



Child Protection Policy of Licht für Kinder e.V.

January 2024

The child protection policy of Licht für Kinder eV is based on the following:

- Child Protection Policy of Kindernothilfe 2019
- CBM Child Protection Guidelines 2014



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Introduction

Light for Children e.V. (hereinafter referred to as **LfK**) (abbreviated) does not implement the majority of its projects itself, but works together with local partner organizations.

Our target group includes a particularly large number of children. LfK is committed to improving children's educational opportunities and supporting disadvantaged children, children in need, and orphans by sponsoring and/or facilitating educational sponsorships to finance school attendance and related costs, such as school uniforms, meals, learning materials, accommodation (if necessary), course fees, medication, and other living expenses. Every child has a right to protection, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or whether they have a disability.

The LfK child protection policy is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 (and the associated Optional Protocols) and German child protection legislation.

The protection of the human dignity of all children and child protection are among the fundamental principles of LfK's work. For the purposes of this guideline, a child is any person who has not yet reached the age of 18.

LfK sees itself as having a duty to create a safe environment for children and therefore provides sufficient resources for the implementation of the procedures described in this guideline.

LfK pursues four central goals with this guideline:

- Provide a safe environment for children
- LfK representatives protection from potential false accusations and to prevent LfK employees from working in an unclear environment.
- protect the reputation of LfK
- to prevent the organization from being infiltrated by child abusers

LfK employees. It is also binding for all visitors to LfK e.V., including third parties (employees of member organizations, donors, VIPs, consultants, visitors, volunteers, and journalists) who visit LfK partner organizations on matters concerning LfK. All these individuals are hereinafter collectively referred to as "LfK representatives."

This guideline is intended to help all LfK representatives worldwide understand the importance of child protection and to encourage them to fulfill their legal, ethical and political responsibilities during and outside of working hours.



This policy (including its appendices) should be adapted to local legal and social conditions in each country as needed. However, under no circumstances should the essence or purpose of this policy be diluted. Any changes to this policy require the approval of the LfK Board . Such changes must not contradict the principles of this policy. The overarching principle of this policy is always to act in the best interests of the child.

LfK's mission is to prevent all forms of abuse and mistreatment and to protect children from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect. This includes other forms of abuse such as bullying, corporal punishment, grooming, and using or exposing children to the production of pornographic material, witchcraft, ritual and spiritual abuse, and harmful traditional practices.

LfK expects its partners to commit to protecting the welfare of children. Such protection is a responsibility at both the organizational and individual levels. To promote this idea, we encourage all employees, partner organizations, and all other individuals and organizations associated with the LfK to actively participate in building and maintaining a safe environment for children.

Reporting of suspected cases

Suspected cases are reported to the LfK board and processed immediately. Case management is carried out in accordance with Chapter 4 of this child protection policy.

1 Collaboration with partner organizations

Child protection is an integral part of LfK 's partnership concept . We therefore expect our partners to either already have such a policy in place, develop one within a clearly defined timeframe, or have similar agreements in place that comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Upon request, LfK supports its partners in developing and strengthening child protection policies and procedures.

In the event of a serious incident at a partner organization, LfK expects to be informed of the incident and the measures taken as soon as possible. In such a case, LfK can offer advice to the partner organization upon request or facilitate contact with local experts. If the partner organization fails to take action or ignores the incident, LfK reserves the right, as a last resort, to suspend further funding to the partner organization until such measures are implemented. Depending on national legislation, LfK may be obligated to report the incident to the locally responsible authorities if the partner organization fails to act.

2 Prevention

LfK 's preventive measures include codes of conduct for various groups of people, standards within personnel policy, and standards for different



forms of communication. All preventive measures aim to minimize the risk of endangering children and to demonstrate to the relevant groups of people how to interact safely with children in the context of their work. If a violation of the preventive measures occurs, LfK must be informed, and the reporting system will be activated (see Chapter 4).

Code of Conduct

The aim of the code of conduct for dealing with children is to ensure responsibility for children's safety. At the same time, it aims to protect staff and individuals who have access to children through LfK from false accusations.

The undersigned employees of LfK commit themselves to...

- > LfK guidelines for the protection of children.
- > to ensure that the rules of conduct are observed, communicated and disseminated in the respective work environment.
- > to react immediately to all incidents and to inform the child protection team or the child protection officer of LfK directly.
- > to contribute to creating a safe, supportive and encouraging environment for children.
- > To take children's opinions and concerns seriously and to foster their development as individuals.
- > To treat all children equally, with dignity and respect.
- > to observe the respective codes of conduct of the partner organizations.
- > to follow the "two-adult rule", i.e. to ensure that during personal encounters, interviews, etc. with a child, another adult is present or within sight or earshot.
- > When photographing, filming or reporting for public relations purposes, the human dignity and need for protection of all persons, especially children, must be respected (e.g. by not photographing unclothed or suffering children).¹² Appropriate written permission must be obtained for the use of image materials by LfK .
- > When presenting LfK 's project work , care must be taken to ensure that all media content is based on the values of respect and equality, to uphold the dignity of the person depicted, and to portray the life situation of the children and their environment in a differentiated way.
- > and to describe them truthfully. Children are portrayed as individuals and agents with many facets and potentials. Reducing them to a victim role or other stereotypical portrayal should be avoided.
- > to handle children's personal data with the utmost care and to demand the same from third parties who receive information about children through LfK or partner organizations (in accordance with the data protection guidelines signed by all).
- > not to stay in hotels or visit locations known to be involved in (sexual) exploitation of children while on business trips.
- > to refrain from any kind of sexual harassment or violence against children.



Each signatory undertakes never to ...

- > To humiliate, discriminate against, threaten or deliberately intimidate children.
- > to abuse the power conferred by position or office.
- > To hit children or otherwise physically abuse them.
- > to sexually, physically or emotionally abuse or exploit a child; in particular, never to engage in sexual activity with or on a child or to expose them to pornographic material.
- > To hug, stroke, kiss or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner.
- > to use inappropriate, immoral or abusive expressions.
- > Making sexual innuendos or ambiguous acts towards a child.
- > To help a child with intimate tasks (such as going to the toilet, taking a bath or changing clothes).
- > Spending excessive amounts of time with a single child, separated from the other children.
- > to establish a relationship with a child that could be considered exploitative or violent.
- > Asking children for a service or favor that is abusive or exploitative.
- > to support illegal, dangerous and violent behavior towards children.

Communication regarding children

For LfK, it is essential that guiding principles for external communication exist. This is intended to ensure that individuals with malicious motives cannot misuse photos and other information contrary to the agreed purposes.

1. LfK is committed to ensuring that all interviews and photographs of children are conducted with the necessary sensitivity to protect the child's rights to dignity, identity, confidentiality, and privacy. Where possible, children should be prepared for interviews beforehand. A parent or legal guardian must be present at all times during the interviews.
2. Images of children should always be decent and respectful, and the stigmatization or stereotyping of families and/or communities should be avoided. All children, whether girls or boys, should be (fully) clothed. Consent for the use of interview information should be obtained from the children themselves (once they have reached the appropriate age and have the necessary awareness and maturity) or, if necessary, from their parents and/or guardians.
3. LfK handles all information about children appearing in LfK publications with utmost care under all circumstances, ensuring the appropriate use of personal data. The same applies when materials are made available to third parties.
4. Children's images, materials, and personal information are stored in a secure database. Access to these materials is restricted by a



clearly defined rights structure. Applicable data protection regulations are strictly enforced.

3 Reporting and handling of incidents

LfK has mechanisms in place for handling reported cases of child abuse and maltreatment. The aim of these mechanisms is the appropriate and swift investigation of suspected cases and the early identification of abuse and maltreatment. All LfK partner organizations and their staff should be familiar with the mechanisms outlined in LfK's child protection policy for reporting and handling cases of abuse and maltreatment. All decisions regarding cases and suspected cases are based on acting in the best interests of children's well-being and safety.

confidentiality

All reports and the information they contain will be treated with strict confidentiality. This serves to protect the identity of both the child and the person raising suspicions, as well as the accused person, and is in accordance with the relevant German legal provisions, including the Federal Data Protection Act (BDSG).

Reports

Suspected cases of child abuse or maltreatment can be reported anonymously to LfK in various ways . Anyone receiving such a notification must forward it immediately to the LfK board . Reports of suspected cases of child abuse and maltreatment must be in writing and must be submitted immediately after becoming aware of or expressing a suspicion.

Reporting obligation of the partner organization

Suspected cases where criminally relevant behavior is apparent must be reported to LfK by the partner organization directly at the beginning of the investigation. LfK must also be informed immediately if there is a cluster of suspected cases or violations of internal guidelines that suggest children cannot expect additional protection in an environment often already characterized by violence.

All further cases will be reported to LfK at the latest as part of the project progress report from the partner organization .

Investigation of suspected cases

If a suspicion is raised, the board of directors informs and appoints a case management team to further investigate the incident.

The individual steps of the investigation are:

1. The board of directors convenes a case management team.
2. Verification of the available information using the form for reporting suspected cases (see Annex 6.2)
3. Decision on which other persons should be included in the investigation



4. Clarification of roles and responsibilities
5. Determining the scope of the investigation (in terms of time and content)
6. Should insufficient information be available to assess the case and/or the partner organization be unable or unwilling to conduct a case-specific investigation, a consultant will be appointed (including a confidentiality agreement), and the methodology for such an investigation will be agreed upon. To ensure that suitable individuals can be contacted as quickly as possible when needed, each partner organization has identified individuals with relevant expertise and named them in a Child Protection Policy .
7. Identification of the persons to be interviewed (person who reported the case, project environment, affected child and accused person, etc.) and their interviewing – if necessary
8. Assessment of the situation by the case management team with the possible outcomes: suspicion is not substantiated, violation of internal guidelines, or suspicion is confirmed.
9. Documentation of the investigation (content: summary, description of the context, investigation process with members, roles, responsibilities and communication processes, results, findings, recommendations and action plan)
10. Informing the individuals involved about the investigation results and measures taken

4 Implementation of the child protection policy

LfK is taking the following steps to ensure that this guideline is implemented efficiently:

- > LfK representatives sign a document before commencing their activities confirming that they have read and accepted the terms of this policy.
- > The LfK website (www.licht-fuer-kinder.de/) states that LfK is a child-safe organization. It lists the contact details of the board members, whom individuals who suspect child abuse or mistreatment can contact.
- > LfK has described and defined measures to protect the welfare of children in relevant, central internal processes within this child protection policy.
- > LfK supports partner organizations in strengthening their expertise in the area of child welfare.



5 Attachments

5.1 Code of Conduct form

Code of conduct for all representatives of LfK

Protecting children from violence – Guidelines for dealing with children in the context of LfK 's work

LfK is committed to ensuring the protection of children from violence within its own organization, at events, and in its work with coordination structures and partner organizations abroad. Therefore, preventative measures to reduce the risk of violence are implemented both internally and in the projects it supports.

The objective of the code of conduct for dealing with children is that LfK employees assume individual and shared responsibility for the safety of children.

name

position

By signing below, I commit myself to...

- > LfK 's child protection policy in its currently valid version.
- > to ensure that the rules of conduct are observed, publicized, and disseminated in my work environment.
- > to communicate them directly to the board or the child protection officer of LfK .

In this sense, I will...

- > especially in my work context, to contribute to creating a safe, supportive and encouraging environment for children.
- > Take children seriously as individuals with their opinions, ideas and concerns.
- > Treat all children equally, with dignity and respect.
- > Please observe the respective child protection guidelines of the partner organizations.
- > Follow the "two-adult rule", i.e., ensure that during personal encounters, conversations, interviews, etc. with a child, another adult is present or within sight or earshot.
- > When photographing, filming or reporting for public relations purposes, I respect the human dignity and the need for protection of children (e.g. by not photographing unclothed children or children in extreme situations of suffering) and only distribute these materials privately (such as on the internet on Facebook) if the respective declaration of consent also extends to private use.
- > When presenting LfK 's project work , ensure that all media content is based on the values of respect and equality and upholds the dignity of the person depicted. I describe the children's living situation and their environment in a nuanced and truthful manner. I portray children as multifaceted individuals with potential. I avoid reducing them to a victim role or any other stereotypical portrayal.
- > children's personal data carefully in accordance with applicable data protection guidelines and LfK 's communication standards , and also demand this of third parties who receive information about children through LfK or its partner organizations.

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- > Do not stay in hotels or visit locations known to be involved in (sexual) exploitation of children while on business trips.

Furthermore, I will refrain from any form of threat, discrimination, humiliation, physical or verbal violence, or intimidation. This means, among other things, that I will never...

- > abuse the power or influence conferred by my position or office on the life and well-being of a child.
- > I will not hit children or otherwise physically abuse them.
- > do sexual, physical or emotional violence to a child or exploit them; in particular, never engage in sexual activity with or on a child or expose them to pornographic material.
- > hugging, stroking, kissing or touching children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner.
- > use inappropriate, immoral or abusive expressions.
- > making sexual innuendos or ambiguous acts towards a child.
- > Helping a child with intimate tasks without being asked.
- > build a relationship with children that is exploitative or violent
- > spend an excessive amount of time with one child, separated from the other children.
- > requesting a service or favor that exploits or abuses children.
- > tolerate or support illegal, dangerous and violent behavior towards children.

Please return the signed code of conduct to the child protection officer of LfK .

<i>Place, Date,</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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5.2 Form for reporting suspected cases

Form for reporting suspected cases to the child protection officer of LfK

Note: Please treat this email confidentially.

E-mail:

The information on this form is confidential. This form is for reporting concerns regarding a possible violation of LfK 's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. It should only be sent to LfK 's Child Protection Officer .
Please try to complete the form as thoroughly as possible. Sections where you have no information can be left blank. If you are unsure whether to report your suspicion, the following checklist may help you decide:

On what facts is the concern based?

Have you witnessed violence against children?

Yes No

Do you or another person suspect someone,
Have you committed violence against children?

Yes No

Has anyone reported a specific incident to you? Yes No

Does your concern fall into any of the following five categories:

Do you believe a child may have been neglected? Yes No

Do you believe a child has been physically abused? Yes No

Do you believe a child has been emotionally abused? Yes

No

Do you believe a child has been sexually abused? Yes No

Do you believe a child was exploited? Yes No

Your concern is justified if you answered "yes" to any of the questions. It is your duty to report your suspicion using the form. Don't hesitate – a child could be in danger or seriously threatened if you don't act.

Personal details:

Name:

Relationship to LfK or position at LfK :

Address:

Phone/Mobile:

Fax:

Email:

What is your relationship to the child/adolescent?

Information about the child :

(If other children are affected, please fill out a form for each child)

Name:

Gender: male female Age _____

Nationality _____ Organization:



Project name:

Type of funding/relationship to the project:

Relationship to the alleged perpetrator:

Address of the child (or information about with whom the child lives):

The child's current location:

Have measures been taken to ensure the child's current safety?

If so, which ones?

What measures have been taken to ensure that the violence cannot continue?

What further measures are needed to protect the child?

Does the child appear to you to be particularly vulnerable? If so, why?

Does the child have a physical or cognitive impairment?

Has the child been repeatedly abused?

Does the child show signs of trauma? Which ones?

Specific cultural factors to consider:

Miscellaneous:

Which relevant authorities have you contacted?

Please describe the date and time of contact, the name of the person(s) you spoke with, and the content of the conversation:

Details of the alleged perpetrator(s):

Name:

Gender: male female

Age _____ Nationality_____

Description of the alleged perpetrator:

Relationship of the alleged perpetrator to the child:

Relationship of the alleged perpetrator to LfK :

Relationship to the project funded by LfK :

Details of your concern:

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Type of concern/suspicion:

(Please describe the type of abuse or mistreatment, who reported it, the circumstances and sequence of events.)

Crime scene

Date Time

Witnesses

Transcript of conversation:

(Please describe exactly what the child said in their own words and what you said. Do not guide the conversation with targeted questions, but report exactly what the child said.)

Observations : *(e.g., injuries, the child's physical appearance, anxiety, etc.)*

How did the accused person respond to the accusation?

What further steps have you taken? What further steps have you taken?

Have you taken any action?

Place, Date: Signature:



5.3 Relevant laws

There are a number of laws in Germany and the countries where LfK operates and supports partner organizations that relate to this directive. In addition, several international child protection mechanisms also apply.

Under the German Criminal Code (StGB), a person with German citizenship or a person residing in Germany can be prosecuted for a crime committed abroad against a child. The relevant laws have extraterritorial application (Sections 5–7 of the German Criminal Code).

German Criminal Code (STGB) 2009		
Law	Example of criminal offenses	Maximum penalty
Section 12, § 171	Violation of the duty of care or education towards a person under sixteen years of age	3 years imprisonment or a fine
Section 13, § 174 ac	Sexual abuse of a person under sixteen years of age who is in the care, training or supervision of life was entrusted to.	5 years imprisonment
	Sexual abuse of a person under eighteen years of age who is in the care of an educator, teacher or teacher. was entrusted to.	5 years imprisonment
Section 13, §176	Sexual abuse of children under fourteen years of age	10 years in prison
	Show pornographic Images or depictions, playing sound recordings of pornographic content, or speaking to a child in a corresponding manner	5 years imprisonment
Section 13, §184b-c	Possession, distribution, production, dissemination or acceptance of child pornography material	5 years imprisonment