

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR SIRA

Adopted by the Executive Committee of SIRA on behalf of the Board on November 12, 2018.

Background

An important principle of the SIRA Foundation is that our activities are safe for children. Child protection means that we have routines and practices to ensure that SIRA provides safe activities for children.

This policy describes the policies and procedures that our schools in Palestine must follow to ensure that all children we are in contact with are respected and that their right to freedom from all forms of intentional or accidental injury, discrimination, violations, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation in the organization's programs are recognized.

Fundamental values

SIRA should be a safe and secure organization for children. We have zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination, violations, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children and do not accept any behavior that violates this policy.

This means that all staff, all representatives and any partner organizations have an obligation to read the policy, share the basic philosophy and comply with the commitments established.

SIRA's basic philosophy is that

- A child is a person under 18 years of age
- All children are equally valuable and have the same rights and may never be discriminated regardless of the child's or parent's / guardian's skin color, gender, gender identity or gender expression; language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin.
- All children have the right to freedom from discrimination, violations, violence, harm, sexual abuse and exploitation
- SIRA informs its students and works to make them aware of their right to be free from discrimination, violations, injuries, sexual abuse and exploitation.
- SIRA has an obligation to ensure that all our staff and all our representatives as well as employees in any partner organizations, regardless of where they are based, apply the best practices regarding their behavior towards children in both professional and private life.

Extent

Every child in our schools must be protected from all forms of violations, injuries, physical, mental and sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in accordance with current policies.

SIRA works actively for the children in our work and their families/caregivers to be aware of and understand the importance of this policy. They will be informed of how policy discrepancies should be reported.

This policy must be clear, visible and accessible to all staff, all representatives and partner organizations.

Contact persons for child protection are the Principal / Social Worker at the respective school

The policy applies to:

1. All staff, whether they work full or part time, locally or within Sweden
2. Staff employed on short-term contracts, e.g. consultants, researchers etc.
3. Active members, volunteers and board members in Palestine and Sweden.
4. Children in our schools
5. Staff and representatives of partner organizations and individuals, groups and organizations with a formal or contractual relationship with SIRA that involves contact with children.

How SIRA defines child abuse

Physical abuse: The act in which a person causes a child physical injury, illness or pain. Any form of bodily punishment is considered to be physical abuse of children.

Psychological abuse: Psychological abuse involves serious punishment, ridicule, criticism, mockery, deviation, rejection, freezing, unreasonable demands, forced isolation from social contacts and constant refusal to listen to what the child has to say. All forms of physical abuse of children, including sexual assault, involve psychological abuse.

Sexual abuse: encompasses all forms of sexual acts against a child of another person.

Sexual use: Actually or attempt to abuse the child's exposed position for sexual purposes based on power or trust. This includes, but is not limited to, promising the child money, social or political gain through sexual exploitation.

Sexual abuse online (via the internet): Comprises all forms of sexual abuse, physical and non-physical, forced on a child by another person via the internet. SIRA shall pay attention to, prevent, act and report on this form of child abuse.

All staff and all representatives of SIRA should strive for:

- Planning and organizing their work and workplace in such a way as to minimize the risk of child abuse, exploitation, injury or other violation of their rights
- To promote an environment that is characterized by openness about children's vulnerability to abuse and exploitation, where all questions or views can be investigated and discussed.

Our commitment and responsibility

All staff and all representatives of SIRA shall:

- Do everything to protect children from harm, discrimination, violation, all forms of physical and mental violence, sexual abuse or exploitation
- Treat children as individuals and with respect - regardless of the child's or parent's / guardian's skin color; gender, gender identity, language; religion; political or other views; national, ethnic or social origin, real property; functional variation, sexual orientation, civil or other status
- Respect the child's integrity and never compromise their physical and / or mental health
- Respect children's views and concerns and allow them to express their views in situations affecting them in ways appropriate to their age and maturity
- Act respectfully in relation to children by avoiding talking to or touching them in ways that may be perceived as inappropriate or offensive or make suggestions that may be perceived in the same way
- Never expose children to situations that they cannot understand, are not sufficiently mature to handle and that they cannot consent to
- Never act with the intention of making children feel guilty, worsened, devalue or shame or otherwise expose a child to emotional abuse

All staff and all representatives of SIRA and our partner organizations have an obligation:

- To act in accordance with this policy in both their professional and private lives
- To sign a statement in conjunction with employment or commitment to confirm that they have familiarized themselves with and understood the policy and will act accordingly.
- To report immediately, in accordance with SIRA's reporting procedures, when a child has been subjected to any form of discrimination, injury, crime, physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation
- To know where to turn suspicions about abuse and to make sure that the suspicions are being investigated
- To define, minimize and avoid situations that may expose children to risks
- Identifying and avoiding situations where personality behavior can be misinterpreted
- To ensure, for example when photographing and videoing children, that an agreement was made with the parents / caregivers
- To ensure that images and / or information about children and parents involved in SIRA's activities are not published on social media, such as Facebook, without agreement between the child and the parents / caregivers

Reporting

Reporting shall take place when

- You see or suspect that a child has been exposed to deliberate or accidental injury, violation, discrimination, any form of physical or mental violence, sexual abuse or exploitation
- You get a report
- A child tells about an offense or abuse

The report must be made primarily to the principal, in second hand to the board of SIRA. The principal shall always report to the board in case of serious violation.

If you do not know whom to contact, send an email to childsafeguarding@rb.se for help. Use the form: Child Safety - Incident Reporting.

Reporting must be performed regardless of risk level. Everything that increases the risk of children getting injured must be reported.

If you notice shortcomings in the activities that could have affected child safety but no child has been injured yet, you should report it to the principal.

Responsibility for implementation, follow-up and continuous improvement

The following functions are responsible for implementing and following up the policy within their areas of work:

- The Principals of the two SIRA Schools
- The SIRA Board.

This policy has been adopted 2018-11-12 by the Executive Committee of SIRA on behalf of the Board.

Thord-Ove Thordson
Chairman