

# **RULEBOOK ON WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

## **Non government organisation “Little steps”**

### **Non government organisation “LITTLESTEPS”**

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### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Non Government Organisation “Little steps” strongly condemns all forms of abuse and exploitation of children. We are committed to creating and maintain an appropriate environment for play, research and learning, with a simultaneous commitment to preventing abuse and exploitation of children.

We strongly condemn any form of abuse and exploitation of children. Our commitment includes disseminating this policy and providing mechanisms to overcome challenges to board members, associates, volunteers and all other participants in our activities. Our goal is to raise awareness, provide assistance in prevention, encourage reporting and facilitate responses to every form and case of abuse, whether proven, alleged or attempted.

Our child protection policy is based on:

**\* The Council of Europe Strategy for Children's rights (2016 – 2021)**, including:

- Equal opportunities
- Children's participation
- A life without violence
- Justice adapted to children
- Children's rights in the digital environment

**\* European Convention on human Rights**

**\* United Nations on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

**\* The National Strategy for the Protection of Children and Prevention of Violence of the Republic of Serbia**

**\* General and special protocols for the protection of children and students from violence, neglect, and of abuse in educational institutions**, developed by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia

**\* The Law on the Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**, including the protection of children from physical and psychological violence, abuse and neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, kidnapping and trafficking of children, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment, and other forms of exploitation harmful to children's well – being.

The child protection policy of the NGO “Little steps” was developed in accordance with the UNCRC, putting the best interest of the child as a priority. All board members, associates and volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of this policy.

### **KEY PARTS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

1. **AWARENESS:** Raising awareness about child abuse and risks.
2. **PREVENTION:** Giving guidelines on how to protect children from abuse.
3. **REPORTING:** Establishing and following clear reporting procedures.
4. **ANSWER:** Ensuring that clear action is taken when child abuse is suspected.

## **GOALS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

This policy aims to:

- \* Preventing cases of child abuse and reducing the number of incidents in all environments where the association has influence.
- \* Informing children about their rights and their active role in child protection.
- \* Informing all relevant parties about the child protection policy and implementing appropriate procedures.
- \* Encouraging associates to apply the skills necessary for the development and protection of each child.
- \* Open and honest discussions about child abuse at meetings and workshops.
- \* Establishing safe and transparent reporting channels in all programs.

## **WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE**

### **1. Physical abuse:**

Actual or potential physical injury caused by actions or lack of action under the control of a parent or responsible person.

### **2. Sexual abuse:**

Activities between a child and an adult or another child that involve forcing or enticing the child into sexual activities.

### **3. Neglect and no action:**

Negligence and failure of the caregiver to ensure the proper development of the child in terms of education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions.

### **4. Emotional abuse:**

Persistent emotional abuse that negatively affects the child's self-perception and development, including conveying feelings of worthlessness, inadequacy or discrimination.

## **SPECIFIC CONSIDERATION**

### **1. Child – to – Child Abuse:**

\* Special sensitivity allegations or concerns about child abuse by another child. The approach should be effective, ensuring the protection of the child victim and supporting the young person to change their behaviour.

### **2. Violation of children's privacy:**

\* Careful handling of private data and information about children in order to preserve their privacy.

## **CONCLUSION**

Protecting children is the responsibility of all of us. This child protection policy is the foundation of a safe and supportive environment in which the NGO "Little steps" operates. All participants in the work of the association must adhere to these guidelines and act in accordance with the highest standards of child protection. Any suspicion of abuse or exploitation of children should be reported immediately, and the association will cooperate with the relevant authorities to provide support and protect the best interests of the child.