

## **Child Safety and Protection Network Elements of a Child Safety Program**

In keeping with its mission to support the common desire of like-minded agencies and schools to provide safe and rich experiences for all children and through the collaborative efforts of its member organizations, the Child Safety and Protection Network provides the following *Elements of a Child Safety Program* for the use of its member organizations in establishing and maintaining effective child safety practices.

1. **Governance:** An organization with an effective child safety program will have the management controls necessary to govern the activities of its personnel (staff and volunteers) so that a safe and healthy environment for children can be maintained.
2. **Definitions:** An organization with an effective child safety program will have a written set of basic definitions of the types of harm children may suffer. The definitions will be written keeping in mind the various cultures represented in the organization's context.
3. **Screening:** An organization with an effective child safety program will conduct pre-engagement screening of both staff and volunteers.
4. **Training:** An organization with an effective child safety program will have a training program for staff and volunteers.
5. **Childcare Protocols:** An organization with an effective child safety program will have childcare protocols that are commonly applied throughout the organization.
6. **Response Process:** An organization with an effective child safety program will have established and maintains the capacity to respond promptly, objectively and compassionately to any report of concern for child safety, whether based on current events or in past history of the organization or its members.
7. **Member Care:** An organization with an effective child safety program will provide care for its personnel and other persons who may be affected by child safety issues, as needs are assessed.

On the following pages, each of these Elements is listed with specific Indicators, to assist an organization with implementation.

Supporting Documents:

CSPN Guidance Notes on Child Safeguarding Terms

# 1. Governance

An organization with an effective child safety program will have in place the management controls necessary to govern the activities of its personnel (staff and volunteers) so that a safe and healthy environment for children can be maintained.

Indicators of this element include:

1. A commitment from the highest level of leadership within the organization to maintain child safety as a priority of the organization.
2. A defined system for the regular and recurring management processes of the child safety program including:
  - 2.1. Planning and review of program activities
  - 2.2. Recognizing and acting on improvement opportunities
  - 2.3. Administration of documents, including records.
3. A written policy for child safety that is adopted by the relevant management body, is provided to all members, and addresses at least the following topics:
  - 3.1. The stated intent of the organization to prevent harm to children and to respond to reported concerns;
  - 3.2. A description of the various roles and responsibilities for child safety within the organization;
  - 3.3. The intent of the organization to implement the elements and indicators of CSPN
4. A written code of conduct which lists specific behaviors of personnel with children and classifies these behaviors as either acceptable or unacceptable.
5. Documented procedures to govern the key child safety activities identified in these elements.

## 2. Definitions

An organization with an effective child safety program will have a written set of basic definitions of the types of harm children may suffer. The definitions will be written keeping in mind the various cultures represented in the organization's context.

Indicators of this element include:

1. This set of definitions includes specific terms.\*
2. The definitions are based on research.
3. The terms as defined are used by the personnel of the organization.

\* See also '*CSPN Guidance Notes on Child Safeguarding Terms*'

### 3. Screening

An organization with an effective child safety program will conduct pre-engagement screening of both staff and volunteers.

Indicators of this element include:

1. A written history of employment.
2. Questions related to inappropriate behavior with or abuse of children.
3. Personal and professional reference information.
4. An interview comprised of standard questions.
5. A background check.

## 4. Training

An organization with an effective child safety program will have a training program for staff and volunteers.

Indicators of this element include:

1. Initial training for all staff and volunteers
  - 1.1 Abuse awareness, recognition, and reporting procedures
  - 1.2 Code of Conduct to create and maintain safe environments for children
  - 1.3 Age-appropriate initial and ongoing materials for children
2. Ongoing Training for all staff and volunteers
3. Initial training of parents\*, youth and children in child safety
  - 3.1 Characteristics of physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy homes
  - 3.2 Age-appropriate resources for parents to use in child safety training with their children
  - 3.3 Child developmental norms and milestones
  - 3.4 Decreasing risk and increasing accountability scenarios for hospitality and babysitting
  - 3.5 Culture specific education for field workers (cultural practices, trends, risks for specific geographic locations where workers are posted).
4. Ongoing training of parents\*, youth and children in child safety
5. Specialized training for those working specifically in activities with children
  - 5.1 Management of safe environments
  - 5.2 Policy, procedures, and documentation
  - 5.3 Age-appropriate materials and programs for children
6. Training for those who work in child safeguarding response roles

*\* Parents are defined as those people who are staff or volunteers of the organization, and have children, not parents of children attending a school.*

## 5. Childcare Protocols

An organization with an effective child safety program has childcare protocols that are commonly applied throughout the organization.

Indicators of this element include:

1. Written protocols are developed for each program and/or age group of children (i.e. nursery, child-care during meetings, overnight retreats)
2. The protocols are routinely utilized by staff and volunteers throughout the organization.

## 6. Response Process

An organization with an effective child safety program has established and maintains the capacity to respond promptly, objectively and compassionately to any report of concern for child safety, whether based on current events or in the history of the organization or its members.

Indicators of this element include:

1. The response process is documented.
2. The process is consistent across the organization, according to the documented procedures.
3. The process conforms to the relevant legal requirements of the organization and its members.
4. The organization responds to all reported concerns for child safety, whether current or historic.
5. Those persons involved in the response are trained for their roles and responsibilities.
6. The findings of the organization conform to its documented policies and definitions.
7. The findings of the organization are based on objective evidence, which has been gathered without bias.

## 7. Member Care

An organization with an effective child safety program will provide care for its personnel and other persons who may be affected by child safety issues, as needs are assessed.

Indicators of this element include:

1. The procedures for providing this care will be documented, and will include how the costs of services will be covered.
2. This care may include retreats, spiritual resources, mentoring, educational resources, medical care and counseling.
3. Care will be made available to staff during and after child safety training.
4. Care will be provided to the persons directly involved with and affected by a response process (victim, alleged offender, their families and the reporter), with consideration given to effect of such care on the inquiry, both during and after the response process.
5. Care will be provided to the following persons and groups, both during and after a response process, including communications, debriefing and individual care:
  - 5.1 Field location leader(s);
  - 5.2 Inquiry team members;
  - 5.3 Affected community(ies).
6. A plan will be made in cooperation with the member receiving care, when appropriate specialized services are used to provide follow-up services.