

DJMV Child Protection Policy-2022

Divya Jyoti Mahila Vikash (DJMV) is a non-profit community-based organisation working towards women empowerment, education and livelihood promotion. DJMV aspires to improve the living conditions of the poor and marginalized by adopting strategies through community initiative, participation and sensitization. Promoted in 2000, the organization has worked among backward fishing communities in the interior unreached pockets of Rural Odisha, identified as one of the most under developed states in India. Women self help groups have been taken as the base for all interventions and livelihood activities enabling them to contribute towards mainstream development process.

About the Policy : A Child Protection Policy is a set of guidelines and procedures designed to ensure the safety and well-being of children involved in an organization or community. Such policies are crucial in various settings, including schools, sports clubs, religious institutions, community centers, and other places where children may be present. The primary goal of a Child Protection Policy is to prevent child abuse, exploitation, and neglect. Here are some key components typically found in a Child Protection Policy:

- **Policy Statement:** Clearly state the organization's commitment to protecting children from abuse and ensuring their safety and well-being.
- **Definitions:** Clearly define different forms of child abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect, so that there is a common understanding within the organization.
- **Code of Conduct :** Establish a code of conduct for all staff, volunteers, and others involved with the organization when interacting with children. This may include guidelines on appropriate behavior, communication, and boundaries.
- **Screening and Selection:** Outline procedures for the recruitment, screening, and selection of staff and volunteers who will work with children. This may include background checks, reference checks, and interviews.
- **Training:** Provide comprehensive training for all staff and volunteers on recognizing and responding to signs of abuse, as well as the organization's child protection policies and procedures.
- **Reporting Mechanisms:** Clearly outline the procedures for reporting suspicions or allegations of child abuse. This should include reporting hierarchies, contact information for relevant authorities, and assurance of protection for those reporting in good faith.
- **Confidentiality:** Address the importance of maintaining confidentiality while reporting and investigating child abuse cases, while also emphasizing the priority of the child's safety.
- **Monitoring and Supervision:** Define the methods by which the organization will monitor and supervise activities involving children to ensure compliance with the Child Protection Policy.
- **Responding to Allegations:** Outline the steps the organization will take if an allegation of child abuse is made, including an investigation process, reporting to appropriate authorities, and support for the child and affected parties.
- **Review and Evaluation:** Establish a process for regular review and evaluation of the Child Protection Policy to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective.
- **Communication:** Clearly communicate the Child Protection Policy to all stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, parents, and children. Ensure that everyone is aware of the policy and understands their responsibilities.

Introduction

States Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.”(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19)

DJMV Child Protection Policy (CPP) provides the framework for the organisation’s responsibility to keep children safe, ensuring that no child comes to harm as a result of their engagement with us, whether that be via their interaction with staff and those who represent us, or their participation in our programmes and activities

In addition, it details our responsibility to ensure that we minimise risks to children in everything we do and places an obligation on us to report concerns we have over a child’s safety. It commits us to ensuring that our activities and programmes do not impact negatively on children, whether associated with us or not, and that the best interest of a child remains a priority.

Through our CPP implementation framework, we aim to provide safe environments for children in all aspects of our work, where children are respected, treated without discrimination and supported to realise their potential.

The policy governs the behaviours of DJMV NGO staff, associates and visitors, ensures we minimise risks to children and report any concerns about a child’s welfare appropriately.

DJMV programmes nationally address the problem of violence against children in wider society. These programme activities are linked to, but distinct from our efforts to ensure that we as an organisation ‘do no harm’ to children.

This policy sets out common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children. The policy was adopted by the DJMV’s Board’s Meeting in Jan 2022.

Our commitment to protect children

Our values, principles and beliefs

- All child abuse involves the abuse of children’s rights.
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.
- Child abuse is never acceptable
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/ for whom we work
- When we work through consultants & partners an, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes.

What we will do

We will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse through the following means:

- **Awareness:** We will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.
- **Prevention:** We will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and theirs minimise the risks to children.
- **Reporting:** We will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.
- **Responding:** We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.
 - In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, members of the DJMV NGO will also ensure that they:
 - Take seriously any concerns raised
 - Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
 - Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
 - Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
 - Are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
 - Listen to and takes seriously the DJMV and wishes of children
 - Work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

How we will ensure our commitments above are met

All DJMV NGO staff will sign up to and abide by the attached code of conduct

- All partners will sign and abide by the code of conduct
- All staff and volunteers will have access to a copy of the child protection policy
- Recruitment procedures will include checks on suitability for working with young people
- Induction will include briefing on child protection issues
- Every workplace will display contact details for reporting possible child abuse and every member of staff will have contact details for reporting.
- Systems will be established by every Member to investigate possible abuse once reported and to deal with it
- Training, learning opportunities and support will be provided by DJMV members as appropriate to ensure commitments are met.

Code of conduct

All DJMV staff must sign up to and abide by this Code of Conduct.

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.
- ❖ 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, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- ❖ act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- ❖ Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- ❖ This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

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 organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- Empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

In general it is inappropriate to:

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

DEFINITION

1. **Child:** Any person, male or female, below the age of 18, as evidenced by relevant birth certificate or in cases where birth certificate is not available, medically ascertained by competent authorities, who has or is undergoing training in DJMV development programmes at any of its locations.
2. **Volunteer:** Any person, who has chosen out of his/her own volition, to extend help in any programmatic or non-programmatic areas of DJMV's operations, without any remuneration whatsoever, and who has signed an application cum undertaking to protect children's best interests at all times during the period of his/her association with DJMV, following the due process of volunteer selection as laid down in the Volunteer Policy of the organisation.
3. **Visitor:** Any person who has signed the prescribed undertaking attached to the CPP and escorted by a staff member or authorized volunteer, visiting any location(s) where children's sports and/or outdoor activities are conducted.
4. **Session:** A Session is a period starting from the time the children are taken to the playground from their respective location by the above referred programme delivery team and community co-ordinators, till they are dropped back at the point of origin.
5. **Children's Right to Protection:** Includes freedom from all forms of exploitation, abuse, inhuman or degrading treatment and neglect
6. **Protection Issues:** In the context of activities of DJMV, an indicative list of child protection issues. DJMV recognises that children have the right to be protected both from the violation of their rights by adults, as well as by older/other children.
7. **Sexual Abuse:** A child may be abused in any of the following ways:
 - Sexual intercourse through penile penetration i.e. rape, or use of objects or other parts of body.
 - Exposing children to pornography and using them for producing pornographic materials.
 - Directly or indirectly touching any part of the body of a child with an object or with a part of body for sexual gratification.
 - Exposing or flashing genital organs or other parts of the body with sexual intent.
 - Deriving voyeuristic pleasure by showing sexual activity or forcing two or more children to have sex with each other.
 - Passing sexually coloured remarks or verbally abusing a child using vulgar and obscene language or actions.
8. **Corporal Punishment:** Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child pain, not for the purpose of injury but for correction.

ANNEXURES

A. CHILD PROTECTION DECLARATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

It is mandatory for all Employees, Volunteers and Visitors at DJMV, to sign this declaration and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy of DJMV.

I, _____ (write name), hereby declare that I have read the Child Protection Policy of DJMV India Foundation, and understand its contents, spirit and purpose. I agree to abide unconditionally to the said policy, and will ensure that my conduct at all times ensures the protection of children as laid down in the policy.

Signed _____

Relationship with DJMV: (Tick one) Employee/ Volunteer / Visitor

B. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR VISITORS

Why are we asking you to read and sign this?

DJMV is a non-profit organization working with children in Odisha state of India. Ensuring child safety at all times is at the core of our work.

The DJMV programme gives children an opportunity to learn, play and grow. We cannot do this without making sure that the surroundings are safe and that adults (and the children themselves) do not violate any of the codes of dignity and protection.

The DJMV Child Protection Policy is based on the principles of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, - a declaration India signed in November 1999. Signing this makes India answerable to its children in terms of making sure every child is protected from abuse.

“States Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.”(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19)

We would request you to adhere to the Code of Conduct while participating on the programme.

COMPLAINT FORM

Every instance of violation of a child's Right to Protection must be registered in writing and brought to the attention of the relevant Child Protection Committee in the area.

To file a formal complaint, please fill out this form completely in writing and submit it to any person on the Committee. If you need help completing the form, or want to discuss the issue before completing the complaint form, you can approach any person in the Committee or any person you trust within or outside the organisation.

PART I: Person(s) Submitting the Complaint

Name of the Person completing this form: _____

Tick any one of the following:

- I am the child making the complaint
- I am the child's parent/guardian
- I am a DJMV staff member
- Other

- 1. Name of the Complainant : _____
- 2. Address of the Complainant : _____
- 3. Telephone number of the Complainant : _____

4. If you would like to have your parent(s), guardian(s), or another person attend a meeting with the Committee please provide the following information:

- Name of the person/s : _____
- Address : _____
- Telephone : _____
- Relationship : _____

Part II: Complaint

5. Please describe the situation that has caused you to complain

Date/ Time Period of the Incident :

Location of the Incident :

Description of the Incident :

Person/s who witnessed the Incident :

Please share with us how this incident has affected you so that we can know best how we can be of help to you.

6. Please describe any efforts you have made to resolve your complaint informally and the responses to your efforts.

Date:

With whom did you share your experience?

Describe the conversation and the response you received.

7. (OPTIONAL) Please describe the outcome or remedy you seek for this complaint.

Signature of Person Submitting Report_____

Signature of member, Child Protection Committee:

Date Filed_____