



# Safeguarding policy - Children

Safeguarding is a term used to describe a set of policies, procedures and practices employed to actively prevent harm, abuse and distress. Safeguarding is about protecting certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances. These people may be at risk of abuse or neglect due to the actions (or lack of action) of another person. In these cases, it is vital that organizations work together to identify people at risk, and put steps in place to help prevent abuse or neglect. Child safeguarding is specifically focused on preventative actions to ensure that all children are protected from deliberate or unintentional acts that lead to the risk of or actual harm.

A child is defined as anyone under the age of eighteen years, in accordance with Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

Child safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff (teachers, coordinators and directors) and volunteers should work together to embrace diversity and respect the rights of children and adolescents.

As part of our child safeguarding policy, Yoga and Sports with Refugees (YSR) promises to:

- promote and prioritize the safety and well-being of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children
- and is provided with appropriate training and learning opportunities to recognise, identify and
- respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support
- provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are
- maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

## Behavior

I commit to:



- Treating all children equally and with respect, regardless of their age, sex, language, religion, opinion or nationality, or any other personal characteristics.
- Using positive and non-violent behaviors when supervising children. Additionally, sports should be fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Making sure that another adult is present or trying to be visible when you are in contact with a child.
- Organizing the gym in such a way so as to minimize the risk of harm to children.
- Ensure that information -minor's forms and other information- concerning children remains confidential.
- Modeling good behavior like sharing, respect, being fair and kind and use positive reinforcement
- Not having excessive physical contact with children. Children might not feel comfortable with overly friendly behaviors, especially if they are recovering from extreme emotional or physical abuse. If you need to touch a child because you need to help it in a sports activity please inform him/her about what and why you will do exactly.
- Not initiating hugs with a child (or only when the child is very distressed and needs comforting)
- Not encouraging close attachments with individual children. Impartiality and neutrality ethics must be followed.
- Not offering gifts to individual children. If providing gifts is appropriate, it should be given to the group and in a format agreed upon by the field coordinator and with the consent of the caretaker.
- Not inviting a child into your home or developing a relationship with a child that may be considered outside normal professional boundaries.
- Not discriminating or showing differential treatment towards certain children, excluding others.
- Not smoking, swearing or fighting in front of children, they see and hear everything.
- Not engaging in play fight, tickling or arm wrestling
- Not allowing, promoting or facilitating the consumption of psychoactive substances, cigarettes, alcoholic beverages or any other type of drugs.
- Not putting an unaccompanied minor in your car or in a YSR car. You can transfer a minor only with the presence or consent of the caretaker.
- Not encouraging, under any circumstances, hatred, racism, homophobia that affect or may affect children's wellbeing.
- Not exchanging email addresses, telephone numbers or any other means of personal conduct with minors, including social networks, other than official channels agreed upon with the parents and the organization.
- Not punishing a child (such as kicking a child out of an activity), instead, enforce natural consequence (if someone is throwing paint, it is disturbing for the others and for the space, so the paint will be taken away)
- Not working with or transporting a child alone without the prior authorisation of your coordinator, unless absolutely necessary for the safety of the child.



## Photos

I commit to

- Not taking photos or videos of children unless prior permission is given by the coordinator and caretaker.
- If authorized by the coordinator, obtaining permission from the child and their parent / guardian before taking the image, after explaining how the photos or videos will be used.
- Ensure the child does not pose in a sexual/degrading manner in the pictures/videos.

## Children seeking negative attention

Do not react strongly to negative behavior, as it only encourages children to continue. (laughing or making a surprised face, yelling, running after a child, etc...)

Calmly remind the child that the behavior is not polite / nice and redirect them by inviting them to join the activity.

## Abuse

I commit to:

- Not engaging in behavior that harms any area of child's life or act with intention of embarrassing or humiliating children, degrading childhood, or engaging in any form of emotional punishment or abuse.
- Not being alone or away with a child without professional justification
- Not showing a child any intimate attitude.
- Not engaging in or maintain sexual activities with children, whether physical or virtual.
- Not exposing children to videos, photos or websites that are inappropriate.
- Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the personal information of children and their families.
- Not tolerating or conducting illegal or dangerous behaviors towards children.
- Immediately informing a coordinator if I see any sign of abuse or neglect.
  - Signs of abuse, trauma and concerning behavior include:
    - Child is extremely withdrawn
    - Aggressive or violent behavior
    - Over sexualized behavior (constantly over affectionate / overly clingy / sitting on your lap / inappropriate touching)
    - Self harming
    - Physical injuries (bruises / marks/ black eyes / needle marks / burns)



- Manipulative behavior
- Signs of neglect include:
  - If a child is consistently dirty - wearing the same clothes for a long length of time, clothing is inadequate, smells, is torn
  - Hungry, asking for food and water, asking for money
  - Constantly over tired, expresses they have not slept
- If you see any change of behavior or you are concerned about a child, please inform your coordinator immediately

## Disclosure of abuse

If a child tells you about abuse:

- If the child is in immediate danger, call your coordinator
- if not:
  - **Listen** carefully and **reassure** them that they have done the right thing in telling you and that they have not done anything wrong
  - **Avoid leading questions**
  - Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events
  - Tell the child that you need to inform a competent authority, do not ensure confidentiality
  - **Document immediately**: make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence. Use the child's own words where possible
  - **Report** to your coordinator who will take appropriate action
  - DO NOT make promises that you can't guarantee
  - DO NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone
  - DO NOT give your home address

Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible. Legally, it is appropriate to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child, but not everyone needs to know when a concern or worry is raised.

This respects the child's, family's and/or staff's rights to privacy. So only people who need to know should be told about it.

## Fight protocol

Fights between children can happen, and can be distressing. We always try to prevent conflict, by paying attention to the whole group, keeping all children engaged and thinking quickly when signs of tension arise.



Here are simple steps to follow if a fight takes place:

1. If the children are big, or you estimate there might be a danger getting involved, do not get involved: check if you can bring everyone else out of the room safely, and stay away. Call a coordinator as soon as you can. Please consider your own safety first, the safety of the other bystander then.
2. **If they are small enough / if you feel you can without danger for yourself**
  - a. Separate the children involved in the fight: Ideally, with another person, you calmly break up the fight, and separate the children from each other. It is important to stay as calm as possible. Other volunteers will keep the other children engaged.
  - b. Calm the children involved, use a calm voice, ask them to take a few deep breaths with you, walk a little if needed, etc...
  - c. Support the children and check for injuries, there is a first aid kit in the office.
  - d. Re-engage the involved children if they have calmed down and are not seriously hurt. Re-engage the children into the activities with extra attention and encouragement.
  - e. Inform your coordinator

By signing this document I declare that I have read and understood the Child safeguarding rules and express my willingness and understanding to behave accordingly,

Name:

Date:

Signature: