Victims*. Katherine Keane Action Pour Les Enfants, British Embassy, Phnom Penh, 2006

¹⁸ Ugandan girl with a disability. *Violence Against Children: The Voices of Ugandan Children and Adults*. Dipak Naker, Save the Children in Uganda, 2005, pp. 36-37.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Child abuse can generally be described as any _____ act by an adult to harm a child. There are many types of child abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, _____ abuse, neglect, sexual or commercial exploitation, _____, and social abuse. All children are _____ to abuse, although some are _____ to being abused.

Discussion questions:

1. What forms of abuse do children face in your community?
2. Why are some children more vulnerable to abuse than others? Which children are most vulnerable to abuse in your community?
3. Do you know of any cases of child sexual abuse in your community? If not, why do you think you have not heard of any specific incidents?
4. How can people in your community learn about child abuse?

Discussion questions for managers:

5. What forms of abuse do staff and volunteers in your organization understand and recognize? With what forms would they be less familiar?
6. Among the children that your organization serves, which do you think are most vulnerable to abuse? Why?
7. What could be done to help staff and volunteers grow in their understanding of child abuse?
8. How might this increased understanding of abuse change staff behavior and the organization as a whole?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Two, Exercises 2.1 and 2.2

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Lesson 3: From what and from whom do children need to be protected?

Summary

- Contextualizing child abuse (harmful practices/traditions and corporal punishment)
- Who abuses children?
- Child sex abusers

Child abuse occurs in all cultural, ethnic, occupational, social and economic groups. The first part of this lesson will help you consider a few important perspectives on how children may be being abused in your context.

Negative local traditions and cultural practices

Understandings and forms of child abuse vary by context and culture, so we need to discuss how child abuse occurs in our context, and analyze practices or ideas in the local culture which may cause harm to children. While most local traditions and cultural practices are helpful to children as they increase their understanding of history and identity, some are harmful and even abusive. These behaviors continue in communities because of local beliefs and prejudices that need to be challenged or transformed. Change in these areas usually takes a long time, but can be initiated through exploring Biblical perspectives of children, the rights and experiences of children, and the impact of traditional harmful practices.¹⁹

Harmful traditional or cultural practices include female genital mutilation, corporal punishment (in homes, schools, or other places), early marriage, child labor, and dangerous initiation ceremonies.

“I hate early marriage. I was married at an early age and my in-laws forced me to sleep with my husband and he made me suffer all night. After that, whenever day becomes night, I get worried thinking that it will be like that. That is what I hate most.” Girl, 11, married at 5, Eastern and Southern Africa²⁰

Corporal punishment and verbal abuse

Corporal punishment and verbal abuse are common forms of abuse in many communities, and are often considered acceptable or normal behaviors or even promoted by some Christian ministries.

- Corporal punishment is “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury, for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behavior.”²¹
- Verbal abuse includes criticism, humiliation or threats to try and control children’s behavior. Even though they are quite common, corporal punishment and verbal abuse are NOT the most effective approaches to discipline, and sometimes can cause serious harm to children.

Corporal and humiliating punishment is not effective in changing behavior, because children do not learn positive behavior from this type of punishment, and they lose respect for the adults who are punishing them. According to *Keeping Children Safe*, corporal and humiliating punishment has a number of serious unintended negative effects, such as:²²

- It can increase children’s aggressive behavior and lead to violence in future relationships
- It does not teach child about why behavior is wrong.

¹⁹ See Workbook 1, lesson 3.

²⁰ *World Report on Violence Against Children*. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. p. 58.

²¹ *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, p. 52.

²² *Ibid.*, powerpoint presentation.

- It causes fear, anxiety and anger in children, and can cause them to avoid the adult.
- It is linked to low confidence, helplessness, and feelings of humiliation in children.
- It can lead to abuse. For many parents/carers/teachers etc. physical abuse begins with attempts to change a children’s behavior or to “teach them a lesson” through corporal punishment.

A final reason not to use corporal punishment is that children have a right not to be physically abused. Adults have the right to protection from physical punishment. Adults are protected from corporal punishment from spouses, teachers, bosses, neighbors, and doctors. Children deserve this same protection.

Some common forms of punishment which can be considered abuse		
Slapping	Physical striking of the head	Punching
Pinching/nipping/biting /kicking	Burning/scalding	Use of any object to physically punish
Withholding food or drink	Restraint using hand-cuffs or rope	Discriminatory remarks or actions
Exposure to heat/cold	Threats of violence	Extreme physical exercise
Humiliation	Hair/Ear pulling	Intimidation
Bribery	Name calling	Cursing/swearing

Who abuses children?

Children can become victims of abuse by parents, relatives, neighbors, family friends, acquaintances or strangers. Abusers may be male or female, and they may be adults, adolescents or children. Surprisingly, *most violent acts against children are carried out by people they know and should be able to trust*: for example, parents, boyfriends or girlfriends, spouses and partners, schoolmates, teachers and employers.

Child sex abuser

A particularly destructive and offensive form of child abuse is sexual abuse of children. A “child sex abuser” is someone who has a sexual interest in children.

Some child sex abusers have a particular sexual interest in children. Other child sex abusers do not have a particular attraction to children, but find themselves participating in situations where older children have been forced to be available for sexual acts. Some child sex abusers come from cultures which contain myths about sex with children—that it can cure AIDS, give power to the adult, or provide spiritual edification. Most sex abusers are men, but some sexual abuse of children is also perpetrated by women. Also, there are many cases of women providing sex abusers with access to children for money.

Child sex abusers come from all social and ethnic backgrounds, professions, and economic levels. Sometimes they hold positions of power and respect, or professional jobs. They can be married, heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. They can be younger or older adults, or adolescents. Some abuse children in their own families, some abuse children that they know well, and some abuse children they do not know. They may be skilled at building trust with children, and also adults.

Case Study²³

Why do you think each of the following practices is considered abusive or harmful to children?

What beliefs underpin these practices?

What do you think is the impact on the children concerned?

1.	Children are seen during a visit to a childcare program of a partner agency to have swollen hands and marks on their bodies. The children looked as though they had been beaten. The director of the program says that the Bible says “spare the rod and spoil the child”.
2.	Children with learning difficulties are left to be cared for by the village, and they are not given access to any sort of education or independent living skills.
3.	Disabled children are given up by parents at birth at a very young age, to be cared for by state institutions. It is not expected that families should have to carry the ‘burden’ of caring for these children.
4.	When boys reach puberty they are circumcised.
5.	Girls in many regions continue to be circumcised (female genital mutilation) even though the country law forbids it.
6.	If a young girl is raped then the traditional remedy for this is for her to marry her perpetrator.
7.	It is acceptable for a girl of 14 to be married if the male partner is working and able to provide for her.
8.	It is considered okay for children in this area to work as domestic servants instead of going to school; members of their family are dependent on them for food.
9.	Due to the extreme poverty in the region, girls as young as 12 are sent to the city from rural areas to earn money through prostitution.
10.	Children are taken to the village priest to remove evil spirits. Parents believe that this will stop bad behavior. Women have been known to leave a baby to die if it is thought to possess evil spirits.

²³ Adapted from *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, p. 46.

Exercises:

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Child abuse occurs in all cultural, ethnic, occupational, social and _____ groups. Abusers may be male or female, and they may be adults, adolescents or children. Surprisingly, most violent acts against children are carried out by people they _____. While most local traditions and cultural practices are helpful to children as they increase their understanding of history and identity, some others are harmful and even _____. These behaviors continue in communities because of local beliefs and prejudices that need to be challenged or transformed. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse are _____ the most effective approaches to discipline, and sometimes can cause serious harm to children. A “Child sex abuser” is someone who has a _____ in children.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is corporate or humiliating verbal punishment a common practice in your community? Why or why not?
2. Why is corporal punishment and verbal abuse not effective?
3. What are some local practices that harm children in your area?
4. What beliefs or prejudices cause people to use these practices?
5. What would be the biggest concerns or worries in the community if they stopped these practices?

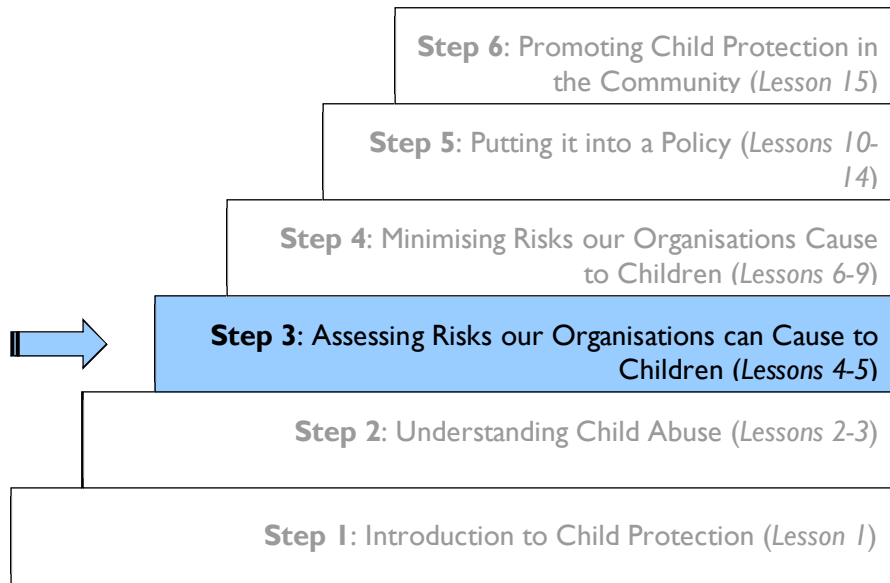
Discussion Questions for Managers

6. What attitudes or understanding of abuse and abusers needs to change among the staff of your organization or ministry?
7. What are some local practices which cause harm to children in your area?
8. How could your ministry begin to influence people to change this practice?
9. What do you think is the Biblical perspective on discipline of children?
10. What are the most appropriate alternatives to corporal punishment if children in your programs misbehave?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Two, Exercises 2.4 and 2.5; and Module 4, Exercise 4.3

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Step 3: Assessing risks our organizations can cause to children



In this step, you will consider the ways that your organization or ministry could put children at risk of harm or abuse. This step includes special consideration of risks that Christian organizations can pose to children.

Lesson 4: How could our organization or ministry put children at risk of abuse?

Summary

- How can children be at risk in activities run by organizations and ministries?
- Particular risks from Christian organizations: spiritual abuse, false beliefs and abusers targeting Christian organizations

While most Christian organizations and ministries are committed to children, any organization can put children at risk of abuse. There are many terrible examples of children being abused during or through their participation in activities run by well-meaning organizations. A few ways that organizations can put children at risk include:

- Children being sexually abused or harassed by other children participating in activities
- Staff using abusive violent discipline to try and control children's behaviour
- Children being injured from unsafe conditions or hazards, such as knives left on counters or unsafe playground equipment

The remainder of this lesson will discuss three particular ways your Christian organization could unintentionally put children at risk of abuse or harm.

Vulnerabilities to child abuse in Christian organizations

Surprisingly, Christian organizations or ministries have particular vulnerabilities to becoming an abusive context for children.²⁴

1. *Spiritual abuse (See lesson 2 for a definition of spiritual abuse)*

Spiritual abuse can take a number of forms. For example:

- A staff or volunteer in a church or Christian organization uses their authority to force children to attend church against their will²⁵
- Children are pressured to convert to be a Christian in order to gain certain favors in the ministry over other children
- Children are forced to reconcile with a perpetrator who has seriously abused them, in the name of forgiveness

2. *False Beliefs*

The following beliefs, which are found in some Christian organizations and ministries, can put children at risk of abuse.

²⁴ Rev. Dr. Roman Paur (Inter Faith Sexual Trauma Institute), quoted in Building Safer Organizations Handbook: Training Materials on Receiving and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Exploitation by Humanitarian Workers. International Council of Voluntary Agencies, no date given, p.112-117.

²⁵ Please see also Workbook 4, lesson ? for more on this topic.

- **The high status of leaders and teachers:** Some people believe that religious leaders could not possibly abuse children—and so when a leader is accused of abuse, they shift the blame to the child, saying that the child “seduced” the adult.
- **Concerns about Christian witness:** Some Christian organizations are reluctant to take action against their leaders when they find out about abuse, based on concerns about the reputation of the church and damage to Christian witness.
- **Beliefs about forgiveness:** After confession, some abusers have been given opportunities to continue to work with children as though they are no longer a risk. Also, children can receive false messages that if they are abused they should not cause trouble by reporting the incident.
- **Beliefs about healing:** Children accused of being spiritually possessed or witches in some contexts are forced to go through abusive rituals to “free him or her of the spirit”. Abuse in these situations includes beating, burning, starvation (in the name of fasting), intimidation and isolation.
- **Beliefs about corporal punishment:** Many people quote the Bible to support corporal punishment, especially Proverbs 13:24: “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”

The African Child Policy Forum clearly points out that this is a misunderstanding of this passage.

“The [term for the word ‘rod’] used in the often quoted Proverbs text is ‘Shebet’. The Shebet was the large walking staff held by the head of a family, the king’s scepter, or the shepherd’s crook which was used to rescue and guide sheep. Guidance was given by the kind and responsible shepherd whose rod was used to guide and protect his sheep, not to beat them. A version of the Shebet is carried by bishops to this day – as a symbol of guiding, not beating their people. It should be remembered that the “rod” referred to in Psalm 23 comforts people.

...Within the entire Law or Torah, where God outlined what he required of his people, there is no instruction to beat children...there is no instruction within scripture of how or when to beat or even who to beat. Christians look to the example of Jesus for the way to live their lives. There is no evidence to suggest that he cited the scriptures to justify hitting children. All the recorded encounters between Jesus and children were kind, gentle and respectful...Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God is like a little child, and whatsoever we do to the least of these we do to him. That clearly rules out physical punishment and humiliating treatment of children.”

3. Abusers targeting Christian organizations

Child abusers sometimes target Christian organizations in order to gain access to vulnerable children. In Christian organizations or ministries, staff and volunteers can develop intimate relationships with children. In these relationships, they can manipulate children toward sexual behavior and intimidate them from reporting abuse. Abusers will also sometimes work in Christian organizations or ministries because “they know that people are generally more forgiving, trusting and want to believe the best of everyone. In addition, they know that in some organizations if they are caught, repentance may be enough to secure a pardon and avoid prosecution.”²⁶

²⁶ *Building Safer Organizations*, p. 115.

Case Study

What should have been done differently to stop the abuse in the following examples?

Why did the ministry not take these important steps to stop abuse, and what was the result of their inaction?

1. A small orphanage had been set up by a donor who visited from time to time. It was a basic, locally-built house and this seemed to be appropriate but one visitor realized that, in fact, children received very little food, clothes or medical care at all. It was being run by one woman 24/7 with a little support from a local pastor. She was so tired and resentful that she would take it out on the children by beating and swearing at them. When the visitor approached the donor to increase the amount of funding, he said that he wanted to keep the orphanage at a level 'appropriate to what the locals would experience so that they could re-integrate back into the community'. In fact, he was raising considerable amounts of funds from the West and pocketing most of it himself! This orphanage was reported to the Government and they gave a list of recommendations to the donor to raise the standards.²⁷

2. A children's ministry in a small church found out that one of the Sunday School teachers had been sexually abusing some of the children—touching them in private areas during the lessons. Because they were worried about the damage to their Christian witness, they did not inform the parents or take strong action to stop the abuser—they just asked the teacher to teach older children in the false belief that the older children could protect themselves. A year later one of the abused children told his parents that the teacher had touched him inappropriately. The parents raised this issue in a church meeting, and an investigation was launched. The investigation revealed that abuse had continued over the past year, and also revealed that the church leadership had tried to deal with this quietly and cover it up the previous year. Many people left the church, people in the community heard about the "cover-up", and many children were confused, angry and wounded from their experiences.

²⁷ The first Case Study was written by Glenn Miles

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Any organization can put children at _____. However, Christian organizations have additional particular ways that they can put children at risk, including: 1) _____, which includes forcing children to do certain “Christian” acts against their will. 2) False beliefs about leaders, _____, forgiveness, _____ or corporal punishment which lead to tolerance or even encouragement of abuse. 3) The beliefs, culture and practices of some Christian organizations make them vulnerable to _____ trying to use them to gain access to and abuse children.

Discussion questions:

1. Have you heard about children being abused through their participation in Christian activities?
2. Do any of the vulnerabilities above surprise you? Do you disagree with any of them? Why?
3. What beliefs or attitudes do you think need to change in your organization or ministry to reduce the risk of harm to children?

Discussion questions for managers:

4. Which areas listed above could possibly be a vulnerability factor in your organization or ministry?
5. Are your staff and volunteers aware of these areas of risk? Why or why not?
6. What could be done to ensure that your staff and volunteers do not have the false beliefs listed above?
7. What other steps could your organization or ministry take to reduce these areas of risk to children?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Two, Exercises 2.3 and 2.5; and Module Three, Exercise 3.3

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Lesson 5: How can we minimize the risks our organization might cause for children?

Summary

- Integrate child protection in program assessment
- Integrate child protection in program design
- Ensure children's participation in program design

Any program can put children at risk if the staff have not considered child protection issues in the planning and implementation of activities. Organizations need to assess the risks they could pose to children, in order to be able to take steps to prevent or minimize the risk that children will be harmed when participating in their activities. It is very dangerous to assume that child abuse could not happen in your organization.

To ensure that children are safe and protected, organizations should reflect on the areas where they could put children at risk of harm (see Lesson 4 for a description of common areas of concern). In addition, the following steps should be a part of *all programs* of organizations and ministries that have direct or indirect contact with children.²⁸

Step 1: Integrating child protection into program assessment

Each ministry needs to understand the child protection threats and resources in the communities they work with, and how they could be impacted (positively or negatively) by the programs planned by the ministry. For this purpose, in every community or target area the ministry needs to assess:

- What types of abuse, violence and exploitation do children experience in our communities, and which children are particularly vulnerable to abuse or exploitation?
- What is life like for the most vulnerable children? How do they survive? What coping mechanisms or resources do they use?
- What resources exist in our communities to aid in the protection of children?
- What are the common attitudes and beliefs toward children?

“I was just 15 years old and was studying in Grade 9 when my dreams shattered. I was attacked with acid for refusing a marriage proposal. You can imagine the physical pain of having acid thrown over your face and body, but the pain of social stigma is worse than physical pain and can last forever.” Acid victim, South and Central Asia.²⁹

2. Integrating child protection into design of programs

Child protection considerations should be clearly included in the planning of all programs. Consideration should be given to possible child protection risks in every activity, and steps should be taken to minimize identified risks. For example, appropriate measures might need to be taken to ensure that livelihood projects do not lead to increases in child labor because children are required by their parents to labor in a new family business. Or a drop-in shelter might need to add a second bathroom in order to prevent girls and boys from harassing each other. Assessing child protection risks includes assessing whether there are any dangerous materials or spaces in the project activities (such as knives in the kitchen, or dangerous playground equipment).

²⁸ Please see also Workbook 7 on Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of programs.

²⁹ *World Report on Violence Against Children*. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. p. 56

Common child protection considerations for programs that directly involve children include:

- **Transportation of Children**

When project activities include the transportation of children, the organization should have standards that address the following issues: parental consent, accompanying adults (including number, gender, responsibilities, conduct), insurance, and emergency plans. For longer trips such as to a summer camp or a conference, organizations should ensure all of the above, plus required approvals from within the organization, preparation of the child, adequate rest for the child, and recreational opportunities.

- **Child Supervision**

There should be clear guidelines about the ratio of adult supervisors to children in any activity. Adults who are supervising children should receive child protection training (including behavior protocols and child discipline).

- **Health and Safety**

There are many health and safety issues to consider when planning program activities.

Keeping Children Safe has outlined the following questions to consider in any program:

How does the venue measure up in terms of health and safety (e.g. fire risk, etc.)?

Do you have adequate toilet facilities?

Do you have first aid supplies to deal with minor accidents?

Is the venue accessible for disabled people? Are there facilities for them?

Do the children have any special dietary or medical requirements?

- **Parental Consent**

Whenever possible, parents or guardians should give their consent for children to participate, and completed forms should be kept on file.

- **Emergency Plans**

Staff and volunteers should know whom to contact and what to do should there be an emergency involving a child. Contact information for guardians should be easily accessible.

3. Ensuring participation of children in *program design*³⁰

Children and young people should be involved in the design of any program, helping to identify risks relating to child protection. They may have suggestions about unsafe and safe places or times for activities. Studies have also shown that child participation can be very valuable in the area of selection of volunteers, as children often know risky adults within a community and can help ensure that they are not recruited or accepted as community volunteers or staff in programs.

“Listen to the problems and voices of children regarding children’s issues...encourage children to express and create forums for children to speak out.” (Youth from Thailand and Vietnam)³¹

³⁰ Please refer to Workbook 2 for more information on children’s participation.

³¹ “Kids Understand How Other Kids Hurt: Children and Adolescents Speak Out about Sexual Exploitation.” World Vision International (2008).

Case Study

1. A drop-in program for street children decided it would develop an arts activity. A large church in America sent a number of arts and craft materials, including scissors, glue, paper, and crayons. The orphanage recruited and trained local volunteers to teach art lessons three days per week.

One day, some of the children got in an argument, and one boy took a pair of scissors and stabbed another child. The child was seriously wounded, although he recovered with surgery. The boy who stabbed the other child was arrested and later sent to juvenile prison for one month.

Upon reflection, the staff realized that they should not have sharp-pointed scissors on their premises, and requested that the church in America send rounded scissors for the arts activity. The staff also conducted a series of discussions with children, community members and volunteers to identify other ways that children might be at risk of harm while participating in activities.

They identified a number of areas of risk, including girls going to the bathroom alone, the use of corporal punishment by one volunteer, and the attitudes of some children against the ethnic minority children at the center. The staff and volunteers planned steps to reduce each of these areas of risk, and set up feedback groups of children and adults to help the ministry continually measure and learn about better ways to keep children safe in their activities.

2. A dynamic Christian street children's ministry was successful and doing really well. The staff were excited about all God was doing. They enjoyed volunteers coming to work with them. They didn't have any child protection policy.

One day one of the youth informed one of the staff members that a foreign volunteer had abused him. When he was confronted he confessed that he had actually sexually abused eight of the boys, although some were older than 18 years old.

The staff were upset and confused. They didn't know how to handle it so they asked him to leave. He returned to his home country. Afterwards the staff member was attending child protection training and realized that they hadn't dealt with it properly and that the man may well abuse other children in the future. Meanwhile the reputation of the ministry was severely affected.³²

³² Written by Glenn Miles

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Organizations need to understand the risks they could pose to children, in order to be able to take steps to prevent or minimize the risk that children will be _____ in their activities. This begins with the organization _____ the child protection threats and resources in target communities, and how they may be impacted (positively or negatively) by the planned programs. It also includes the organization considering possible child protection risks in every _____, and taking steps to minimize identified risks. This includes risks associated with transportation of children, _____ of children, health and safety, parental consent, and emergency plans. Finally, _____ should be involved in the design of any program, helping to identify risks relating to child protection.

Discussion questions:

1. What risks might your organization cause to children?
2. Are you aware of organizational guidelines to reduce risk to children in the areas mentioned in the lesson?
3. Have you ever listened to children and included them in helping to identify and reduce risk in an activity? How could you do that?

Discussion questions for managers:

4. What processes has your organization used to assess abuse and other child protection issues in your communities? Were staff or volunteers involved in or made aware of the findings of this assessment?
5. Has your organization or ministry analyzed how it might be putting children at risk of harm in project/ministry activities? Do all staff and volunteers understand these risks?
6. What steps does your organization need to take to more clearly identify and minimize risk to children in activities?
7. How could children's perspectives on safety, risk and protection be more seriously considered in your organization?

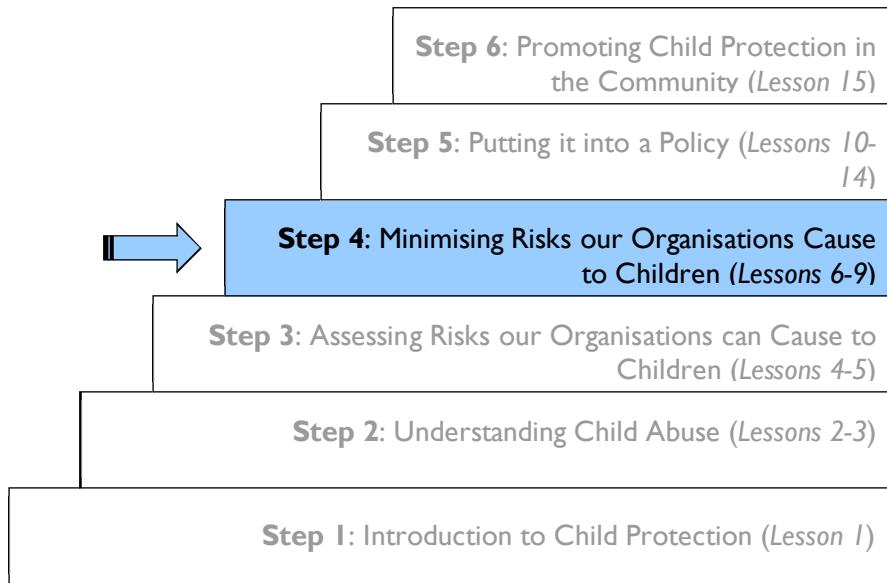
To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Three, Exercise 3.7

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Also look at Keeping Children Safe *How to Implement the Standards*, "Standard 3: Preventing Harm to Children Step 3"

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Step 4: Minimizing risks our organizations cause to children



Organizations should create *an environment in which children are kept safe in all program activities*. In Step 4, you will learn about a number of important steps your organization or ministry should take to remove or reduce the risks our organizations or ministries can cause to children—including establishing clear behavior protocols for staff and volunteers, helping staff and volunteers to practice non-violent positive discipline of children, and helping them to recognize abuse. This step also discusses how to encourage and respond to reports of child abuse or harm within your organization or ministry.

Lesson 6: What guidelines do workers need to help protect children from the risk of harm?

Summary

- What are behaviour protocols?
- What areas of conduct should behaviour protocols cover?
- What are good guidelines for discipline of children?

Our staff and other people working in organizations need to have clear guidance about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour toward children. Clear guidance regarding staff behavior helps to keep children safe when they are participating in our activities, while also helping to prevent false accusations against staff, volunteers or visitors to the organization. Our organizations should develop two important types of guidelines: *behavior protocols* and *guidelines for discipline of children*.

Behavior Protocols

Behavior Protocols are clear and concise statements of what behaviors toward and around children the organization expects of staff and other adults in the organization, and what behaviors the organization will not tolerate. Behavior protocols are also sometimes referred to as Codes of Conduct. Behavior Protocols should help our staff understand requirements and restrictions in the following areas:

✓ Good practice when working directly with children	✓ Physical contact and touching	✓ Transporting children
✓ Two-adult rule: Where possible and practical, the ‘two-adult’ rule should be followed. This means that two or more adults supervise all activities where minors or children are involved and are present at all times	✓ Environment and work space	✓ Language and equality
✓ Acknowledgement that the adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves in a “seductive” or provoking way	✓ Sleeping arrangements	✓ Discipline

Communities (children and adults) should be clearly informed of the behavior protocols, and given practical ways of reporting suspicions of staff or volunteers breaking the behavior protocols. See Lesson 9 for more detail on reporting mechanisms.

Discipline

As many of our staff are required to care for children, it is important that we equip them with clear guidance regarding discipline of children.

Discipline comes from the same root word as “disciple,” and means to train or teach to in order to produce specific character traits or behaviors. Many people mistakenly think of discipline only as punishment. Discipline actually includes a range of approaches that help develop positive characteristics and behaviors in a child. Discipline can be defined as a “system of teaching and nurturing that prepares children to achieve competence, self-control, self-direction, and caring for others.”³³

³³ “Guidance for Effective Discipline.” American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, *Pediatrics*, Vol. 101, No. 4, April 1998, p. 723.

Types of discipline

An effective discipline system must contain three elements. The elements are:

1) A **caring environment** characterized by positive, supportive adult-child relationships

This is the best environment to help children learn positive behaviors. You can build positive relationships with children by:³⁴

Showing an interest in each child and their interests	Greeting children by name
Noticing when they seem disturbed, upset, worried or concerned	Giving encouragement for trying
Finding something positive to say about each child each day	Expecting that children will behave well
Trusting them with responsibilities	

2) A **proactive strategy** for teaching and strengthening of desired behaviors

An important part of discipline is to affirm and reward positive behaviors in children so that children understand and want to practice them. Specific, consistent praise is one of the most important discipline methods. It helps children to learn and practice positive behavior, since all children crave praise. Another critical proactive teaching method is the example of the adults—children learn from the behaviors of adults, which can reinforce the verbal lessons they are trying to teach.

Principles for Reinforcing Positive Behavior:

*Provide regular **positive attention**, sometimes called special time (opportunities to communicate positively are important for children of all ages);*

***Listen carefully** to children and help them learn to use words to express their feelings;*

*Provide children with opportunities to make **choices** whenever appropriate options exist and then helping them learn to evaluate the potential consequences of their choice;*

*Reinforce emerging desirable behaviors with **frequent praise** and ignore trivial misdeeds;*

***Model** orderly, predictable behavior, respectful communication, and collaborative conflict resolution strategies.³⁵*

3) A **reactive strategy** for decreasing or eliminating undesired behaviors

Adult caregivers have a responsibility to help children understand and avoid behavior that is dangerous, unreasonable, and destructive to others. **Staff and volunteers need to understand that violent punishment is unacceptable;** and they need to be equipped with non-violent alternatives, such as natural consequences, time-out, with-holding privileges, and reasoning.

Important points regarding punishments:

Punishments have to be consistent, and followed through.

Punishments should be immediate. Children have short memories when linking task to result. A warning is the first step

Punishments have to be explained; the rule which has been broken has to be explained

Punishments should fit the crime; cleaning up the playground if the child was being messy or littering.

Punishments have to be fair; don't punish a group for one person's misdeed³⁶

³⁴ *Supporting Children with Behavior Difficulties: A Guide for Assistants in Schools.* Glenys Fox, David Fulton Publishers, inc., 2001, pp. 3-4.

³⁵ "Guidance for Effective Discipline." American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health 101 (4)

³⁶ Children in Emergencies Manual. Carol Toms and Heather MacLeod, World Vision International, 2008, p. 124.

Case Study

Review the following example of Behavior Protocols, and discuss the relevance of each point for your own organization or ministry.³⁷ (Another example can be found in Appendix I.)

Staff will treat all the children with dignity and respect and will help them learn to teach each other with respect as well. Organization X will implement the following guidelines in our programs:

- Staff members and children should not be left alone together in a closed room. If a staff member and a child or two children are alone together, the door will remain open. Private meetings will be done in a room with windows and the door will never be locked. The time and place of private meetings should be reported beforehand to the director.
- Sleeping arrangements: bedroom doors should never be locked at night after bedtime. Children are not permitted to share beds. Staff will not sleep in a child's bed with him/her. Children are not permitted into bedrooms of the opposite gender.
- Physical touch:
 - Staff and children should not touch other children in an inappropriate way. A guideline is not to touch anyone where they would be covered by shorts and a t-shirt. No rubbing, massaging, fondling in these areas as well.
 - Proper displays of affection include:
 - Speak to a child at eye level and listen with your eyes as well as your ears;
 - Hold a child's hand when speaking or listening to her;
 - Gently hold the child's shoulder or hand when disciplining her;
 - Put your arm around a child's shoulder when comforting her;
 - Pat a child on the head, hand, shoulder, or back to encourage her.
 - Inappropriate displays of affection:
 - Do not kiss a child or ask them to kiss you;
 - Do not engage in long hugging or tickling;
 - Do not hold a child's face when disciplining her;
 - Do not carry older children and do not allow them to sit on your lap;
 - Avoid prolonged physical contact with any child.
 - All touch must be done in view of others.
- When a staff helps a younger child bathe, she should inform another staff or the director and leave the door unlocked. She should only touch the child where necessary to help the child clean.
- Staff will not use physical punishment in disciplining the children. Staff will not take away things necessary to survival as a form of discipline (for example, food, shelter, love). Other forms of discipline will be encouraged, including verbal discipline, positive reinforcement and withdrawing privileges.

³⁷ Example of behaviour protocols from a Child Protection Policy shared by Chab Dai Coalition. www.chabdai.org

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Organizations should develop two important types of guidelines: _____ and _____ and guidelines for _____ of children. Behavior Protocols are clear and concise statements of what behaviors toward and around children the organization expects of staff and other adults in the organization, and what behaviors the organization will not tolerate. Discipline is a system of _____ aimed at developing positive characteristics and behaviors in a child. An effective discipline system must contain three elements:

- 1) a _____ environment characterized by positive, supportive adult-child relationships. This is the best environment to help children learn positive behaviors.
- 2) a _____ strategy for teaching and strengthening desired behaviors
- 3) a _____ for decreasing or eliminating undesired behaviors

Discussion questions:

1. What are some behaviors toward or around children that your organization expects? Are there any areas that you think should change after this lesson?
2. What are some behaviors toward or around children that your organization does not tolerate? Are there any areas that you think should change after this lesson?
3. What does discipline mean? How is discipline usually understood in your cultural context / your church / organization?
4. What are the three components of a good discipline system? Give some examples of how you could use these with children you live or work with.
5. What are some effective alternatives to corporal punishment and verbal abuse?

Discussion questions for managers:

6. What behaviour protocols or code of conduct exists or should exist in your organization or ministry?
7. In what situations in your organizations do volunteers or staff have to discipline children?
8. How do staff and volunteers perceive corporal punishment and verbal abuse?
9. How can your organization build capacity for staff to use a complete and non-violent discipline strategy? What are the biggest changes that staff would have to make?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe *How to Implement the Standards*, “Standard 4: Written Guidelines on Behavior Towards Children”

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Also look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Two, Exercises 2.6 and 2.7

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Lesson 7: What are signs of abuse?

Summary

- Indicators of abuse
- Be alert to signs of abuse in disabled children and boys

The next three lessons help staff or volunteers to recognize and respond to abuse. First, it is critical that staff and volunteers in organizations recognize signs of abuse in children, so that they can take appropriate steps to try and protect children from further abuse. However, signs of abuse are not always clear to untrained staff. Organizations and ministries must train staff in recognizing and responding to signs or indicators of child abuse.³⁸

Signs, indicators or clues of possible child abuse

Children often try to communicate to adults when they are being abused. **However, they are often not listened to, believed, or understood.**

“When I was like twelve, I thought I was pregnant by my father. I contemplated suicide because I was just saying to myself, ‘How am I going to explain this to people?’ I mean, I was twelve years old. Nobody is going to believe me.” Young girl, North America.³⁹

While some children will directly tell an adult that they trust when they have been abused, more often children will try to *indirectly* communicate their situation – through their actions and attitudes. Sometimes these actions and attitudes can be difficult to handle for the adults responsible for the children, and these children are thus sometimes called poorly behaved. This adds to their suffering. There are some behaviors which can be a clue to adults that a child may be suffering abuse – but none of these indicators are sure signs of abuse. It is important to develop locally contextualized indicators, as the behaviors will vary somewhat from place to place. However, following is a simple list of indicators of possible abuse.⁴⁰

- Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or marks on the skin in the shape of an object
- Bite marks
- Anti-social behavior
- Problems in school
- Fear of adults
- Apathy
- Depression
- Hostility or stress
- Lack of concentration
- Eating disorders
- Inappropriate interest or knowledge of sexual acts
- Nightmares and bed wetting

³⁸ For more details and definitions of child abuse, see lesson 2 of this workbook, “What is child abuse?”

³⁹ World Report on Violence Against Children. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. p. 55.

⁴⁰ Based on “Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse.” Childhelp, no date given.

- Drastic changes in appetite
- Overcompliance or excessive aggression
- Fear of a particular person or family member
- Unsuitable clothing for weather
- Dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Apparent lack of supervision
- Failure to grow/malnutrition
- Language developmental delay

Disabled children and boys suffer abuse too!

It is very important to remember that any child can be abused, and so we must be looking and listening for signs of abuse in all work with children.

One group that some people wrongly believe are not vulnerable to abuse is children with disabilities. Also, some people believe that children with disabilities do not feel pain or know that they are being abused. This is not true. Children with disabilities are more at risk of abuse than other children, because they may be less able to protect themselves or communicate about what is happening to them, have less confidence and knowledge about their rights, and be more dependent on their caregivers. Staff in organizations and ministries must specifically include children with disabilities in their efforts to protect children.⁴¹

Many people also believe that boys cannot be sexually abused, but this is also not true. Boys are often victims of sexual abuse, but many organizations focus on girls in their protection and care for sexually exploited children. There are many reasons for this failure to respond to sexual abuse and exploitation of boys, but perhaps the most obvious is that boys, and particularly adolescents, “are expected to be able to protect themselves and/or overcome [sexual abuse] very quickly.”⁴² Boys are also often very likely to not report or admit sexual abuse, due to fear of the stigma, teasing and disbelief that can follow. In addition, there is a tendency to assume that boys and young men can only be potential abusers, rather than also recognizing their vulnerability to being abused. This is largely due to the fact that “the most commonly reported perpetrators of sexual violence” are male.⁴³

Whenever a child shows indicators of possible abuse, staff should take them seriously and respond with support and the first steps in investigating or exploring the suspected abuse.

⁴¹ For more on children and disabilities, see the fifth workbook in this series.

⁴² “I thought it could never happen to boys”: *Sexual abuse and exploitation of boys in Cambodia. An exploratory study*,” Alastair Hilton, World Vision Cambodia, Hagar International and Social Services of Cambodia, 2008. p.8.

⁴³ *World Report on Violence Against Children*. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. pp. 15-16. p.55.

Case Study

1. A caregiver in a drop-in center had built strong trusting relationships with the street children who came every day for nonformal education and a meal. Most of the street children who used the center's services were boys. One day the caregiver noticed that one of the boys named Stuart was being very bossy and even unkind to the other boys. Stuart was normally quite polite and friendly, so the caregiver encouraged him to be more helpful. He scowled at her and remained quiet the rest of the afternoon.

The next day Stuart got in a fight with another boy, and hit him hard in the stomach. The caregiver recognized that something was affecting Stuart's behavior, since he was not acting like he normally did. After she stopped the fight and gave the boys some time to cool down, she asked Stuart if he would talk to her and took him for a walk outside to a quiet place. She pointed out that he was not acting like himself for the last couple days, and asked if something was going on that was causing him to feel upset. The boy initially resisted, but after some gentle probing questions he told her that his father had been beating up Stuart and his mother the last couple of evenings, because Stuart was not bringing home as much money as before. The caregiver asked him if he had any injuries, and Stuart showed her a bruise on his back. The caregiver said that he was very brave and strong to tell her this, and told the child that she would like to share this with the counselor at the center, so they could begin to work with the child's family to address this issue.

2. A member of a church was visiting an orphanage which the church was supporting. While she was visiting the church, she noticed that a number of the children were in very dirty clothes and looked unwashed. One child with a disability was laying in bed in soiled and wet pants. Some of the children were very withdrawn from the visitor, while a couple were very affectionate—holding her hand, stroking her leg, and refusing to leave her even when asked.

The visitor asked the director of the orphanage about these things that she had observed, and the director sighed deeply saying, "Yes these children are so poor, and come from such difficult circumstances. And even we as an orphanage are poor—we cannot provide the care that we want for these children."

The director then asked for the visitor to try and encourage her church to give more money to the orphanage.

While the visitor could understand the need for more resources in the orphanage, she was not comfortable with the current conditions and treatment of the children. She resolved to talk to her own church leadership about her concerns, and to recommend that rather than just send money, the church start a process of engaging with the orphanage to specifically address the concerns about how the children were being treated.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Organizations and ministries must train staff in recognizing and responding to _____ of child abuse. Some _____ of a child can be a clue to adults that a child may be suffering abuse – but _____ of these indicators are sure signs of abuse. Children with _____ are more at risk of abuse than other children; and _____ can also be sexually abused, but are often shy to _____ the abuse.

Discussion questions:

1. What do you think are the most common clues or indicators of child abuse in your context?
2. Do you think that sexual abuse of boys or of children with disabilities is a risk in your community? Why or why not?
3. What do you think you should do if you suspect a staff is abusing children?

Discussion questions for managers:

4. How could your organization train staff to recognize and appropriately respond to clues or indicators of child abuse?
5. What are some common misconceptions or misunderstandings about abuse of children?
6. What do you think your staff should do if they suspect another staff person is abusing children?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Three, Exercise 3.4

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Lesson 8: What stops children and workers reporting concerns about abuse?

Summary

- Common barriers to reporting abuse for adults and children
- How to encourage children to talk about abuse
- How to encourage adults to report abuse

When abuse is happening, there are many barriers which stop both children and adults from speaking about the abuse. However, children have a right to be safe, and adults have a responsibility to protect children.

It is critical that our organizations create an environment where children, parents, workers and other adults are able and encouraged to report abuse. If abuse is not reported, abusers will likely continue to abuse a child, and are also likely to abuse other children over time. So staff and volunteers must overcome the barriers to talking about and reporting abuse, and help children to do the same, if organisations are to be safe places for children.

Common barriers that stop CHILDREN reporting abuse ⁴⁴	
They feel fear because the abuser has threatened them or their family	They believe they are to blame for the abuse or that they will not be believed
They are reliant on the abuser for care or food—and are not aware of other options	They feel embarrassed or guilty and responsible, even though the abuse is not their fault
They have communication difficulties or may not have the vocabulary for what happened	They do not want the abuser to get in trouble
They have no one to turn to or they do not know how to complain	They do not recognize it as abuse

Keeping Children Safe encourages a number of practical steps to encourage children to speak out about abuse:⁴⁵

Openly discuss your child protection principles and policy with children⁴⁶

Display posters or have information leaflets especially for new children in program activities, that talk openly about the need for children to feel secure and safe, and what to do if they do not feel safe

Make sure that each child has a named person (or focal point) they can turn to if they have concerns about anything

Conduct short questionnaires or run focus groups occasionally to check on how things are going

⁴⁴ Ibid., Powerpoint presentation.

⁴⁵ *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, pp. 66-72. Keeping Children Safe Standard 7 “Communicating the ‘keep children safe’ message,” has a number of practical recommendations for encouraging children to speak out about child abuse in organizations

⁴⁶ For more about Child Protection Policies, see Part 3 (Lessons 10-14) of this workbook.

Common barriers that stop ADULTS reporting child abuse⁴⁷	
Fear of revenge (including loss of job) or of not being taken seriously	Respect for/fear of a senior staff or expatriate staff member
Cultural issues and norms – abuse is seen as acceptable practice in the country/region	Confusion about who is to blame – for example, a girl is sometimes blamed as a “seductress” if she has sex with adult men, rather than be recognized as a child needing protection
Lack of awareness that abuse and exploitation is wrong	Feeling that the issue is not too serious
Feeling that they do not have the right to complain	They do not know how or to whom to complain, or how the complaint will be handled

What else can your organization do to help encourage reporting of child abuse?

The following steps are critical in helping staff report child abuse:⁴⁸

- Raise awareness of child abuse, including sexual abuse and exploitation, along with indicators of child abuse. Also train people (staff and children) in how to report child abuse. This should of course be part of the standard child protection training in your organization. Staff should regularly be reminded of these points through visual aids and verbal reminders in trainings and meetings
- Establish clear reporting mechanisms with the community (including children) and staff
- Make reporting mandatory. Mandatory reporting should tell staff very clearly:
 - When to report
 - To whom to report
 - How to report
 - What will happen if they do not report (including disciplinary measures)
- Include measures to protect people who report, and to discipline people who submit false reports to hurt a staff member

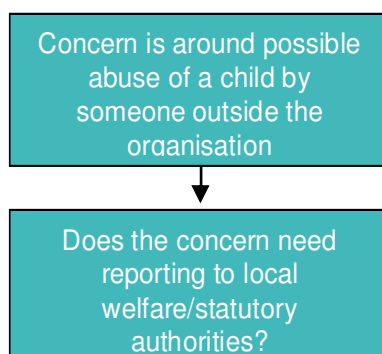
⁴⁷ *Building Safer Organizations Handbook: Training Materials on Receiving and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Exploitation by Humanitarian Workers*. International Council of Voluntary Agencies, no date given, p. 28.

⁴⁸ See Lesson 8 for more information about complaint/reporting mechanisms.

Case Study

Child protection reporting procedure

Use the chart to fill out the gaps and decide on your organisation's process. The procedure for responding to reports of concern is as follows:



Seek further clarification about next steps and whether parent/carers or others need informing

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

It is critical that our organizations create an environment where children, parents, workers and other adults are able and encouraged to _____. When abuse is happening, there are many _____ which stop both children and adults from speaking about the abuse. Staff and volunteers must overcome these barriers, and help children to do the same, if organizations are to be safe places for children. This can be achieved through open discussions and awareness-raising with _____, _____ of staff, providing opportunities to discuss _____ with management, and continued reinforcement of the importance of _____.

Discussion questions:

1. What barriers do you think would make staff reluctant to report suspicions that another staff member has abused a child?
2. How do you think children would respond in your organization or ministry if they were being abused at home?
3. How do you think children would respond in your organization if they were being abused by a staff member?
4. What would you do if you suspected a child in your organization or ministry was being abused?

Discussion questions for managers:

5. What are the most common barriers to reporting suspected abuse? Which are most likely in your organization?
6. What steps has your organization or ministry taken to help staff overcome these barriers? What else could you do?
7. What steps could your organization or ministry take to help children overcome the barriers to reporting abuse?
8. What concerns do you have as a manager about creating an open and safe environment for reporting abuse?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection, Module Three, Exercises 3.5 and 3.6

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=17:english&Itemid=4

Lesson 9: How should we encourage people to report child abuse?

Summary

- What is a complaints mechanism?
- Why are complaints mechanisms important?
- How should I respond if a child tells me s/he has been abused?
- How should an organization or ministry respond to a complaint about child abuse?

Parents trust organisations to keep their children safe while they participate in activities, and organisations should be held accountable to do so. Therefore it is critical that parents and children have effective ways to report concerns regarding inappropriate behavior by the people associated with organisations and ministries. Your organisation should set up a mechanism that children, adults or workers can use to report abuse.

Complaints mechanisms

A complaints mechanism is a procedure that allows someone to inform the organization of accusations or suspicions of abuse by one of its staff, volunteers, donors, visitors, consultants, or others associated with the organization. Complaints mechanisms are also sometimes called reporting mechanisms.

Complaints can be made by anyone – including other staff members, members from partner organisations, adults or children from the community. **Confidentiality is critical** in complaints mechanisms—there should be no negative consequences for the person who reports abuse. After setting up a complaints mechanism, organisations must **be intentional and persistent** in encouraging people to speak out, through regular awareness raising – including children and staff.

Good complaints mechanisms have the following positive impacts:

- Children can be protected from abuse through prosecution of abusers and deterrence of potential abusers
- Organisations become less attractive to potential abusers
- Good complaints procedures can lead to fair investigations—which protect the rights of the accused and the victims, as well as the organization
- Complaints mechanisms are a great opportunity to promote and model a commitment to child protection

*When developing a complaints mechanism, staff need to research how children and adults deal with abuse, as well as government services and legal frameworks regarding child abuse. They then must consult with people from the community (including children and women) in the development of the mechanism - considering safety, confidentiality, transparency and accessibility.*⁴⁹

What if a child tells you they have been abused?

If you suspect that a child is being abused, you must keep the child's safety and best interests as the top priority, and you must be careful not to put the child at further risk by their actions.

⁴⁹ The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership has excellent guidance for developing reporting mechanisms in *Building Safer Organizations Guidelines: Receiving and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Exploitation by Humanitarian Workers* (<http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/bsa-guidelines.pdf>)

Follow these recommendations if a child tells you that s/he has been abused:⁵⁰

- React calmly
- Reassure them that they were right to tell, but do not promise confidentiality – as you will most likely need to tell others and take action if the child is in a dangerous situation
- Take what they say seriously, even if it involves someone you feel sure would not harm them
- Avoid leading questions (say “Then what happened?” not “Did he touch your leg?”). Try to get a clear understanding of what the child is saying to you
- Ensure the safety of the child. If he/she needs urgent medical attention, make sure doctors or hospital staff know that this is a child protection issue
- Only contact parents and caregivers once you have advice and guidance from the organization’s designated child protection staff, or from another agency with expertise in child protection
- After talking with the child, fill out a child protection incident report form as soon as possible, and submit it according to your organization’s child protection policy⁵¹

How to respond to a complaint

It is important that each organization or ministry develop a clear plan for how to respond to a child protection complaint. Senior Leadership should be involved in the management of the response to the allegation. It is critical to keep information as confidential as possible—sharing only on a “need-to-know” basis.

Here are some of the first steps for an organization or ministry to take:

- **Make contact with the person who made the complaint**
Clarify what happened, who did it, when, where, who else was there and how the complainant can be contacted again.
- **Identify and respond to immediate risks**
Consider the survivor, the person who made the complaint, the witnesses, the person who is being accused, and the investigators.
Regarding the abused children, consider physical injuries, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, emotional effects, and fear.
- **Make a plan to minimize risks**
This will primarily involve referring people to experts who can help (for example doctors, counselors, or security specialists).
- **Launch an investigation**
If there is sufficient information to investigate a complaint about violating the child protection policy, then an investigation team should be appointed by senior management.

⁵⁰ Adapted from *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, p. 155.

⁵¹ For more about Child Protection Policies, see Part 3 (Lessons 10-14) of this workbook.

Special Note for Managers: Conducting Investigations

The Focus of an Investigation

- To protect individuals from being (further) abused or exploited
- To find out if the staff member has broken the organisation's policy
- To recommend appropriate and proportionate disciplinary action
- To highlight issues relating to poor practice/performance
- To identify aspects of program delivery or performance that carry risks of abuse or exploitation by staff¹

The investigation should include the following steps:

- The well-being of the child is the most important concern. If abuse is proven or suspected, every effort must be made to ensure that the child is safe and no longer experiencing abuse, and then to assist the child in coping with any trauma or guilt he or she may be experiencing. This may include counseling or other forms of assistance deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Generally, an employee accused of sexual abuse of a child should be temporarily suspended during the investigation. The employee should be informed that charges have been made against him or her, and given an opportunity to respond. They should also be informed that as a result of these charges, the organisation will initiate an internal investigation. The employee should be encouraged to participate in the investigation by providing information and the names of witnesses to be interviewed. At the conclusion of the investigation, the employee should be informed of the results and what corrective action, if any, will be taken.
- There should be a review of the facts uncovered during the investigation to determine what actually happened, followed by a consultative decision-making process about the future of the employee involved. The employee should have the findings of the investigation shared with him or her.
- Organisations should follow procedures for reporting to the authorities according to locally mandated laws. In some instances, local police may carry out an investigation. Any interference with this process could have legal implications for staff and for the organisation.
- Organisations should develop a plan for dealing with media inquiries that includes a designated spokesperson.
- An effort should be made to provide assistance to an employee accused of inappropriate behavior with children, including appropriate counseling and support.
- In the event an allegation is proven to be untrue, appropriate steps should be taken for follow-up with the person who has been accused, the child, and the person who made the complaint.
- All information concerning the incident and investigation should be documented in writing.

Further information and guidance on planning for and conducting investigations can be found at the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership Website (www.hapinternational.org), especially in the Building Safer Organizations section. See *Building Safer Organizations Guidelines: Receiving and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Exploitation by Humanitarian Workers* (<http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/bso-guidelines.pdf>)

Case study

Care for Children is a small ministry that works with at risk children in a very poor rural community, providing literacy classes and life skills education to children, and organising self-help groups for their mothers. In the first year after they developed a Child Protection Policy, they realized the importance of establishing complaint mechanisms for the children and the mothers – so that they would have an appropriate and safe means for raising concerns about abuse of children and women. The staff found through research that abuse of children is a crime that is sometimes enforced by the police (especially with pressure from groups outside the community), but that communities tend not to discuss child abuse directly with outsiders. They knew that most of the mothers were illiterate, as well.

However, they were not sure what method to use for complaint mechanisms. They talked to some other agencies, and brainstormed a number of possible ways that community members could raise complaints: by phone, community notice board, letters, complaint forms and comment boxes. They drew a color picture of each of these methods on separate pieces of paper, and then gathered groups of the mothers and groups of children for discussion. The staff first reminded the groups that abuse of children is totally unacceptable to Care for Children organisation (the community members had recently been trained in the organisation's Behavior Protocols). They then told each group that Care for Children wants to know if any staff or volunteers abuse or mistreat children in these ways. They emphasized how the safety of the children is the top priority for Care for Children. They talked about reporting mechanisms, confidentiality, and safety.

After some discussion, they showed the pictures to the community members, and talked with the children and women about which ways might be appropriate to report misbehavior of staff or volunteers. The mothers and children agreed that phones were not realistic since most people did not have phones. The women thought that complaint boxes would work, even though most of them are not literate – because they thought the literate women could help the others write their complaints. They suggested putting one complaint box in the classroom the children use, and one in the local church. They also said that they would be comfortable complaining directly to one female staff that they trusted.

The children were not comfortable with any of the proposed methods of complaining, because they said they would be afraid to report by themselves. They said that the only way they would raise a complaint would be in small groups—even if only one child had been abused. They proposed that all the children be formed into committees, with an elected head. The head would report any concerns from the group directly to any Care for Children staff member, or write complaints for the complaint box. The children also said each committee could meet at least once per month and give other suggestions to the Care for Children staff—not only related to abuse, but to ideas to improve the program.

The staff drew pictures with arrows (a flowchart) on a big flipchart, so that the people could see and discuss the complaints mechanism. The mothers suggested that the staff make a nice-looking poster of the flowchart, and post it in the classroom, and on a public notice board near the church. The staff knew that designing the complaints mechanism was only the first step, and that they would need to continue to remind the children and the mothers of the organization's desire to hear complaints and feedback over the next years. However, they were excited to have included the children and mothers in this process.⁵²

⁵² For more information about using cards to develop a Complaints Mechanism, see: Community Feedback System: Complaints Cards. Joshua Pepall, World Vision Sri Lanka. <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/ww-sri-lanka-community-complaints-handling-cards.pdf>

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

A _____ is a procedure that allows someone to inform the organization of allegations (accusations) or suspicions of abuse by one of its personnel. Complaints can be made by _____ – including other staff members, members from partner organizations, adults or children from the community. If you suspect that a child is being abused, you must keep the _____ as the top priority, and you must be careful not to put the child at further risk by their actions. The first priority in responding to a child protection issue is the _____ and best interest of the child. Organizations need to have a clear plan for responding to child protection complaints, which should be led by an Incident Management Team that includes senior leadership. After clarifying the complaint and taking all steps to ensure the safety of the child, the perpetrator and the complainant, the Incident Management Committee should launch an _____ into what happened, followed by a consultative decision-making process about the future of the employee involved.

Discussion questions:

1. What are complaint/reporting mechanisms? Who uses them?
2. Why is a complaint/reporting mechanism important?
3. What do people in your community normally do if they suspect someone is abusing a child?
4. What are your concerns about how to respond if a child tells you they have been abused?
5. What are the most important first steps for an organization responding to an allegation of child abuse by a staff or a volunteer?

Discussion questions for managers:

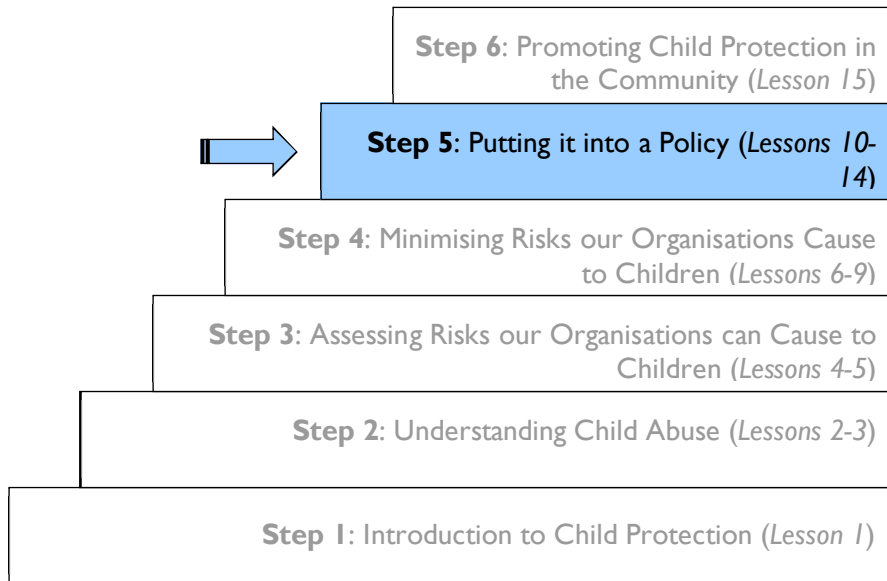
6. What is your own personal or organizational experience with complaint/reporting mechanisms?
7. What steps could your organization take to effectively encourage people to report if they suspect that a staff or volunteer has abused a child?
8. What complaint/reporting mechanisms could be accessible and safe for children and adults in your community? How could you find out what people would prefer to use?
9. What capacities does your organization have and lack in conducting investigations of child abuse reports? How could it build necessary capacities?

To Learn More: Look at *Keeping Children Safe How to Implement the Standards*, “Standard 2: Putting the Policy into Practice Step 4, Activity 2.4”

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Also look at *Building Safer Organizations Guidelines: Receiving and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Exploitation by Humanitarian Workers* <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/bsg-guidelines.pdf>

Step 5: Putting it into a policy



Developing and implementing a good Child Protection Policy is the foundational responsibility for all Christian organizations and ministries. This step will help you understand the major steps and considerations to responsibly develop and implement a policy.

Lesson 10: What is a child protection policy?

Summary

- What is a child protection policy?
- What should be in a child protection policy?

A child protection policy is a statement by the organisation or ministry of its commitment to keeping children safe. It makes clear to everyone that all children must be protected, describes the systems and processes the organization or ministry will use to fulfill its duty of protection, outlines what to do if child protection concerns are raised, and provides the accountability mechanisms⁵³ for implementing the policy.

Child protection policies will vary by context and ministry, but all are based on children's rights and promote the well-being of children as the most important consideration of organisations. Child protection policies relate to all people associated with an organisation or ministry, including Boards of Directors, leadership, management, staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, partners and visitors.

Contents of a child protection policy

While this lesson will give a general overview of child protection policies, the following lessons explore critical aspects of developing and implementing child protection policies in more detail. Below is a detailed outline of a typical child protection policy, which organisations can use when creating their own child protection policy:⁵⁴

1. The introduction

This should include:

- Contents page
- Any preamble or introduction
- Definition of terms - glossary
- Need for and scope of policy - the policy should state that it applies to all staff, leadership, Board of Director members, visitors, consultants, volunteers, and partners of the organisation
- Policy principles - definition of a child and principles of treatment and value of children
- Acknowledgements - any help received in putting the policy together

2. Policy issues

This section should include:

- Statement of commitment – a declaration of the organisational commitment to protection of children
- Definitions of child abuse - how the organisation defines child abuse (Note that the policy should not only focus on sexual abuse, but on all aspects of child protection, including other forms of abuse, discipline, safety, working with children, management, and corrective action for staff.)

⁵³ Accountability mechanisms are ways to demonstrate to stakeholders (such as beneficiaries, managers, directors, partners, or donors) that the organization is acting and managing resources responsibly and effectively for an agreed upon set of results.

⁵⁴ Adapted from www.viva.org

- Common forms and causes of abuse - a description of the typical types of abuse faced by children in the local area
- Legal provision for children - mention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other applicable laws in the country
- Communicating about children - awareness raising and training of staff; how the organisation will communicate about children, child protection and child abuse (internally and externally)
- Behaviour protocols - general behavior guidelines for staff, volunteers, consultants, visitors, donors, sponsors and others who interact with children, in order to keep children safe and to avoid false accusations [See Lesson 6 for more explanation of Behaviour Protocols]
- Project partners - any child protection expectations for partners of the organisation, particularly when the organisation has contractual partners; including requirements for partners to follow child protection policies
- Recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers - guidelines on recruiting and screening workers (See Lesson 14 for more information on recruitment and screening).
- Complaints mechanisms - how to help children and adults report suspicions or allegations of abuse without fear of reprisal
- Responses to allegations and incidents of child abuse - step-by-step guidelines on how to respond when reports/allegations are made. These guidelines should include how to care for affected/abused children, who to contact (police, legal counsel, etc.), and how people will be investigated and treated throughout
- Advocacy & networking - how the organization will work with others to ensure child protection is a priority in the legal system and society.
- Confidentiality - guidance on how to keep all information regarding abuse confidential

3. Forms

Release forms for background checks, self-declarations, behavior protocols, parental consent, Child Protection Incident Report Forms

4. Contact Details

Phone numbers and other contact information for key focal person(s) for child protection. The organization must assign the responsibility and allocate sufficient authority, time and resources to oversee child protection activities.

Examples of Child Protection Policies

Child Rights Information Network Child Protection Policy
http://www.crin.org/docs/FileManager/child_protection_policy.doc

Plan USA Child Protection Standards <http://www.planusa.org/site/protection.php>

World Vision International Child Protection Standards <http://www.worldvision.ca/Sponsor-a-Child/Documents/FY09-ChildProtectionStandardsPolicy.pdf>

International Save the Children Child Protection Policy
www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/child_protection.pdf

Case Study

Extracts from a Child Protection policy⁵⁵

Introduction

-- is an organisation that has as its vision to see people in Cambodia have freedom to live in hope, love, joy and peace in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. -- has a home for orphan children in Phnom Penh and also works with children and youth through village projects.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent abuse within our organisation's programs, and to protect our staff from false accusations of abuse. -- is a Christian organisation that believes in the Bible as our guide in protecting children.

"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men." (2 Corinthians 8:21)

"Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. ... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2)

-- is committed to following Cambodian law in issues of abuse and exploitation. -- is also committed to upholding the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. The protection of children is one of the four themes which run throughout the UNCRC, which entered into force as international law in 1990. Cambodia is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore, we should take our role in upholding the Convention where it applies very seriously. In a country where children are the largest demographic group, and where child-sex tourism, child rape and child abuse are on the rise, -- staff and volunteers will do everything in their power to protect the children in their home from further abuse.

Statement of Commitment

To be signed by all -- team members, short-term workers, volunteers, and visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the -- office.

I declare that:

- I have read and understand the -- child protection policy.
- I will work within the procedures and protocols as laid out in this policy.
- I have not been accused or convicted of any offence involving physical or sexual abuse of children.
- I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in -- activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

⁵⁵ Shared by the Chabdai coalition. The entire policy can be found in Appendix 2.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

A child protection policy is a statement by the organization or ministry of its commitment to keeping children _____. It makes clear to everyone that _____ must be protected, describes how the organization will fulfill its duty of protection, and provides the _____ mechanisms for doing so. A policy usually contains an introduction, policy issues (for example, definition of _____, how to report and respond to abuse, recruitment of staff), lists of _____ expected of workers, necessary forms, and contact details of assigned child protection staff.

Discussion questions:

1. Does your organization have a child protection policy? Why or why not?
2. If your organization does have a child protection policy, how do you think it affects the organisation? If your organisation does not have a child protection policy, what impact do you think a child protection policy could have on your organisation?
3. Who should a child protection policy relate to in your organisation or ministry?
4. If your organisation has Behaviour Protocols, which points do you have questions about and why? If your organisation does not have Behaviour Protocols, what are some of the behaviours regarding children that you think would be inappropriate or appropriate for staff?

Discussion questions for managers:

5. Why do you think a child protection policy would be important for your organisation?
6. Which parts of a child protection policy would have or do have the greatest impact on staff behavior?
7. Which parts of a child protection policy are the most difficult for staff to understand? Why?
8. If your organisation has Behavior Protocols, what challenges have you faced in raising awareness and enforcing the protocols, and why? If your organization does not have Behavior Protocols, why not?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe *Standards for Child Protection* “Standard 1: A Written Policy on Keeping Children Safe”

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=section&id=1:standards&Itemid=4

Lesson 11: Why do we need a child protection policy, and how do we get started?

Summary

- The importance and benefits of a child protection policy
- Child protection self-audit
- Child protection risk assessment

Why is a child protection policy important?

A child protection policy is the foundation for all child protection efforts by a ministry or organisation. Every organisation that has any contact or significant impact on children should have a child protection policy. Even organisations which do not focus specifically on children will usually have significant contact with children through their work in communities - so this is an important consideration for all organisations. It is important to have these things written up in a policy, so all workers can be trained and have access to an agreed document, and to provide guidance when difficult situations arise.

No child protection policy can keep children completely safe, but a good policy can:

- Help protect **children** by minimizing the risk of abuse and exploitation
- Help protect **workers** by providing clear guidelines for appropriate behavior, and clear procedures for responding to concerns or allegations
- Help protect **organisations** from infiltration by potential abusers⁵⁶
- Help protect **organisations** from the damage that can be caused by allegations of abuse.

Child protection policies and procedures help to create 'child-safe' organisations:

Where there is a child protection 'aware culture'

Where everything possible is done to prevent intentional and unintentional harm coming to children

Where children feel safe

Where children can speak out

Where children are listened to

Where children and staff are respected and empowered⁵⁷

First Steps

Before starting to write a child protection policy, your organisation should understand your organisational strengths and weaknesses in regards to child protection. Even organisations which do not focus specifically on children should consider the indirect impact that they have on children's safety and development through their programs. A Child Protection Self-Audit is recommended for this step.

⁵⁶ Viva Website, www.viva.org

⁵⁷ Child Protection Policies and Procedures Toolkit: How to Create a Child-Safe Organization, *Elanor Jackson and Marie Wernham, Elanor Jackson and Marie Wernham and ChildHope, 2005, p. 28.*

The Self-Audit Tool from Keeping Children Safe is an excellent resource to help measure an organisation's strengths and weaknesses in terms of child protection. It is available from http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4.

The Self-Audit tool is a series of checkpoint questions that all organisations and ministries committed to protecting children should strive to meet. However, some of the checkpoints may seem more relevant to particular contexts than others. The self-audit helps staff to think about six different areas of an organisation:

- Children and the organisation
- Policies and procedures
- Preventing harm to children
- Implementation and training
- Information and communication
- Monitoring and review

Risk Assessment

After conducting the Self-Audit, the organisation should carry out a risk assessment, to identify the possible actions or situations that could put children at risk or have a negative impact on the organisation's objectives and reputation. Lessons 4 and 5 explain some of the ways that your organisation might put children at risk.

When doing the Risk Assessment, staff should think about the following questions:

- What is the organisation or ministry doing positively that protects children?
- What weaknesses does the organisation have that could put children at risk?
- What outside threats exist that could harm children associated with the organisation?
- What does the organisation or ministry need to do better?

Once participants have finished the risk assessment, they should summarise the key strengths and risks that have been discussed, and key steps for moving forward. For example, if a weakness is that the organisation has no child protection policy or procedure, perhaps writing one is the first step the organisation needs to take. If the organisation has no training of child protection behaviour protocols for volunteers, maybe this is the next step for the organisation. If there is an opportunity to receive child protection training from a local organisation that specialises in this field, this could be a helpful step to include in planning.

Self audits and risk assessments should be repeated at least every three years, followed by revisions in child protection policies, systems, and other measures.

Case Study

Trinity Church had been running an after-school tutoring program in their church for a few years, but recently realized that they needed to consider developing a child protection policy after another church in their area had a tragic accident in which a child was seriously injured due to poor supervision from a volunteer. The church leaders and leaders of the after-school tutoring program therefore conducted a self-audit and risk assessment, utilising the Keeping Children Safe Materials. These steps identified a number of areas that needed to be addressed.

- First, they realised that they had no written guidelines describing acceptable and unacceptable behavior for staff or volunteers that come into contact with children.
- They also realised that they had no firm guidelines for the ratio of adults to children during the after-school tutoring activities.
- Finally, they realised that since they did not train their staff in child protection issues and responsibilities, there was a significant risk that staff or volunteers could harm children or put children at risk - through intentional acts or accidental neglect of responsibilities.

After reviewing the results of the child protection self-audit and risk assessment, the leadership team of the church decided that the church and after-school program needed a child protection policy.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

A child protection policy is the _____ to all child protection efforts by a ministry or organisation. A good child protection policy can help protect children, _____ and organisations. The first step in writing a child protection policy is to develop an understanding of your organisational _____ in regards to child protection, through a child protection self-audit. The Self-Audit Tool from _____ is an excellent resource to help do this. Next, it is important to carry out a _____, to identify the possible actions or situations that could put children at risk, or have a negative impact on your organisation's objectives and reputation.

Discussion questions:

1. Why is it important for your organisation to have a child protection policy?
2. What direct and indirect contact does your organisation have with children?
3. What does a Child Protection Self-Audit measure?
4. Why is a Child Protection Risk Assessment important? What key information does it help people to understand?
5. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation in child protection?

Discussion questions for managers:

6. How is your organisation already a "child-safe" organisation? How does it need to improve?
7. What are some of the barriers to conducting a Child Protection Self-Audit, and how might they be overcome?
8. What are some of your organisation's strengths and weaknesses in child protection?
9. If you have a child protection policy, how does it compare to the template at this website: http://www.viva.org/en/articles/child_prot/policy_template.doc
10. What are the next steps your organization needs to take in the development or revision of a child protection policy?

To Learn More: Look at *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*, "Core Workshop 1: Stage 1"
http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=section&id=2:training&Itemid=4

Also look at *Keeping Children Safe How to Implement the Standards* "Phase One: Getting a picture of your organization," Activity 1.3 and 1.4
http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Lesson 12: How do we write a child protection policy?

Summary

- Who should be involved in writing a child protection policy?
- 6 steps for writing a child protection policy

After conducting a self-audit and risk assessment, and identifying key steps for moving forward in child protection, it is time to start the process of developing a child protection policy. This lesson describes the major steps in the process of writing a child protection policy.

Writing a child protection policy is a process which requires input from throughout an organisation or ministry, in order to ensure the policy fits the organisation and to build ownership of the policy among staff and leaders. If staff are involved in developing the child protection policy, they will better understand it and be prepared to implement it and they can help improve it if the context or organisation changes over time.

1. Form a taskforce

The first step to writing a policy is to form a taskforce to coordinate and lead the process. This taskforce should include senior leadership and staff from different parts of the organisation (including management as well as those who work directly with children). It should normally consist of 3-8 people.

2. Conduct some research

The taskforce should first research what similar organisations or ministries have done regarding child protection policies and procedures, as they might have good examples, and different types of organisations will need different emphases in their child protection policy (for example, a child protection policy for a church would not be the same as one for an orphanage). Viva can be a helpful resource for making these connections (www.viva.org). Also, taskforce members should review the Keeping Children Safe training materials. Finally, it is important to consult with a lawyer to understand relevant local laws during the process.

3. Develop a plan

The next step is to develop a plan for writing the policy. Review the Parts of a Child Protection Policy from Lesson 10, along with the findings from your self audit and risk assessment. Also review key resources such as Keeping Children Safe materials, and consider how to draft each section of the policy. When developing a plan, the taskforce should decide who should be consulted in the process. The child protection policy is relevant to the whole organisation, so everyone needs to have the opportunity to participate in the development of the policy – including human resources staff, volunteers, senior management, and staff from all parts of the organisation. Most staff can be consulted by giving them a chance to review the first draft of the policy and give comment.

4. Write a first draft of the policy

The first draft can be written by a small group of capable staff, under the direction of the taskforce. The policy should be written clearly and should be easily understandable, including the use of national languages. The draft child protection policy should address the items listed in Lesson 10. Also, Viva has a helpful child protection policy Template as a guide for writing a child protection policy: http://www.viva.org/en/articles/child_prot/policy_template.doc

5. Circulate the first draft of the policy for feedback

The first draft of the policy should then be circulated to staff from across the organisation for feedback. You also might consider sharing the draft with external stakeholders, such as legal counsel, children, or partner organisations. The feedback should be collected into one place, and analysed to identify main concerns, important points, and also areas where staff do not understand the policy.

6. Write the final draft of the policy

A final draft can then be developed, which should be discussed and approved by the leadership of the organisation or ministry.

Case study

After the leadership team of Trinity Church decided that they needed a child protection policy, they appointed a task force to develop the policy. The taskforce was made up of the head pastor, the pastor of outreach ministries, the coordinator of the after-school tutoring program, and one volunteer in the program. The taskforce then each read the Keeping Children Safe Materials and met 4 times to discuss different chapters and lessons in the materials. The taskforce then developed a plan to write the policy over a 6-month period. They made sure that the plan included steps where other volunteers, parents, staff of the church and children themselves could give input and feedback to drafts of the policy.

The outreach pastor had actually written policies in previous jobs, so she was willing to take the lead in writing the first draft of the policy. She worked for about a month, reviewing Keeping Children Safe materials in depth, conducting interviews and discussion groups with key people in the ministry, and writing various sections of the policy. After one month, she presented a first draft to the taskforce for review. They had a 2-hour meeting, during which they reviewed the policy in depth and made a number of comments. Another staff volunteered to revise the policy according to their feedback, and then he circulated it to all church staff and volunteers in the ministry for feedback. After 2 weeks, he consolidated the feedback and then revised the policy draft once more.

This process started many helpful discussions among the staff and volunteers about child protection and ministering to children. They even decided to try and get some training this year for the staff and volunteers in how to witness to children. They now took the second draft of the policy and conducted an open meeting to get feedback on the policy. During this meeting, one room was for parents of children who participate in the after-school tutoring program, and one was for children who participate in the program. They discussed the policy in depth, including any concerns or questions. The parents and children raised some excellent ideas and feedback about the policy (especially in terms of discipline of children), and suggestions for how to implement the policy after it was finished.

The taskforce then revised the policy one more time based on this helpful input, and then as a final step asked a lawyer who is a member of the church to review the policy from the legal perspective. She gave two small suggestions about how they should phrase certain items in the Behaviour Protocols. As a final step, the taskforce presented the policy to the church leadership team, who enthusiastically approved it. Everyone felt great about the achievement of developing a child protection policy, and also about how the process itself had caused so many great discussions and interest in child protection and ministry to children.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Writing a child protection policy is a process which requires input from throughout an organisation or ministry, in order to ensure the policy fits the _____ and to build ownership of the policy among staff and leaders. A _____ that includes senior leadership should coordinate and lead the process to develop the child protection policy. Since the child protection policy is relevant to the _____, everyone needs to have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the policy – including human resources staff, volunteers, senior management, and staff from all parts of the organisation. After staff have given input on initial drafts, a final draft of the child protection policy should be approved by _____ of the organisation or ministry.

Discussion questions:

1. What policies already exist in your organisation or ministry?
2. Why is it important for your organization or ministry to have a child protection policy?
3. Who do you think should participate in the development of a child protection policy in your organization or ministry?

Discussion questions for managers:

4. What challenges would your organisation or ministry face in writing a child protection policy?
5. Who should be on a taskforce to coordinate and lead the development of a child protection policy in your organisation or ministry?
6. Who should be involved in writing or revising a child protection policy in your organization?
7. Which sections of a child protection policy would be most difficult to write for your organisation or ministry? Why?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe *How to Implement the Standards*, “Standard 2: Putting the Policy Into Practice”

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Also look at Keeping Children Safe *Training for Child Protection*, Core Workshop 1: Stages 2-5

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=section&id=2:training&Itemid=4

Lesson 13: How do we implement a child protection policy?

Summary

- Action plan
- Dissemination
- Training
- Planning and monitoring

Writing a child protection policy is only the first step toward an organisation becoming a safe place for children. The bigger challenge is to implement the policy into all parts of the organization, including the awareness and behaviors of staff.

The following points are critical to implementing a Child Protection Policy

A child protection policy is only as good as the people who follow it. A piece of paper will not protect children.

If you do not have a clear plan of action about how to implement the child protection policy, it will not help keep children safe.

All staff must be made aware of the policy, receive training on it and understand how it applies to them.⁵⁸

Developing an action plan

After developing a child protection policy, it is important to develop an initial action plan to make sure that the policy and procedures are shared throughout the organisation, and that the necessary steps are taken to implement all parts of the policy.

The keys to implementation of the child protection policy and procedures are dissemination, training, planning and monitoring.⁵⁹

- **Dissemination:**

First, it is critical that all staff read the policy and sign agreement with it. The policy should be easily accessible by all workers and volunteers in the organisation (for example, in the staff manual and other organisational policy manuals).

Every team, ministry or department should review their systems, activities or behaviours in light of the child protection policy, and make plans for required changes.

Community members (including children) and beneficiaries should also be made aware that the organisation has a child protection policy. They should be informed that the organisation has a zero tolerance policy regarding child abuse, and what behaviours to expect from staff and volunteers.

- **Training:**

Every staff member has a role to play in child protection. They can only fulfill this role if they have the right attitudes toward children, understand child protection issues, and have the necessary knowledge of your organisation's child protection procedures and policies. It is the organisation's responsibility to provide sufficient training to staff for them to fulfill this role.

Community members should also be trained in how to report child abuse.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, Powerpoint Presentation.

⁵⁹ Adapted from www.viva.org

“As for the NGOs, they are carry[ing] out awareness on sexual exploitation, HIV and AIDS and STIs, but during the night hours they are the same people running after these 12 years girls.”⁶¹

The table shows the Keeping Children Safe Coalition’s standards for training staff regarding child protection:⁶²

Training for child protection standards
All members of staff, volunteers and other associates have training on child protection when they join the agency, which includes an introduction to the organisation’s child protection policy and procedures.
All members of staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse.
Children are provided with advice and support on keeping themselves safe.
Staff members and volunteers with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have relevant training and regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.
Training is provided to those responsible for dealing with complaints and disciplinary procedures in relation to child abuse and inappropriate behavior towards children.
Training and written guidance on safe recruitment practice is provided for those responsible for recruiting and selecting staff.
Opportunities exist for learning from practical experience to improve the training in child protection.

- **Planning and Monitoring:**

Organisations must monitor the implementation of the child protection policy. In most cases, this is best done through appointing a senior person responsible for child protection (child protection officer), who is supported by a wider group of senior leaders, or by a child protection committee that includes senior leaders. The child protection staff or officer should organise and monitor training and the implementation of the policy. The child protection committee should develop a clear and specific action plan to address weaknesses and build on strengths identified in the Self Audit and Risk Assessment. The organisation will initially probably need to change a number of systems or activities, develop forms, and implement new processes in order to come into compliance with the policy. Each year the organisation should review progress against the action plan, consult with workers and children about key child protection issues, and develop a new action plan.

The child protection policy and procedures should be reviewed at least every 3 years in the light of new legislation or new areas of risk, opportunities or barriers. Good practices should also be reviewed for lessons that can be learned in protecting children.

⁶⁰ See lessons 8 and 9 for more information about how to equip children and other community members to report inappropriate behavior or abuse by staff or volunteers

⁶¹ From Camp to Community: Liberia Study on Exploitation of Children. Save the Children UK, 2006.

⁶² *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006.

Case Study

After the Trinity Church Leadership Team approved the Child Protection Policy (See Case Study in Lesson 12), they realised that the policy would be worthless if they did not put together an action plan to implement it. They therefore held a discussion that reviewed the new policy, along with the findings of the self-audit, and developed a 12-month action plan for the initial implementation of the policy. The 12-month plan had three major action items, along with a number of smaller practical activities/steps.

The major items were:

- Disseminate the new child protection policy to all staff, volunteers, and participating children – along with their parents. They would do this first in writing and ask the staff and volunteers to sign acknowledgement and agreement with the policy. With the children they would disseminate the policy through a discussion which shared the main components of the policy and gave them the chance to raise questions and share reflections. They would send a memo with the child protection policy home to parents, along with information about what to do if the parents suspect a staff or volunteer is breaking the policy.
- Train the staff and volunteers in child protection. The staff would bring in a local expert to train the staff and volunteers in basic child protection issues—including understanding the child abuse and child protection, signs of abuse, what to do if we suspect a child has been abused, behavior protocols, and reports/complaint mechanisms.
- Develop an initial complaints mechanism where children are equipped to recognise and report inappropriate behaviour by a staff or volunteer.

The leadership team delegated the responsibility to oversee the action plan to the children's ministry coordinator, as she had the most time and passion for the issue. Every 3 months, the children's ministry coordinator reported to the leadership team about progress made in the key areas.

After one year, the leadership team implemented a child protection self-audit again, and reviewed progress in the last 12-month action plan. They worked together to develop a new 12-month plan, which included the following key actions:

- Recruit more volunteers, so that the adult: child ratio in the after-school tutoring program is reduced to at least 1:5, as prescribed in their child protection policy
- Develop child protection screening mechanisms for recruiting volunteers (see next lesson for more detail on this)
- Train the staff and volunteers who work directly with children in positive, non-violent discipline methods

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

Writing a child protection policy is only the first step toward an organization becoming a safe place for children. The bigger challenge is to _____ the policy into all parts of the organization, including the awareness and behaviors of staff. The keys to implementation of the child protection policy and procedures are dissemination, training, planning and _____. It is the organization's responsibility to provide sufficient _____ to all staff to fulfill their role in child protection. After developing a child protection policy, organizations should develop an _____ to make sure that the policy and procedures are shared throughout the organization, and that the necessary steps are taken to implement all parts of the policy. Each year the organization should review progress against the action plan, consult with workers and children about key child protection issues, and develop a new action plan. Finally, the child protection policy and procedures should be reviewed at least every _____ in the light of new legislation or new areas of risk, barriers or opportunities.

Discussion questions:

1. Did your organisation inform you about child protection when you started working? If yes, how? If no, why not?
2. What has your organisation done to train staff in child protection issues or a child protection policy?
3. How can children be made aware of a child protection policy?
4. How can parents be made aware of a child protection policy?
5. What can organisations do to monitor the implementation of a child protection policy?

Discussion questions for managers:

6. What are or would be the key challenges for your organisation in implementing a child protection policy?
7. Who in your organisation needs more training in child protection? What skills or knowledge do they need to develop?
8. Who should be involved in child protection policy planning and monitoring in your organisation?
9. What are or would be some concrete steps your organisation should take in a Child Protection Action Plan?
10. What are some good child protection practices in your organisation that people could learn from?

To Learn More: Also look at *Keeping Children Safe How to Implement the Standards*, "Standard 10: Implementing and Monitoring of the Standards"

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Lesson 14: How do we protect children in our recruitment of workers and hosting of visitors?

Summary

- Risks to children from workers, volunteers and visitors
- Child protection through recruitment and selection procedures
- Child protection and visitors and partners

As stated in Lesson 4, sometimes abusers come from within organisations and ministries. Indeed, sometimes child sex abusers will intentionally attempt to work or volunteer in ministries or organisations, in order to gain access to children and abuse children. Children can also be targeted by visitors and partners to your organisation. By implementing strong child protection recruitment procedures and behaviour protocols, organisations can usually deter most child sex abusers from trying to enter their organisations. Also, in the unfortunate case that a worker or visitor is accused of abusing children, the organisational leadership can demonstrate that they made every effort in child protection during recruitment.

What steps can be taken to protect children in recruitment and selection procedures?

Child protection recruitment and selection procedures must be implemented for staff, Board members, volunteers, contractors, and consultants. The leaders of the organisation (including Boards of Directors) should set an example by also submitting to these child protection recruitment and selection requirements.

The following steps are a minimum recommended procedure for all recruitment and selection processes:

Organisational Commitment to Child Protection	Mention the organisational commitment to child protection in job advertisements, application forms, job descriptions, and job interviews.
Interview Questions	<p>Ask child protection questions during recruitment interviews, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>You may know that our organisation has a strong emphasis on children and so even if you are not currently working directly with children, it would help us to know what experience do you have with children?</i> ▪ <i>Please tell us about your experience interacting with or working with children in one of the following settings (e.g. work, home, church or community)?</i> ▪ <i>Can you give examples of where you have acted to protect a child and what you learned from it?</i> ▪ <i>Would you consciously avoid any particular kinds of behavior when with children who are not your own?</i>

Reference Checks	Conduct at least three child protection character reference checks before hiring (asking people who know the person to comment on their suitability to work with children, and whether they have any knowledge that the person has committed child abuse in the past). This can be included as part of wider professional or character references, and can be conducted in person, in writing, or by phone (sometimes people will share information over the phone that they would not put in writing).
Criminal Background Checks	Where possible and permissible by local law, organisations or ministries should work through police in the candidate’s home or resident country/region, to conduct criminal record or police background checks for any conviction related to abuse of children. Organisations should ask candidates for written consent to gain information on a person’s past convictions or pending disciplinary proceedings related to children. See Form 1 at the end of the workbook for an example of a consent form.
Identification Documents	Require documentation from the candidate to confirm their identity and proof of qualifications listed in their application or CV.
Child protection self-declaration forms	Candidates should be given a form, on which they declare that they have never committed or been convicted for child abuse. See Form 2 at the end of the workbook for an example of a self-declaration form.
Orientation	All new staff and volunteers should be oriented on all aspects of the child protection policy, and sign acknowledgement and agreement with the policy – including the Behaviour Protocols. This orientation should also include clear explanation of the reporting/complaint procedures, as well as procedures for managing allegations related to child protection.

Visitors and partners

In some cases, it is not necessary for visitors, partners, consultants, or contractors to review the entire child protection policy; but they must always at least be informed of and sign agreement with the behaviour protocols. These signed acknowledgements should be kept on file in the organisation. Also, there should be a procedure for screening visitors before they have any contact with children, and all contact between children and visitors (both written and direct contact) should be supervised by your organisation. Partner organisations that have contact with children should be required and supported to have child protection policies.

Case study

Trinity Church realized after one year of implementing its child protection policy that it needed to develop child protection screening mechanisms for recruiting volunteers that would work directly with children in the after-school tutoring program (see the Case Study in Lesson 13 for more information). They therefore included this as a key item in their 12-month action plan. The Director of Outreach Ministries was responsible for the recruitment of volunteers, so over the next 12 months he conducted the following steps:

- Added the following to the church announcements requesting more volunteers: *“Because we recognize that children are made in the image of God, our church ministries are committed to the protection of children, and do not utilise volunteers whose background is not suitable for working with children. All volunteer work directly with children is conditioned upon the successful completion of all applicable background and reference checks.”*
- When interviewing interested volunteers, the Director of Outreach Ministries decided he would always ask the following two questions:
 - Can you give examples of where you have acted to protect a child and what you learned from it?
 - Would you consciously avoid any particular kinds of behavior when with children who are not your own?
- Before confirming any volunteers to work directly with children, they would conduct at least two character reference checks, which included asking whether the reference had any concerns about the volunteer candidate working with children.
- The church would ask the new volunteers to sign a self-declaration form that they had never committed or been convicted for child abuse, and the church would keep these forms on file.
- After new volunteers were selected, the Director of Outreach Ministries would train them thoroughly in the child protection policy—with special emphasis on the Behaviour Protocols.

The Director of Outreach Ministries also set a meeting with local police to learn about how to conduct background checks on interested volunteer candidates, since no one on the church leadership team was sure how to do that.

Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the summary of the lesson:

As part of the child protection policy, it is critical that child protection recruitment and selection procedures be implemented for staff, Board members, _____, contractors, and consultants. The child protection procedures in recruitment should include mention of the organisational commitment to child protection in _____, application forms, job descriptions, and job interviews. The organisation should ask child protection questions during recruitment _____, and conduct reference checks which ask specifically about child protection concerns. When possible, organisations should conduct _____ regarding crimes against children. Organisations should ask candidates to sign a form on which they declare that they have never committed or been convicted for _____. Finally, all new staff and volunteers should be _____ on all aspects of the child protection policy, and sign acknowledgement and agreement with the policy – including the Behavior Protocols. Visitors, partners, consultants or contractors should at least be informed about and sign agreement with the _____ of the organisation.

Discussion questions:

1. What steps can your organisation take to deter abusers from trying to join the organization?
2. How do good child protection recruitment procedures protect children? How do they protect the organisation?
3. What child protection related interview questions would be appropriate in your context?
4. What child protection screening/recruitment steps did you go through when you started with your organisation?
5. What child protection screening/recruitment steps would you recommend to your organisation?

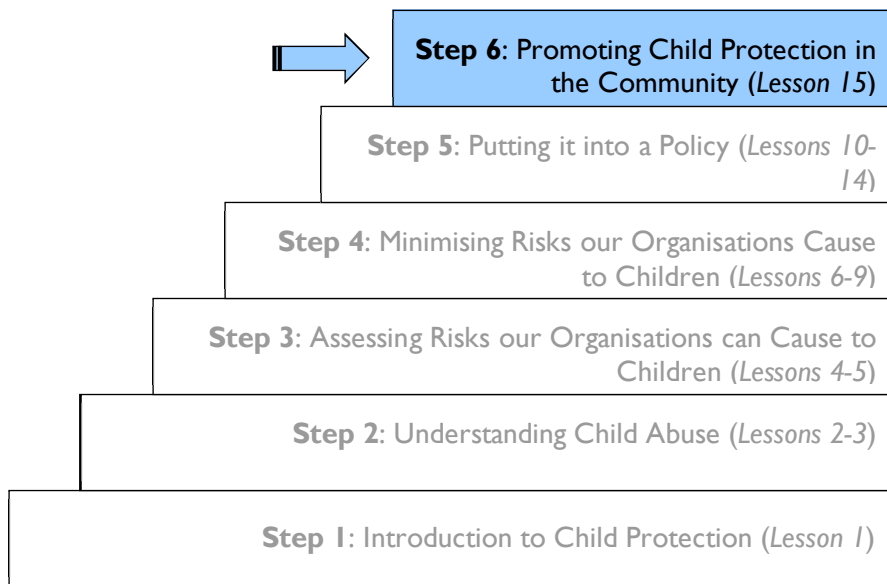
Discussion questions for managers:

6. What challenges would or does your organisation face in implementing good child protection screening/recruitment procedures?
7. What screening/recruitment procedures do you think would be most effective in deterring and/or identifying potential abusers in your organisation?
8. Are criminal background checks feasible and effective in your area? Why or why not?
9. What filing system does/should your organisation have to keep documentation of child protection screening steps for each staff? Why is this important? What forms do you need to develop?
10. What steps need to be taken to strengthen the skills and practices for child protection in screening/recruitment in your organisation?

To Learn More: Look at Keeping Children Safe *How to Implement the Standards*, “Standard 3: Preventing Harm to Children Step 1”

http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=7:english-language&Itemid=4

Step 6: Promoting child protection in the community



In addition to becoming a Child Safe Organisation, organisations can develop and implement programs and activities to *promote and strengthen Child Protection in communities*. Step 6 will help introduce you to the basic components and approaches of programs that seek to help communities keep children safe.

Lesson 15: How can we help create safer communities for children?

Summary

- Learning with the community about child protection
- Learning about responsibilities and duties to protect children
- Planning child protection programs

The previous lessons considered how to keep children safe while they participate in program activities within an organisation or ministry. This lesson builds on that foundation, introducing you to some ways that organisations can promote and strengthen child protection in communities. Promotion of child protection in communities can be broadly broken down into three steps, which are explained below.

Step 1: Learning with the community

Your organisation and the community should learn together about key child protection concerns and threats, as well as local assets and strengths that can address them. This can be done through facilitating community conversations, including consulting with children.

- **Community conversations**

It is very helpful to organise or facilitate conversations in natural meeting places in communities about what is a good life for children and what holds some children back from that good life. In these conversations, community members should talk about what sort of violence children experience, the causes of that violence, and what types of children are most vulnerable to violence. They should include local traditional practices which are harmful to children and which are protective of children. They should also discuss the strengths which communities have in regards to child protection.⁶³

- **Consulting with children⁶⁴**

The views of children, especially the most vulnerable, must be central in the efforts to understand and promote child protection. Children can give unique and critical perspectives on important issues, including:

✓ Where children feel safe and do not feel safe, and why	✓ Which people help children the most
✓ Which people children trust	✓ What children do when they are abused
✓ Which types of children are most likely to be abused	✓ Profiles of potential abusers—children can sometimes identify the characteristics of potential abusers in their community

“When I come out of my house the people point at me and say, ‘Why don’t you stay in, look at you! You cannot walk properly.’” Boy, 12, With physical disabilities, South Asia⁶⁵

Step 2: Learning about responsibilities and duties to protect children

⁶³ I will add a footnote to the final document, referencing SEARCH Developmental Assets and also am searching for a good reference on Community Conversations. Please see workbook 2, lesson ?

⁶⁴ For more on the child participation and listening to children, see the second workbook in this series.

⁶⁵ World Report on Violence Against Children. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. p. 302.

Duty bearers are the people and institutions who have a clear obligation and responsibility to ensure that children’s rights to protection are fulfilled. Their duty is mandated by law and based on international human rights standards, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A duty bearer can be the State or a person (parent, care provider, etc.). When designing programs, it is important to analyse who has an obligation in child protection, what are their duties, and what actions they are taking or not taking to fulfill their duties; as well as their motivation, authority, resources and capacity to perform their duties. From this analysis, programs can identify those who are responsible and capable to bring positive changes in children’s situations, and support them in carrying out their duties. ⁶⁶

Step 3: Planning child protection programs

After getting a clear idea of the child protection issues in communities, activities and programs can be planned to promote and strengthen child protection. Programs should seek to enhance and build upon local assets for the protection of children. All programs should have strong complaint/reporting mechanisms (see Lesson 9 for more detail). In all programs, special efforts must be taken to ensure that marginalized children are able to express their opinions and make decisions. Marginalised children may include: girls, children with disabilities, street and working children, children with HIV, refugee or displaced children, and children from ethnic minorities.

Some child protection programs might include:

- Awareness raising and mobilisation around particular child protection issues, such as domestic violence
- Training health workers or teachers to recognize and report signs of abuse and injuries caused by violence
- Strengthening families through parent support groups, and promoting non-violent discipline in parenting trainings
- Mobilising community coalitions that bring together churches and other faith-based organisations, government, local business, and other NGOs to take responsibility for child protection in the community
- Equipping home visitors - women and men who volunteer to take responsibility for identifying, monitoring, assisting, and protecting orphans and vulnerable children
- Promoting equitable access to services for especially vulnerable groups, such as HIV/AIDS affected children, children of ethnic minorities, children survivors of exploitation, etc.
- Promoting birth registration of all children, including ethnic minorities and children with disabilities, so that they are able to access the same services as other children
- Including child protection in non-formal education and life skills programs—equipping children to protect themselves and empowering children to be promoters of child protection in communities
- Advocacy on legal frameworks and implementation of services to protect children

“If you want to know how to paint, you consult a painter; if you want to eat, consult a chef; so if you want to know about children’s issues, you have to consult young people.” Young Person⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Add some suggested resources

⁶⁷ NGO Advisory Panel to the World Report on Violence Against Children. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, United Nations, 2006. p. 335.

Case study

Birth Registration Campaign⁶⁸

World Vision has been active in helping communities in Zambezia Province in Mozambique to set up Advocacy Councils as a means of addressing child-related issues. Advocacy Councils are made up of local leaders and other key community members. They receive training from World Vision and then identify advocacy issues for action. One of the key issues that many Advocacy Councils have decided to take up is the problem of birth registration for children.

Through a process of community-led situational analysis, two Advocacy Councils in two separate districts of Zambezia Province identified birth registration as one of the top three advocacy issues affecting children in general and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in particular. Lack of birth registration was preventing children from accessing basic services, and was often exposing children to property grabbing. The Advocacy Councils interviewed children in their areas and found that the majority of children had not had their births registered and, as a result, did not possess birth certificates; a vital piece of documentation. The Councils then met with staff from the District Civil Registry Departments and, using their findings, presented a problem tree to illustrate the range of causes contributing to this problem, and a solution tree with suggestions for increasing numbers of registered births. These diagrams were shared both at community level and with the Zambezia OVC Network at the provincial level. This network took the issue forward by inviting the Provincial Birth Registration Department to discuss potential solutions.

A birth registration campaign was the immediate outcome, while a sustainable solution required prompt follow up at national level. Many partners eventually agreed to conduct birth registration campaigns. In the case of World Vision, a campaign was carried out in 2006 in which more than 79,000 children and their parents were registered free of charge!

⁶⁸ Case study prepared by Jaime Chivite, World Vision Mozambique. *Organizational Capacity Building Manuals: Module 27 Advocacy*. World Vision International, 2008, p. 74.

Exercises

Fill in the gaps in the summary of the lesson:

Promotion of child protection in communities starts with _____ with the community about key child protection concerns and threats, as well as local _____ that can address them. This can be done through facilitating community conversations, _____ – especially the most vulnerable, and assessing local traditions and cultural practices which are protective of and harmful to children. Next, organizations should learn about the _____ who have the obligation, responsibility and accountability to ensure that _____ to protection are realized, protected and fulfilled. After these learning steps, activities and programs can be planned to promote and strengthen child protection. Programs should seek to enhance and build upon local assets for the protection of children.

Discussion questions:

1. What are the best methods to learn with and from the community about child protection in your context?
2. Who are duty bearers for child protection in your community, and what are their responsibilities in regards to child protection?
3. What types of children are most vulnerable in your community? How might you intentionally include them in your programs?
4. What are some child protection projects or activities that could be appropriate and effective in your community?

Discussion questions for managers:

5. What tools or capacities does your organisation have for facilitating community discussions about child protection?
6. How has your organisation consulted with children to learn about child protection? How could it do this better?
7. With which duty bearers for child protection does your organisation have a relationship? How could it influence or support duty bearers to improve child protection?
8. What opportunities does your organisation have to promote child protection in communities?
9. How can your organisation become an example of inclusion of the most vulnerable children?

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Further Resources

See <http://www.viva.org/Child-Protection.aspx>

Appendix I

Example #2: Tearfund Code of Conduct/Behavior Protocols⁶⁹

It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
- plan and organize the work and the workplace so as to minimize risks
- be visible to others when working with children whenever possible
- create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues or concerns
- foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behavior can be challenged
- develop a culture where children can talk about their contacts with staff and others openly
- respect each child's boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel that there is a problem.

In general, it is inappropriate to:

- spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- take children to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you.

Staff and others must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

Staff and others must avoid actions or behavior that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive. For example, they should never:

- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised
- sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- condone, or participate in, behavior of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
- discriminate against, show different treatment, or favor particular children to the exclusion of others.

⁶⁹ *Keeping Children Safe Training for Child Protection*. Jenny Myers, Save the Children UK, 2006, CD-ROM.

Appendix 2

Child Protection Policy document shared by Chab Dai Coalition (www.chabdai.org)

Introduction

-- is an organization that has as its vision to see people in Cambodia have freedom to live in hope, love, joy and peace in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. -- has a home for orphan children in Phnom Penh and also works with children and youth through village projects.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent abuse within our organization's programs, and to protect our staff from false accusations of abuse. -- is a Christian organization that believes in the Bible as our guide in protecting children.

"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men." (2 Corinthians 8:21)

"Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. ... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2)

-- is committed to following Cambodian law in issues of abuse and exploitation. -- is also committed to upholding the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. The protection of children is one of the four themes which run throughout the UNCRC, which entered into force as international law in 1990. Cambodia is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore, we should take our role in upholding the Convention where it applies very seriously. In a country where children are the largest demographic group, and where child-sex tourism, child rape and child abuse are on the rise, -- staff and volunteers will do everything in their power to protect the children in their home from further abuse.

Definition of Abuse

Child abuse is an act committed by a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health, or child's welfare.

Child: A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is any deliberate physical force or action that results, or could result, in injury to a child. It can include punching, slapping, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing a child. It is different than reasonable discipline.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is when a child is used for the sexual pleasure of an adult or older children. It can include sexual intercourse, exposing a child's private areas, indecent remarks, touching for sexual pleasure or allowing a child to look at pornography.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is a pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth. It can include constant criticizing, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring, isolating the child. It also includes failure by the caregiver to provide the child with love, emotional support and guidance.

Spiritual Abuse: Spiritual abuse is the misuse of power and trust by someone in a position of spiritual power and authority (whether organization, institution, church or family), with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating, or dominating a child. Results in spiritual harm to a child and can be linked to other abuse, such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Neglect: Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic need for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education and protection from harm.

Recruitment and Screening Procedures

-- will implement a recruitment process to ensure that the children in its care are protected from potential abusers. The application process for new staff will include:

- A complete resume with all relevant and recent work experience, education, and a personal history.
- Two reference checks, preferably done by telephone or face-to-face meeting.
- A face-to-face interview.
- Applicants from other countries must submit a clear criminal record check from their country of residence. National applicants may submit additional references, preferably from their commune leader, instead of a criminal record check.
- Signing the organization's child protection policy, and going through a child protection orientation with the director or another manager.

If a potential staff is found to have a history of abuse, they will be excluded from consideration for the position.

Operational and Behavioral Guidelines

All staff will be aware of this policy and the changes made to it and will implement it in --'s programs. Staff will treat all the children with dignity and respect and will help them learn to teach each other with respect as well. -- will implement the following guidelines in our programs:

- Staff members and children should not be left alone together in a closed room. If a staff and a child or two children are alone together, the door will remain open. Private meetings will be done in a room with windows and the door will never be locked. The time and place of private meetings should be reported beforehand to the director.
- Sleeping arrangements: bedroom doors should never be locked at night after bedtime. Children are not permitted to share beds. Staff will not sleep in a child's bed with him/her. Children are not permitted into bedrooms of the opposite gender.
- Physical touch:
 - Staff and children should not touch other children in an inappropriate way. A guideline is not to touch anyone where they would be covered by shorts and a t-shirt. No rubbing, massaging, fondling in these areas as well.
 - Proper displays of affection include:
 - Speak to a child at eye level and listen with your eyes as well as your ears;
 - Hold a child's hand when speaking or listening to her;
 - Gently hold the child's shoulder or hand when disciplining her;
 - Put your arm around a child's shoulder when comforting her;
 - Pat a child on the head, hand, shoulder, or back to encourage her.
 - Inappropriate displays of affection:
 - Do not kiss a child or ask them to kiss you;
 - Do not engage in long hugging or tickling;
 - Do not hold a child's face when disciplining her;
 - Do not carry older children and do not allow them to sit on your lap;
 - Avoid prolonged physical contact with any child.
 - All touch must be done in view of others.
- When a staff helps a younger child bathe, she should inform another staff or the director and leave the door unlocked. She should only touch the child where necessary to help the child clean.
- Staff will not use physical punishment in disciplining the children. Staff will not take away things necessary to survival as a form of discipline (for example, food, shelter, love). Other forms of discipline will be encouraged, including verbal discipline, positive reinforcement and withdrawing privileges.

Visitor Guidelines

- All visitors, volunteers and short-term staff must read and sign the Child Protection Policy before working with children at --. All visitors to the home must sign in with the guard before entering the -- facilities.
- Visitors, volunteers and short-term staff will be expected to follow all the behavioral guidelines in this policy.
- They will be supervised at all times by a member of staff.
- Where possible, screening guidelines will be enforced.

Communications

-- recognizes that the Internet is increasingly being used by those seeking to abuse children, and that photographs are doctored to create further abuse of children.

- Anyone taking pictures at -- must first get the permission of the director.
- -- will only display photographs of children in groups.
- Visitors and volunteers are prohibited from publishing the children's identities and specific geographic location should not be disclosed.

Reporting and Responding to Abuse

If anyone in the organization suspects abuse or hears of an allegation of abuse, they have a responsibility to report it.

- The allegation should be reported directly to the director. Confidentiality will be upheld and disclosure will only be on a "need-to-know" basis.
- Records of the allegation and procedures will be kept on file confidentially. The director and the person reporting the abuse will fill out a Suspected Abuse Report Form.
- Other organizations will be consulted for advice in the case of suspected abuse; the police will be involved depending on the situation; if the suspected abuser is a foreigner, their embassy will be notified.
- Throughout the whole process, both the victim and the accused will be treated with dignity and respect. Outside counseling will be provided for the victim of abuse.
- A member of staff will be appointed to deal with the media; other staff should not communicate with the media.
- The suspected perpetrator may be temporarily suspended of duties while an investigation is taking place. Staff understand that a violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from their job.

Training, Monitoring and Evaluation

- New staff will receive child protection training before being put in a position of trust.
- Staff will receive training on child protection on an annual basis.
- Attendance will be taken at each training and kept on file.
- The children in --'s programs will be educated about the child protection policy and copies of the policy will be posted throughout the facility.
- This policy will be revised and adapted to the needs of the program once every three years. The next evaluation of the policy will be done in 2011.

Statement of Commitment

To be signed by all -- team members, short-term workers, volunteers, and visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the -- office.

I declare that:

- I have read and understand the -- child protection policy.

- I will work within the procedures and protocols as laid out in this policy.
- I have not been accused or convicted of any offense involving physical or sexual abuse of children.
- I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in -- activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____