



## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- for child we intend every human born, alive, and who has not yet reached the age of 18 years
- for adult we intend every human being who has reached the age of 18 years
- for family we intend any type of union that assumes cohabitation and living together, and where both children and adults are involved
- for rights of children we intend all the rules established for the protection of children by the Convention of New York of 1989, concerning the rights of children, and the optional procedures successively published.

### **TO WHOM DOES THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY APPLY**

FAD, by its proper functions and nature, undertakes to guarantee to every child a secure environment within the definition of the policies and procedures of protection.

The Policy is to be considered binding for all the staff, the volunteers, the Members of the Board of Trustees, and everybody who holds a job or a task even on a temporary basis, on behalf of FAD.

FAD undertakes to issue guidelines which are clear and precise, and also to provide training for its staff, and for all volunteers and Members of the Board of Trustees, on themes relating to ill-treatment, exploitation, and abuse of children, on the possible risks, and the means of their prevention, and not least the behavior to be followed, and the boundaries and limits within which they may operate, when they are in contact with children.

The above seeks to reduce the risk of potential damage, and contributes to the creation of an environment that is respectful, safe, and also calculated to be "on the scale of the children themselves." The staff, the volunteers and the Members of the Board of Trustees are all expected to follow this Policy.

### **WITH WHOM IS THE POLICY SHARED?**

The Policy will be shared with all the boys and girls who are the receivers and beneficiaries of the FAD operations/interventions, in a form that is made to be comprehensible for them.

1. Boys and girls must see that their right to a hearing of their ideas and opinions is guaranteed;
2. Boys and girls may always call attention to negative or unacceptable behaviors which they have witnessed.
3. Boys and girls must be placed in a position to assume an active role in the protection of themselves and of their companions and compeers.

In order that FAD may function as an organization that is safe for boys and girls, it is necessary for everyone who forms a part of it to have the desire and the willingness to observe the policy in all its details.

The families, too, must be involved in the final audit, and the Policy must be shared in a way that is comprehensible to them.

FAD hopes that any organizations with whom they collaborate will accept the responsibility to reduce to the minimum all risks of ill-treatment, exploitation or abuse in their dealings with the boys and girls. For this reason FAD shares its Policy with all organizations that are its Partners, and expects them to respect its principles and to guarantee support and collaboration.

FAD announces its pledge to protect the children, to all who are interested in any way in its dealings, and to all who are engaged in its projects, whether they be private or public subjects.

## **UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

Understanding children, and getting to know about the forms of violence and exploitation to which they may be subjected, constitutes the starting points for the creation and the conservation of a secure environment.

By violence we intend any behavior which is not accidental, at the hands of parents, tutors, other adults, adolescents, or children, and which may produce a real or a potential risk to health, growth, or the dignity of the child or the adolescent. Such behavior may be intentional or unintentional, and may result from acts of omission (eg. negligence), or acts of deliberate commission (eg. abuse). Within this vast definition we may identify 5 main categories of ill-treatment: physical ill-treatment, sexual abuse, psychological ill-treatment, carelessness or negligence and exploitation.

FAD shares the definitions of physical ill-treatment, sexual abuse, psychological ill-treatment, carelessness or negligence, and exploitation, as elaborated by the International Agencies of the United Nations, and recognized by other organizations dealing with child protection.

Infantile ill-treatment: this is defined as any act deliberately carried out by a parent or a subject in a position of power, responsibility or trust, in the case of a child or a boy/girl, and that may cause damage potentially, or really, to their security, their well-being, their dignity or their development. It includes all forms of prejudice, physical or psychological, brought about by an abuse of power, or by the betrayal of a child's trust on the part of an adult.

Physical ill-treatment is any conduct that causes physical damage, real or potential, to a child or an adolescent, at the hands of an adult or a compeer.

Psychological ill-treatment: this refers to a behavior repeated in time that jeopardizes the affective, cognitive and social development of a child or an adolescent, and its perception of him/herself. It may take different forms, and is often accompanied by other types of ill-treatment.

Sexual abuse: this refers to the involvement of a child - incapable through age or psychic problems, or by any other means, even temporarily - in sexual activity with or without physical contact, on the part of an adult or a compeer.

Carelessness or negligence means the inadequate attention paid to emotional or material needs of a child on the part of parents, or those whose duty it is to take care of them. It includes the incapacity to protect the child or the adolescent from potential perils, or to guarantee and care for primary needs such as medical attention, education, and an adequate development of emotional growth, often to the point of exposing the child to physical or emotional disability.

Exploitation is the using of the boy or the girl for the advantage, not necessarily economic or financial, of third persons. Such activities expose the child to an unjust treatment, cruel and dangerous and are thus prejudicial to his/her emotional, social and moral development, and also to the psycho-physical health of the victim.

Herewith included are:

- sexual exploitation, which includes any activity in which a subject takes advantage of his/her position in relation to the child for sexual activities and for the gain of economic, social or political profit. The child becomes exploited both as a sexual object and as a commercial object.

- economic exploitation of children: this includes the engagement of a child in working activities that are particularly risky, so much so as to compromise his psycho-physical well-being, and to

jeopardize his right to education, health and family life. Economic exploitation implies the obtaining of profits for the production, the distribution and the consumption of goods and services which produce an impact on the economy of a determinate entity, be it the State, the community, or the family.

### **WHAT ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES?**

All the countries in which FAD works have ratified the ONU Convention on Infancy of 1989, which is the treaty concerning human rights that is the most shared and agreed upon in the whole of history.

This, however, shows up the weakness of the Convention because, although having been so widely ratified by the whole world, it is at the same time commonly not respected nor applied in the signatory states that have acknowledged it. And this is a source of great worry for FAD, which works where there are a great number of violations of the rights of children and adolescents, who are often victims of ill-treatment physical and psychological, of corporal punishments, sexual abuse and sexual and economic exploitation. Moreover there is an absence, in many countries in which FAD works, of measures and institutions which constitute alternatives to the family, for the care of children.

The staff of FAD, in Spain and abroad, and the Partner organizations, know about the juridical status, and about the effective protection of children's rights. FAD staff in Spain and abroad are requested to monitor periodically the relevant laws and the effective state of the children's rights, and the efficiency of the organs that are charged with their protection and observance.

Precisely to avoid the indifference and the failure to activate the rights of the children in places where FAD operates, every single person who is involved must feel himself personally responsible, in every moment of the day, in the protection of the boys and girls, by adopting the following measures:

1. Understanding their own role and function; FAD guarantees that its staff, its volunteers, its Members of the Board of Trustees, are fully aware of the phenomena of ill-treatment, of carelessness and of exploitation of the children and the adolescents, and of their potential risks and all that is therein involved.
2. Prevent situations of peril: FAD, precisely in order to guarantee the reduction of risks and prevent situations of danger in which children may be involved, encourage and promote the diffusion of good practices, the creation of an environment that is safe and "of a scale that is

comfortable for children”, and supports and encourages the critical participation of the children themselves.

3. Call attention immediately to the dangerous situation: FAD staff who are involved in the activities and projects of the organization must always keep in mind the measures to be adopted, and must point out rapidly, any and every potential situation of peril for the children.

4. Supply a rapid reply to the problems revealed: FAD promises to undertake actions of support and protection for the children and the adolescents in the case of need.

### **CORRECT ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE RISKS IN THE FAD PROJECTS**

FAD, aware that the causes of risk are not always completely avoidable, favors an attitude of understanding and awareness of the problems and the specific risks for the security and the well-being of the children, so as to reduce to a minimum the occasions of abuse, exploitation and ill-treatment. For this very reason it defines, evaluates and manages the potential risks with a participatory approach that takes account of the typology of the risk occurring in the area of intervention (education, health, participation and protection), and of the country that is the destination of the intervention.

For every project and program FAD undertakes to calculate and evaluate the potential impact of the activity, and of the changes caused by the project, upon the children and their parents who are involved, identifying and selecting strategies so as to reduce to the minimum the eventual risks.

### **CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT TO SUIT THE CHILDREN**

The Centers in which FAD works, and its projects, must always be strictly suitable for the child, and that means:

1. Guarantee the equality of each and every child, over and above considerations of race, religion/caste.
2. Respect for all opinions and needs of the children
3. Respect for the gender and the history of each child
4. Children and adolescents participate and are given opportunities to take active part
5. They are accessible to all the children involved
6. No forms of ill-treatment may exist, including violence, abuse, exploitation and child trafficking
7. Recreational activities are organized that will encourage healthy styles of life and the acquisition of competencies that are cognitive, social and emotive
8. The rules and regulations of the Centers are to be shared and agreed upon, and elaborated by, the children themselves

9. The children in the Centers are subjected to visits, periodically, to ascertain their health and their development

10. Unauthorized persons are not permitted to enter.

### **PROTECTION POLICIES**

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF: To guarantee the security of the children involved and even those not necessarily within the projects of FAD itself, it is obligatory to select staff, collaborators and volunteers who know and respect the undertakings of FAD regarding the protection of children. As a consequence, the selectors shall be highly committed to sounding out the motivations of candidates wishing to work on all those matters that are inherent to infancy and adolescence. Selectors have to assess the candidates' understanding of the needs, emotional and material of the children in the context in which the project is to be carried out, and their knowledge about the nation in which they will be working; selectors must be sure that the candidates have made the theme of non-discrimination a choice of their lives, that they have references that are valid and correct, and that their documentation relative to their court records is in perfect order.

### **CHOICE OF PARTNERS, LOCAL, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL.**

An extremely rigorous attention must be paid to the choice of all partners, making sure that they have an ample sharing and agreement with the ethical principles and the goals and objectives of FAD. It is therefore always necessary to check very carefully on their sympathy with their mission, its values and strategies, as well as a full knowledge of the situation of the children in their local contexts.

Precisely for this reason the agreements with all other partners must include a continuous exchange of views regarding the protection of the children, and on their respective approaches, over and above an exchange and a comparison of their Policy of protection of the children.

### **POLICIES OF COMMUNICATION WITH FAD**

All communications of FAD must be respectful of the general principles of communication regarding the children, and their themes which they share, and must be respectful of their dignity and their imagery. This respect must be observed in all cases: from all dealings with donors and with partners and volunteers, from the fund-raising campaigns, and from the awakening of interest in the activities of FAD - to initiatives of all and every type.

Stories and images used must be selected with respect for the superior interest of the child, and only published after receiving the consent of the adults who are familiar with and responsibly

linked to the children concerned. Communications must never be vulgar or undignified, never for instance showing nudity or wounds.

In every type of publication we insist on the language used being respectful of the dignity of the children.

### **SHARING OF ETHICAL VALUES WITH THE DONORS**

FAD insists on evaluating the ethical values of the donors before signing any agreements of collaboration or before authorizing the publication of any information that concerns the emblem (logo) or the name of FAD.

### **CONTINUOUS TRAINING FOR ALL THE OPERATORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND MEMBERS OF THE DIRECTIVE ORGANS OF FAD**

Everybody who works in or for FAD must participate in training courses that the organization arranges at frequent intervals on the theme of child protection. The training courses are always based on international standards and principles regarding the rights and the fundamental needs of children. FAD has to work in such a way that these training courses give emphasis to the methods in which these rights shall be promoted, protected, and guaranteed through the projects, the policies and the developments which the organization is responsible for.

FAD undertakes to ensure for all its own operators, in Spain and abroad, continuous training, suited to the knowledge of the staff and the local context.

Special attention must be paid to the training of new staff or of those volunteers who have recently approached FAD. They are guaranteed a course of training on the Policies applied, on the concepts of the possible forms of ill-treatment and exploitation, also on the signals through which these can be recognized; also on the rights of the children as well, and on how to communicate to FAD possible lacks or absences in application or in training.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE FAD OPERATORS**

The staff of FAD and every volunteer who operates in the name of FAD are obliged to respect the Code of Behavior laid down by the organization.

Each new member of staff must study the Code before or at the moment of signing the contract of engagement.

Both in their professional and private life, the staff of FAD adopt the standards of behavior laid down in the code of conduct when dealing with children, recognizing that the good name and credibility of the organization depends on the conduct of each singular person engaged in the themes in which the organization is involved.

The above, but even more so, applies to the directors of the organization, and for those who represent FAD both in Spain and abroad.

Rules of conduct are in force even for the visitors to the projects of FAD. In all cases the person responsible for a project, or a centre in which FAD works, may refuse entry to those visitors who do not respect the rules of the organization, or who do not comply with the timetables or other standards laid down in the Code of Conduct.

In every FAD project a person is nominated and trained to be responsible for the protection of children.

Whenever, in a FAD center, operators suspect a case of abuse of a child, the above described responsible for the protection of children must immediately inform/warn the same to the competent authorities. FAD lays down a code with the respective procedures to be adopted in every case, country by country.

### **REVISION OF THE RULES OF PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Every two years FAD organizes a revision of the rules above. The children themselves are involved in this revision and also the operators who forward the requests to the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees replies, quoting its own motivations for accepting or refusing the requests for changes.