

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF SOCIETY "OUR CHILDREN" OPATIJA IN A CHILD-FRIENDLY LANGUAGE



Dear children,

adults in the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child back in 1989 in New York to ensure the protection of the rights of all the children of the world. It is the world's most important document on children's rights.

Motivated by that document, our vision and mission, and with the desire to provide a carefree and safe environment for the children we work with in the Society "Our children" Opatija, we created the Child Protection Policy of SOC Opatija.

This document is equally important for both adults and children. Adults should protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and inequality, and you children should know what actions towards you are not allowed, what we do to prevent them and what is done if abuse occurs.

Remember:

Any form of violence and neglect of children is unacceptable!

We must all take care of the protection of children together!

Why is it important to have a Child Protection Policy:

- because any child can become a victim of abuse or neglect, it is important to know your rights and how to protect them,
- because some girls and boys are more often victims of abuse because they are sick or have developmental difficulties, they differ from other children in appearance, speech, behavior or anything else,
- because the abuser can often be a person whom the child trusts and with whom the child is close,
- because the traces of abuse are not always visible,
- therefore, dear children, it is important to talk about difficult and ugly things that happen, to stop and prevent them, and to heal the consequences so that the child can be happy again.

The Child Protection Policy explains:

- what is child abuse and what is child neglect,
- abuse can also happen among children and is equally not allowed,
- what is "child's privacy" and why do we care about protecting a child's privacy,
- it is never too late to report violence that has happened to someone,

- what SOC Opatija is ready to do so that children are protected from all kinds of abuse,
- what they will do if the abuse happens.

CHILD ABUSE CAN BE:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Child neglect
- Sexual abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE

We are talking about physical abuse when a child is physically injured or someone has hurt them physically.

There are several forms of physical abuse: beating, throwing, poisoning, suffocation, inflicting burns, intentionally harming a child's health, whether committed by an adult or another child.

Remember:

No one has the right to inflict pain on another, especially not a stronger one on a weaker, or adult on a child.

When parents or other adults see that a child is being abused, they should IMMEDIATELY do everything to prevent this abuse.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

We are talking about emotional abuse when behavior creates constant psychological pressure on the child, which sends the message that he/she/they is worthless, unloved and incapable, that is emotional abuse.

Remember:

- No one, especially not adults, should send harmful messages to a child, they influence his/her/their development and creation of an image of himself/herself/they.
- No one has the right to restrict a child's freedom of movement, threaten them, intimidate them, mock them, gossip about them and humiliate them (e.g. migration).
- No one should ask a child to do things he is not up to.
- Children should not experience hostility and rejection.

SEXUAL ABUSE

We speak of sexual abuse when a child is forced or induced to commit a sexual act, and the perpetrator of the abuse is an adult or another older person or a stronger child.

Sexual abuse can be committed by unknown persons, but also by persons who are close to the children and whom they trust.

Remember:

Sexual relations between adults and children are inadmissible. Any touching, solicitation or showing of images and films that children find embarrassing or confusing.

Don't forget that you decide who and how can touch, hug, kiss you.

NEGLECT AND NEGLECT

We talk about neglect and abandonment when adults do not provide children with everything they need for normal growth and development: nutrition, safe living conditions and a roof over their heads, health care, education, meeting the needs for love and acceptance.

PEER VIOLENCE

We talk about peer violence when a child abuses another child.

Children are sometimes not even aware that what they are doing to others is wrong, or which the consequences of abuse are for the victim.

Remember:

- If you see that a child is uncomfortable, scared or sad, it means that other children's behavior has crossed the line of joking and playing, and it is necessary to react to protect him.
- Adults are the ones who should tell them this and help the victim, but also help the abuser to change his behavior.

VIOLATION OF THE CHILD'S PRIVACY

In SOC Opatija, all adults (secretary of SOC Opatija, activity educators, volunteers, professional associates) must keep data about your past, family history, state of health, education, behavior with the utmost care.

In order to protect you, they carefully store your documentation, pictures and video materials and do not give them to anyone without your knowledge and the permission of your parent or guardian.

CHILD PROTECTION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ADULTS IN SOC OPATIJA

Children often feel guilty about the abuse they suffer.

Children can only be responsible for their actions (violence towards others, destruction of property, lying, theft, failure to fulfill obligations and agreements), for which they bear the consequences, which must not be violent towards them or endanger them in any way.

Children have the right to say NO to abuse!

Violence is unacceptable!

Adults in SOC Opatija must listen, understand and respect children!

WHAT DOES THE TERM ACTIVE CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION MEAN?

- get and share information,
- to be asked and consulted about matters concerning the child's life,
- participate in children's representative bodies,
- participate in decisions that are important for children and their lives,
- propose and implement own projects and ideas,

and all this with the support and respect of adults and peers and in accordance with their own interests and capabilities.

PRINCIPLES OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION:

- children have the right to freedom of expression, thought, association and access to information,
- the right to be heard and to freely express their opinion on everything that concerns them,
- measures should serve to encourage their participation in accordance with their age and level of maturity,
- participation should promote what is in the best interest of children,
- enables development,
- all children have equal rights to participate without discrimination,
- all children have the right to protection from manipulation, violence, abuse and exploitation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WHEN ABUSE HAPPENS?

Dear children,

if you believe that someone is abusing you, or that someone has abused you in the past, if you noticed someone abusing another child, you should talk to an adult a person you trust.

Who is a trustworthy person in the association?

- activity educators
- psychologist in the association
- secretary of SOC Opatija.

Every child, member of our association as well as adults have the right to know who is a trusted person and how to reach them and participate in their selection.

You can always turn to a trusted person if there is something that worries you and you want to talk about it. She/He/Them will listen to you and help you make decisions.

What you talked about will be told to those who need to know. They will always take care of your protection and the protection of your privacy.

If the victim and abuser are children, we will do what is best for the development and protection of all children involved.

If the abuser is an adult, legal measures are taken against the abuser given the severity of the abuse.

The most important thing is that the abused child feels better. We will do everything to prevent the injury from happening again.

Dear children,

We hope that you have understood everything that is written in the Child Protection Policy of SOC Opatija.

If something bothers you or is not clear to you, look for trusted persons in SOC Opatija to explain the ambiguities and resolve all your doubts.

The guiding thread of our work is "Love, peace and safety for children above all."