

# **Society for Rural Health and Education Development (SRHED)**

## **Policy and Code of Conduct to Protect Children**

Approved By: **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Approved On: **28 – 11 - 2018**

As a large number of children<sup>1</sup> are most vulnerable to become victims of abuse<sup>2</sup>, SRHED endorses the 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' as an important set of standards, supporting the rights of children.

As a consequence, SRHED has adopted this workplace policy to protect children. In this regard, SRHED is committed to protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual, emotional or physical abuse, which also includes neglect. SRHED strives to maintain within the sphere of its activities an environment which is safe for children.

As part of its policy, and to uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct, SRHED has developed this Code of Conduct. Moreover, this document is intended to protect the signatories from false accusations of inappropriate behavior towards, or abuse of children.

All SRHED staff, people travelling under the direction of SRHED, and persons holding a SRHED consultant contract, must sign up to this Code and abide by it. Signing the Code of Conduct commits the signatory actively to participate in building and maintaining an environment, which is safe for children.

All SRHED staff are responsible for encouraging, advocating and promoting the dissemination of this Code of Conduct.

### **Commitments**

#### **1. I will**

- a) Contribute to create and/ or uphold an environment where children are listened to and respected as individuals and which is safe, positive and encouraging to them.
- b) Never abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well- being of any child.
- c) Never engage in any abusive or exploitative relationship<sup>3</sup>– sexual, physical, and emotional – with children. especially I will never engage in sexual activities with any child.
- d) Never request any service or favour that could be considered abusive or exploitative from children.
- e) Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism.

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1 According to the 'UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child' **child** "means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier"

2 According to the WHO "Child **abuse** or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power."

3 ... work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children. "International Labour Organization. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182, Art. 3)"

## **2. I do**

- a) follow the SRHED's policy to protect children, the Code of Conduct regarding the safety and well being of children.
- b) conduct myself in a manner consistent with my position as a positive role model to children, and as a representative of SRHED
- c) treat all children with respect.
- d) use the 'Two Adult Rule'. When possible I take care that another adult is present or within reach when conducting one-to-one coaching, instruction, medical/rehabilitation procedures with a child. where individual Counselling or treatment is appropriate, I will inform another adult/supervisor in advance where and when this will happen.

## **3. I do not**

- a) hold, fondle, kiss, cuddle or touch children in an inappropriate and/ or culturally insensitive way.
- b) use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- c) make sexually suggestive comments or actions to a child, even as a joke.
- d) hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children. All disciplinary measures are non-violent and do not humiliate.
- e) act in ways intended to shame, humiliate or belittle children or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- f) discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- g) hire children as 'house help'<sup>4</sup>.
- h) develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- i) condone, or participate in behavior towards children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.

I have carefully read and clearly understood the SRHED's policy and Code of Conduct to protect children. I am aware that SRHED expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behavior described in the Code of Conduct above.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>4</sup> The definition of child domestic work (house help) does not include occasional babysitting, gardening; help during school holidays or out of school time.